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Winter tourism of Davraz Mountain

Tourism can be defined as a collection of relations and events that consist of travels and accomodations made by people outside their permanent work places and houses (Hunziker and Krapf 1942). International Travel and Tourism Conference held in Rome in 1963 played a prominent role in defining tourism. The definition of tourism presented below sheds light on all the questions concerning the issues of:

- Not having residence out of their permanent houses.
- Having no political, military or money-earning objectives.
- A personal or collective visit due to work, curiosity, religion, health, sports, recreation, entertainment, culture, experience and snobbish purposes or for a family visit and attending congresses and seminars.
- The consumption resulting from an accomodation exceeding 24 hours or at least a one-night accomodation is an integrated service and culture industry (Soykan, 2004).

With regard to transporting people from one location to another (travel) and the focus on products and services rendered within time and place, tourism is a geographical notion and it may be studied in a multi-faceted way from a geographical perspective (Williams 1998). Therefore, the attractiveness of tourism and geographical factors that influence tourism development in Mount Davraz should be studied, considering especially the increasing attractiveness of winter tourism in the recent years.

Turkey has an unrivalled natural richness in comparison to most European countries, i.e., the Mediterranean Basin, mountains, forests, lakes, rivers, flora and fauna, caves, mountain pastures, canyons, interesting geological processes,a rich cultural heritage and authentic traditions (Cengiz 2002). Mountain areas are an important element of this potential. Currently, mountaineering is an important sports activity that requires special knowledge, talent and preparation (Doğanay 1989). Turkish mountains are now available for tourism, mountaineering and skiing. “Alpinism” in Turkey flourished due to the steady development of transportation, accommodation and tour guide services . The mountain areas available for winter tourism have become a ski center providing accommodation as well as recreational facilities, and this fact is indicative of “winter tourism” development (Doğaner 2001).

Winter tourism is a characteristic form of tourism practiced in the high snow-capped parts of mountains (Doğaner 2011). This kind of tourism relies on the following: snowfall, i.e., time when snow is falling on the ground and slopes, the exposure of the slope, etc., and the center is opened from the end of fall to spring (Gönençgil and Güngör 2002). The interest in winter tourism helped to develop touris possibilities as mountain areas remain charming for people.

"Winter tourism" and "winter sports" are the most important features of tourism practiced in mountainous areas. Winter tourism and winter tourist centers are settlements that provide tourist with an opportunity to enjoy winter sports and related activities (Ülker 1978). Mountains also offer evrionmentally conscious people several options of ecological tourism to choose from. The mountain villages, in which tourists can admire picturesque architectual styles and observe local lifestyle, can also benefit from tourism activities (Doğaner 2001). Mountain tourism includes winter tourism, alpinism, mountain pasture tourism, ecological tourism and pastoral tourism (Doğaner 2001). Its aim is to provide exposure to forested areas and terrains that are part of the social and economic sectors, as well as to protect natural features and develop the seasonal tourism activities (Ülker 1987).

More and more people decide to rest and spend their holidays in winter tourist centers in order to escape the dirty air of the cities as well as to separate themselves from the difficult city life. This is also true for Turkey, and particularly, in recent years, the number of tourists during winter has increased due to the rise in the number of cars owned, which is connected with the development of the car industry, and also due to the prolongation of weekend to two days. This in turn has also opened the opportunity to increase revenue (Ülker 1987).

The potential of any country to attract tourists depends on three factors called the basic elements, or supply resources of tourism. These three items are: attractiveness, access and accomodation. Attractiveness of geographical resources plays a role in selecting and visiting a particular place by tourists. That visit can come to fruition by providing transportation and communication services, and, along with other conveniences, by providing entertainment for the touristists in the visited place. Additionally, infrastructure guarantees the fulfillment of the basic functions (Özgüç 2007). Mount Davraz, that is studied in this report, with its suitable climate conditions for ski tourism, and recently developing infrastructure (transportation) and accomodation investments, has become attractive for local and foreign tourists. This results in the increase in demand for the region due to its growing attractiveness.

In Turkey, winter tourism and winter tourism centers have gained importance after 1980 and the Council of Ministers declared the existence of 20 tourism centers (Table 1). Uludağ, Palandöken, Erciyes and Kartalkaya Tourism Centers are the most popular ones due to being located near populous areas. Bursa-Uludağ Winter Tourism Center is the first one which was declared a winter center on 05/08/1986. Winter centers offer tourists a variety of activities to choose from, like Nordic and Alpine skiing, etc. Isparta Davraz Winter Tourism Center is not an exception in this respect. The Davraz Mountain Winter Tourism Center was established under the Council of Ministers' decision of 17/02/1995. The mountain with its altitude of 1650–2350 meters and snow thickness of 0.5–2 meters, offers tourists an opportunity to enjoy Nordic and Alpine skiing.

Tab. 1. Mountan winter tourism centers in Turkey and their features

Tourism center	Thickness of snow	Date of declaration	Altitude	Kind of skiing
Bursa Uludağ	3 m	05/08/1986	1750–2543 m	Nordic and Alpine Discipline – Snowboard
Erzurum – Palandöken	2–3 m	17/10/1993	2200–3176 m	Nordic and Alpine Discipline – Snowboard
Kayseri – Erciyes	0.5–1 m	19/04/1989	2200–3100 m	Nordic and Alpine Discipline – Snowboard
Kars – Sarıkamış	3 m	20/05/1991	1750–2543 m	Nordic and Alpine Discipline – Snowboard
Bolu – Kartalkaya	2,5 m	07/10/1997	1600–2000 m	Nordic and Alpine Discipline – Snowboard
Kastamonu – Ilgaz	0.50 – 2.5 m	07/10/1997	1600–2000 m	Alpine Discipline
Isparta – Davraz	0.50–2 m	17/02/1995	1650–2250 m	Nordic and Alpine Discipline – Snowboard
Bitlis – Merkez	1–2 m	-	1510–1700 m	-
Ağrı – Budi	1–2 m	-	-	-
Bingöl -Yolaçtı – Kurudağ	-	-	1650–1890 m	-
Erzincan – Bolkar	60–100 cm	-	-	-
Gümüşhane – Zigana	1 – 1.5 m	20/05/1991	1850–2200 m	-
Ankara – Elmadağ	30–60 cm	-	-	-
Antalya – Saklıkent	50–100 cm	-	2550 m	-
İzmir – Bozdağ	80–120 cm	-	1700–2157 m	Alpine Discipline
Artvin	2.5 m	Pending	1700–2157 m	Nordic and Alpine Discipline
Aksaray – Hasan Dağı	-	05/03/1990	2500–2700 m	-
Bayburt – Kop	-	17/10/1993	2600 m	-
Samsun – Ladik	-	06/01/2005	1400–1800 m	-
Kocaeli – Kartepe	-	17/10/1993	1600 m	Snowboard

Source: Ski Federation of Turkey, 2011

There is a direct connection between supply and space in tourism. For travel reason, it depends on the features which are sufficient to meet the need for travel and moving to another place temporarily and staying there for some time. The location/venue, a country, or any other region may be a tourist center. This is called ''destination'' in tourism operations. These emerge as the natural assets, values, facilities and socio-cultural entities of that place (Bahar and Kozak 2005).

Davraz Mountain is deemed one of the most valuable natural elements of the landscape in the Turkish Lakes Region; it is an ideal area for tourism and recreational activities. It is also close to the city of Isparta, which is convenient for transportation. Davraz Mountain is located southwest from the Eğirdir Lake and is situated 26 km from Isparta (Figure 1). Nowadays, Davraz Mountain boasts beautiful natural resources, good quality of snow and a 4094–hectare area which was declared a Winter Sports Tourism Center by the Council of Minister's decision. Its topographic

structure, richness of visual landscape and weather makes it both a suitable place for winter sports and an attractive research area. Mount Davraz's neighbours are: Barla Mountain on the north, Anamas Mountain on the east, Kuyucak Mountain on the southeast, and Akdag Mountains on the southwest; its maximum height is 2635 meters.

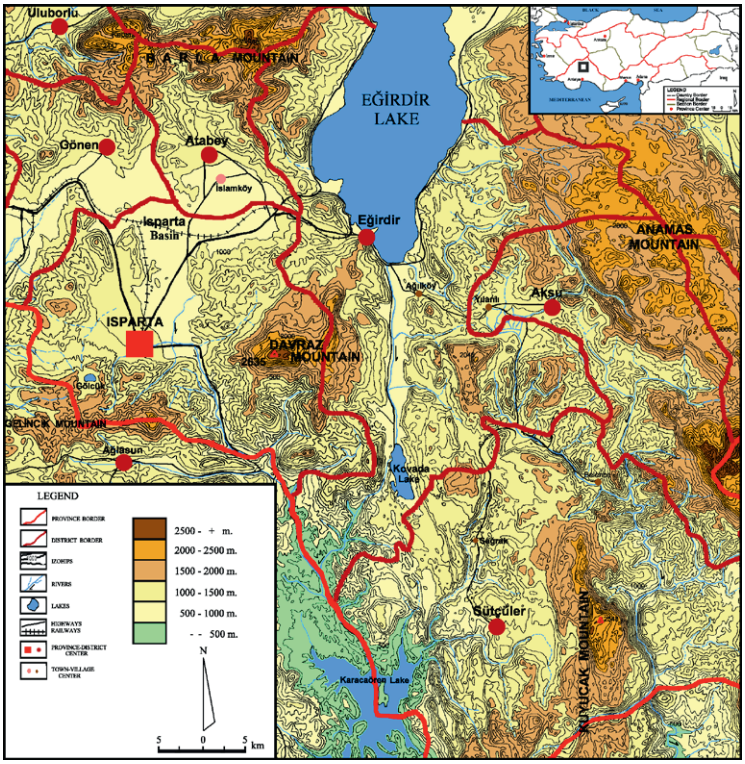

Fig. 1. Map presenting the location of Davraz Mountain (Source: General Command of Mapping)

Natural geographical features

Davraz Mountain gradually loses altitude descending to Isparta plain on the east and Kovada Depression on the west. The highest point of Davraz is Ulparçukuru Peak at 2635 m. It goes down towards Eğirdir Lake to Dereboğaz stream; and the hills that are located on Davraz are a good ski tourism spot. The hills are: Kara Hill (2396 m), Çıkrıklı Hill (2013 m), Kocakır Hill (1675 m) and Garkın Hill (1736 m). Davraz Mountain is mostly built of limestone, arranged in layers which are sometimes massive, that dates back to Mesozoic age. It is a characteristic karst, which was created by block faulting and ascended during the last tectonic movements. Large parts of the area covered by limestones have been affected by erosion since the Mesozoic-Tertiary age. Serpentine is a green rock located particularly on the northern slope of the mountain around Bademli and Çobanisa villages (Ardos 1977; Temurçin 2004). As far as layer altitudes of Davraz and its surrounding mountains are concerned, the area between 1200–1500 meters represents the biggest layer of

33.1%, but there is no winter tourism activity. On the other hand, the area between 1500–2000 meters is an area intensively used for winter tourism (a layer of 41.7%), and there is a ski trail on it (Table 2).

Tab. 2. Distribution of elevation groups

Altitude [m]	The Area	
	Ha	%
-1200	2567	11.5
1200–1500	7379	33.1
1500–1650	3484	15.6
1650–1800	2703	12.1
1800–2000	3131	14.0
2000– +	3056	13.7
Total	22320	100.0

Source: The Special Provincial Administration, Isparta

Erosion and accumulated forms of glacial activity (cirques, moraines, etc.) and tectonic-karstic forms (gaps, dolines, a few limestone pavement) are present on Davraz. Water is obtained from a deep well which was dug at the base of Belkuyu Doline. This is the only water source located at the altitude of 1890 meters. It is not possible to find water higher than this altitude. Permanent snow on Davraz is used by the villagers for their animal herds (Çiçek 1992; Temurçin, 2004). The area is not rich in surface water sources and many of the existing water sources are seasonal rivers which flow in the spring. The only permanent stream is Sav stream, which has its source in the mountain itself. The other streams are: Gürleyik stream in the north, Darıören stream in the south and Kurudere in the west. There is also a pond near this area, which is an important element of the surface landscape and is used for tourism and by winter sport facilities. Because of the limestone and the general structure of the mountain, its waters are able to infiltrate quite rapidly; therefore, it is necessary to build waterproof artificial skating area. There occur dendritic and deranged drainage systems because of the horizontal structure and glacial material.

The upland up to 1800 meters is a hilly area covered with dwarf shrubs (*Quercus vulcanica*). Above that altitude it is possible to spot juniper and larch. Vegetation has been disturbed by intensive exploitation by people.

The studied area is located in the area of Turkish plate, susceptible to earthquakes. There are two north-south-trending faults, and all construction projects are required to comply with the earthquake regulations.

Effect of Davraz Mountain climate on winter tourism

Isparta province is located in the transitional zone between Mediterranean and Middle Anatolia, and due to its location it presents features of these two climates. Nevertheless, the continental climate is dominant; therefore, summers are hot and arid and winters are cold and rainy/snowy. The area receives frontal, convective and orographic rainfall, which occurs mainly during winter and spring. The amount of rainfall in mountainous area is not regular and continous. The maximum values

in the lakes area are lower than in the coastal areas. Towards the north, continental rainfall starts occurring. Rainfall in northern areas is smaller and the high-altitude regions sometimes receive various quantities of snowfall .

Weather station was built by Isparta Meteorology Regional Office and it is located 997 meters above sea level. According to the measurements conducted between 1975 and 2010, the average yearly temperature is 12 degrees Celsius. The examination of average temperature values showed that the highest temperature value is 23.5 degrees Celsius in July, and the lowest is 1.8 degrees Celsius in January. The examination of the long-term temperature values recorded in the ski center indicates that yearly temperature is 4 degrees Celsius, the highest average temperature is 17.5 degrees in July, and the lowest is -5 degrees Celsius (Table 3).

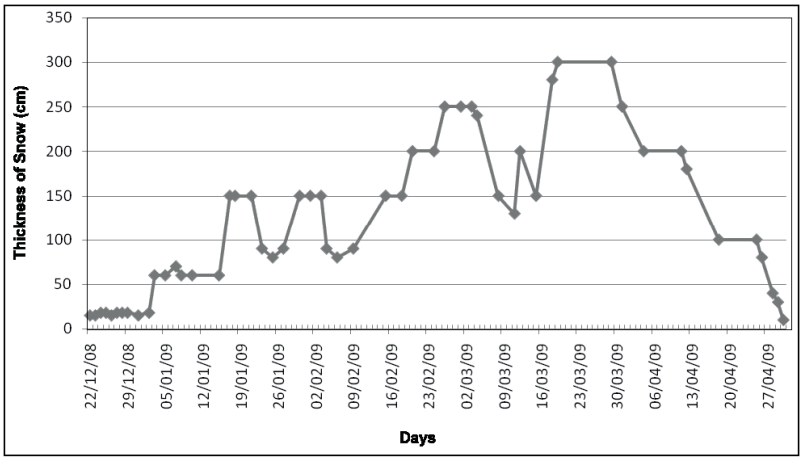

Fig. 2. Snow thicknes in Davraz Ski Center in Isparta

Tab. 3. Selected climate elements according to Meteorological Station of Isparta (1975–2010)

Meteorological parameters	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Yearly
Average Temp. (C)	1.8	2.6	5.9	10.6	15.5	20.2	23.5	23.0	18.4	12.8	7.0	3.1	12.0
Average High Temp. (C)	6.4	7.6	11.7	16.5	21.8	26.6	30.3	30.4	26.5	20.7	13.4	7.8	18.3
Average Low Temp. (C)	-2.2	-1.8	0.5	4.5	8.1	11.8	14.9	14.4	10.0	6.0	1.7	-0.9	5.6
Average Cloudiness	15.7	18.6	26.8	28.2	32.0	35.0	38.0	37.8	35.4	31.0	24.6	18.8	38.0
Average Rain (mm)	5.4	5.5	5.2	5.4	4.5	2.7	1.7	1.5	1.9	3.3	4.4	5.6	3.9
Average Snowy Days	65.1	56.5	54.3	60.1	47.9	28.6	13.2	12.3	15.7	38.5	50.0	72.5	514.0

Average Snow Covered Days	6.5	5.3	2.8	0.3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.3	3.4	18.6
Highest Thickness of Snow	25.0	31.0	28.0	9.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8.0	32.0	32.0

Source: Provincial Directorate of Meteorology, Isparta

In normal winter conditions, the northern and northeastern slopes of Davraz receive between 100 and 200 cm of snowfall, and conditions for skiing hold between 20th of December and 10th of April (almost 110 days). During the ski season, the thickness of snow changes between 50 cm and 2,5 meters. Wind speed is crucial for skiing, and the abovementioned resort is ideal for such sports. Despite the prevailing southwestern wind direction, the ski runs of Davraz are closed to east, west and south winds, and they are open to the north and northeast winds.

Davraz Mountain has a high potential for skiing. The slopes which are overlooking the ski runs are located on the north, northwest and northeast. The abovementioned features support the claim that a lot of the skiing potential is currently unexploited (Table 4).

Tab. 4. Exposure Percentages

Exposure	Covered Area	
	Ha	%
Plain Land	990	4.5
North	2718	12.2
Northeast	2128	9.5
East	2350	10.5
Southeast	2440	10.9
South	3032	13.6
Southwest	2732	12.2
West	2842	12.7
Northwest	3089	13.9

Source: The Special Provincial Administration, Isparta

Situation of transport on Davraz Mountain

The Davraz Winter Sports Center has been constantly developing in the last few years. Davraz is located 26 km from Isparta, 154 km from Antalya and 648 km from Istanbul. Good highway connections from Davraz to Isparta and Eğirdir are available. The journey to the ski center is usually made by car, but during ski season (from December until May) it is also possible to reach the ski centre by city buses. Çobanisa village also has a convenient transport connection because of the highway to Davraz, that passes through this village.

There are also airways to Davraz connecting it with Antalya and Isparta International Airports. The ski center lies 58 km from Süleyman Demirel International Airport and 130 km from Antalya International Airport. The only problem regarding transportation is posed by heavy accumulation of snow on the road during the winter season.

Structure of facilities and ski run features on Davraz Mountain

The Davraz Winter Sports Center has two chair lifts and can carry 1000 persons per hour), one telex (624 meters long; it can move 800 persons per hour) and 2 baby lifts (300 meters long). The third chair lift to the top will be completed by the summer of 2012. There are also mechanical facilities equipped in electricity, water and transportation infrastructure.

Tab. 5. Accommodation facilities in the Davraz Mountain Winter Tourism Center

Names of hotels	Number of stars	Number of rooms	Number of beds
Sirene Davraz Otel	4	122	280
Isperia Davraz Otel	Oberj	17	55
SDU Practice Otel	Education and Practice	42	84
Çobanisa Davraz Houses	Pension	12	24

Source: The Special Provincial Administration, Isparta

Davraz infrastructure was completed and opened in 1997. The tourism center possesses 3 mountain cafes, 1 four-star hotel (122 rooms and 280 beds), 1 hostel (17 rooms and 55 beds) and 1 University Practice Hotel.

In the Çobanisa village (located 8 km away from Davraz), 4 old village houses were restored by the Culture and Tourism Ministry and the Governship of Isparta through an action called "Çobanisa Example tourism village project". The houses were rebuilt taking into consideration the specific architectural features of the region. The village houses have been rented to a private company; they have 12 rooms and 24 beds capacity (Table 5).

Fig. 3. Ski runs on Davraz Mountain

Source: The Special Provincial Administration

On Davraz Mountain, ski runs are subject to the relugations of the International Ski Federation (FIS), and the winter activities available for tourists involve Nordic discipline, Alpine discipline, ski touring and snowboard. The total length of ski runs is almost 8 km. Blue ski runs are for beginners, red ones are for intermediate level skiers and black ones are for professional skiers. Ski runs are located at different altitudes. Beginners use the ones located at a height between 1650 and 1982 meters. Inclination of the slopes on blue ski runs is 10–50%. The remaining four ski runs are located at a height of: 1982–2086 meters, 1950–2024 meters, 1950–2086 meters and 1950–2250 meters. The slopes overlap the north and northeast slopes of Küçük Davraz Mountains and Davraz Moutain, and include also Kulova (1650 m) (where a ski run will be built in the future) (Figure 3).

Ecological and economic situation

Generally, mountain environment is damaged due to intense exploitation. Incompatibility between the attempts at environment preservation, and solid and liquid waste dump, hunting, smuggling of biological species, illegal tree cutting, fires, animal husbandry activities, agricultural activities, erosion, etc., is resolved by recreational activities proposed by the Governorship of Isparta.

Davraz Mountain is one of 122 important vegetation areas and is abundant in endemic vegetation types (*Quercus vulcanica, Quercus Ceris, Quercus Trogona*, etc.). The flora is rich due to altitude and topographical conditions of the mountain, and its location between Mediterranean and Middle Eastern climates (Sağlam 2007). The people who inhabit the villages around the mountain support themselves from animal husbandry. This is one of the main reasons of the damage done to vegetation. Also intensive exploitation and litter remaining after weekend picnics can be observed. In order to avoid these problems, strict regulations included in "Davraz Mountain Management Plan" should be implemented. The landscape works have been completed on 5.7 hectares, in accordance with the natural structure. This area, which is forested, has been used as a tourist facility area, university area and hotel area.

The biggest benefits from the winter tourism center is drawn by Çobanisa village. The only source of livelihood for its people being agriculture and animal husbandry, the protection of forested areas restricts their traditional farming places. Restoration of old houses that can be converted into restaurants can provide the villagers with economic benefits and the market to sell food products, such as: eggs, cheese, boiled grape juice, walnuts, milk and almonds. Some villagers sell food not only in the restaurants, but also at the stands along the highway. The economic benefits from closer relations between the villagers and the tourist center prevent the migration of work force. Almost 30 persons from the village are working in the Davraz Winter Sports Center (mainly on accommodation and technical positions). Usually, middle and lower income groups of skiers are welcomed in the mountain houses. The skiers staying at the Davraz Winter Sports Center prefer to buy food products directly from the villagers. Village houses provide accommodation also for skiers from Antalya.

Davraz Mountain offers its tourists a variety of activities to choose from also in summer, e.g., football, mountaineering, mountain biking, trekking, paragliding and jeep safari. Davraz is preferred as a camping area by professional and amateur

Turkish football clubs. In the future, with its appropriate climate and geographic structure, Davraz Mountain will also be preferred by European football teams.

In Isparta, there are suitable areas for single and group paragliding. Everyday, the number of people doing air sports who are comming to Isparta, has been increasing. In the Davraz Mountain Winter Sports Tourism Center, paragliding is performed from eastern ski runs at a height of 1800 meters. The highway makes it possible to reach flight and ski runs areas. For group flights, departure and arrival areas are located between the eastern side of the Davraz Mountain Ski House and Kulova Plain.

Conclusion

Winter tourism is a form of tourism which integrates natural environment, climate and local economic enterprises. The people who would like to enjoy snow and winter sports prefer to choose more natural places, like Davraz. This study considered issues regarding the way in which tourist centers use natural environment, the kind of relationships that develop, and the advantages and disadvantages of Davraz Mountain. Despite the fact that the mountain is built of limestone and is susceptible to erosion, these problems will be solved in the future through infrastructure improvements. On the other hand, the geomorphology and climate features show that the winter tourism center is more advanced than the existing potential.

In order to create new plans for reconfiguration of and increase in the potential of Davraz Mountain, the center must not damage the natural environment. All analyses conducted aim at protecting the environment. Digging wells, forest exploitation, developing systems of erosion prevention are the steps towards preservation of ecological balance, and simultaneously towards obtaining the maximum economic gain.

New plans for configuration and restoration activities increase the importance of the Davraz Winter Tourism Center. With the growing number of modern tourism operations, and the investment which is appropriate for ski sports, Davraz Mountain has become one of Turkey's most popular ski resorts. Apart from that, thanks to the appealing choise of activities, such as mountaineering, trekking and nature observation, there is a growing demand for Davraz Mountain.

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Abstract

Winter tourism comprises activities such as traveling to snowy and sloping areas in ski centers, accommodation in these areas and other services. For winter tourism, the climate is a major factor. However, a particular altitude and slopes are required. A site could be defined as an available territory for winter tourism if there are places that are suitable for climbing and trekking and have appropriate snow for skiing. In addition to the abovementioned issues, the period during which the snow remains on the ground is also a crucial factor.

Mountain Davraz has become one of winter tourism centers because of its altitude of 1650–2250 meters, suitable climate for winter tourism and its location near the center of Isparta town. Moreover, advantages, such as heavy snowfall, low temperatures, geomorphologic features as well as hydrological and vegetational suitability for winter tourism, contribute to its potential. As a winter tourism center Mountain Davraz has available accommodation facilities with qualified staff and climbing equipment like chair lifts, telexes and baby lifts.

It should be noted that in recent years, transportation has become possible not only thanks to international airports in Isparta and Antalya, but also due to the construction of highways. All

of these features provide benefits to the local economy of Mount Davraz and its hinterland. However, Mount Davraz does not require a big capital for winter tourism, because the real and the biggest capital of Davraz is its own nature. Nevertheless, some issues, like the activities on the plateau, inconveniently steep territory, building tourist establishments, solid and liquid wastes, poaching, biological species smuggling, illegal deforestation, fires and erosion create a dilemma between expecting benefits from tourism and avoiding ecological harm done to the environment.
Keywords: Mountain Davraz, winter tourism, ecological harm, climate, economic benefits.

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