

SUSTAINABLE ISLANDS NETWORK: A PERSPECTIVE OF SUSTAINABILITY OR A DEAD END DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

A management proposal towards sustainability is suggested for a sensitive and unique system of rich natural and cultural environment like the Aegean islands. The crucial features of island ecology, like insularity, oceanicity and fragility, and the determinant properties of the Aegean islands are under investigation. The principles of island sustainability are examined in connection to the Aegean island character and in relation to the present development practices. A “Sustainable Islands Network” is presented as a sustainability perspective for these islands. The objectives, characteristics, and organization of such a network are analysed and an islands categorization takes place. The operation of the first stages is tested through a pilot procedure implementation for the island of Naxos. The problems as well as the main results form the base for a criteria and determinant factors selection, that affect islands sustainability. Based on these findings and the structure of the network, some fundamental criteria arise concerning the incorporation of Aegean islands in the sustainability network. The main conclusions focus on the potential of the network to serve as a sustainability tool, its capability to overpass social and management constraints and its possibility to expand.