



# Scuba Diving Tourism: The Example of Gelibolu Historical Underwater Park

**Murat AKSU\***

Associate Professor, Department of Tourism Management, Tourism Faculty,  
Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University, Türkiye  
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9881-4739>  
[\*Corresponding author]

**Banu GÜRNEŞ BOZ**

PhD Student, Department of Tourism Management, Graduate School of Education,  
Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University, Türkiye  
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5978-1994>

## Abstract

The research aims to emphasize the significance of Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park for diving tourism and evaluates its pros and cons in comparison to other diving spots, as perceived by diving school managers and instructors who operate within the park. The study's assessment of the Park's strengths and weaknesses is key for proactively addressing future threats and maximizing opportunities. The research sample included six managers and diving instructors from four different diving schools, and data was collected using semi-structured interviews and was interpreted using descriptive analysis, content analysis, and word cloud. The study findings indicate that Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park stands out among other diving spots because of its historical shipwrecks from the war era and captivating underwater ecosystem. Furthermore, the Park faces a transportation challenge, which is a drawback. Additionally, the study indicated improvements in the quality of diving schools. By addressing the shortcomings identified in the study, it is anticipated that the Park will see an increase in tourist visits and a rise in its reputation.

## Keywords

Shipwreck, Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park, Underwater diving, Underwater diving tourism

## INTRODUCTION

Tourism is characterized by individuals traveling to destinations for personal or commercial motives, influencing the economy, society, and culture (UNWTO, 2024). The tourism industry offers a diverse array of options, such as hunting excursions, beach holidays, wellness retreats, thermal spa visits, cave explorations, golf vacations, grief tourism, highland adventures, religious pilgrimages, and underwater diving excursions. In this particular context, sustainable tourism can offer financial support for the conservation of natural areas and can serve as an economic justification for the protection of natural resources. It provides an economic rationale for safeguarding natural resources, provides local communities with a sustainable economic option in lieu of depleting or damaging natural resources, and promotes the preservation of natural resources (Hawkins, 1998). Yet, failure to manage it properly can result in adverse environmental effects (Brauwer et al., 2018).

Coastal communities benefit economically from underwater diving tourism as a sustainable income stream (Brauwer et al., 2018). According to Dinç (2021), the Maldives Islands and the Red Sea are the top choices for underwater diving tourism due to their abundant flora and fauna. South Australia, Bahama Islands, Canada, South Africa, Cape of Good Hope, and Brazil are identified by Yarmacı, Keleş, and Ergil (2017) as some of the top diving spots worldwide.

Turkey emerges as a significant hub for underwater diving tourism owing to its diverse underwater flora, fauna, archaeological sites, and underwater wrecks (Dinç, 2021). Antalya, Muğla, Balıkesir, and Çanakkale are recognized as

key diving hubs in Turkey (Top, Yolak, & Thomas, 2013). Çanakkale attracts divers seeking to observe and engage with its underwater and historical wealth (Çanakkale Diving Points, 2024). The presence of numerous shipwrecks and a diverse underwater ecosystem make Saros Gulf, Gökçeada, and Bozcaada popular diving spots in Çanakkale (Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2024).

Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park, the inaugural World War I-themed underwater park, was unveiled on October 2, 2021 and holds high significance for diving tourism in Çanakkale (Çanakkale Governorship, 2021). The park offers the opportunity to explore a variety of war wrecks with historical significance. Furthermore, visitors can also observe the marine plant and animal life in the area at the Park. It is to be expected that Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park will help raise Çanakkale's profile as a travel destination and a diving paradise, giving it the potential to compete with other tourism regions.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### Underwater Diving Tourism

Areas abundant in marine biodiversity are increasingly popular among tourists for diving activities. The practice of scuba diving (SCUBA), originating in 1942, has evolved into a thriving business that provides divers with the chance to witness untouched wildlife, serving as a unique segment of the diving tourism sector (Arcos-Aguilar et al., 2021). On the other hand, human pressures pose a significant threat to the degradation of coastal environments worldwide, which are critical for supporting diverse marine and terrestrial life as well as nearly half of the global population. The decline of coastal ecosystems on a global scale is causing marine biodiversity to become more limited. In this context, it is obvious that studies on underwater diving tourism mainly focus on two key aspects. These include the interaction between divers and the underwater environment, as well as the possible ecological impacts (Haddock-Fraser & Hampton, 2012; Hillmer-Pegram, 2014; Dimmock & Musa, 2015).

Scuba diving enables individuals to move freely without the constraints of gravity, a sensation not typically found in most leisure pursuits. According to Musa and Dimmock (2013: 3), it also enables the discovery of captivating underwater wealth. Underwater diving tourism comprises observing, photographing, and filming the underwater plant and animal life, as well as the historical cultural relics, alongside participating in diving for sport fishing purposes and for promotion, sports, education, accommodation and hospitality services provided on the shore (Yasar, 2011: 36).

The practice of underwater diving tourism contributes to environmental conservation, income generation, and community development. It is crucial to grasp how it interacts with environmental, social, and economic aspects (Lucrezi et al., 2017). Lucrezi and Saayman (2017) point out the rising popularity of underwater diving tourism among tourists globally. Furthermore, underwater diving tourism has brought about improvements in a wide range of services including lodging, dining facilities, entertainment, and tourist guidance (Dimmock & Musa, 2015).

According to their research on underwater diving tourism, Hodeck et al. (2021) highlighted the necessity of incorporating the significance of the issue and the expectations of tourists into the planning and execution of strategies for sustainable diving tourism. Tourists engaging in diving tourism are typically individuals who are eager and financially able to afford the expensive prices associated with this activity.

The study by Mercan, Sünnetçioğlu, and Uşak (2021) revealed that research participants emphasized the impact of diving tourism in Çanakkale on boosting the region's visibility and economic benefits. According to participants, diving tourism could negatively impact the environment as a result of issues like insufficient training, unauthorized diving, and carelessness. Türkel and Gökdemir (2021) categorized the shipwrecks in Çanakkale into three groups based on their chronology: ancient shipwrecks, shipwrecks from World War I, and shipwrecks post-World War I, and emphasized that the inventory of shipwrecks in Çanakkale is subject to revision.

Çanakkale plays a crucial role in underwater diving tourism due to its significant war wrecks and diverse underwater flora and fauna. Enhancing underwater diving tourism in Çanakkale and attracting a larger number of tourists for diving can be achieved through the implementation of the Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park project.

The Gallipoli Historical Area Presidency began its efforts in 2017 to locate and preserve the sunken ships from the Gallipoli Wars, with the goal of making them accessible to the public. The Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park project was launched to increase awareness about the Gallipoli Wars. Through the project, the latest digital techniques were utilized to discover historical shipwrecks from World War I in the Dardanelles and the Aegean Sea. The ongoing underwater archaeological research project aims to protect the Çanakkale war wrecks for future generations. In Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park, visitors have the chance to dive among shipwrecks, as well as view them in three dimensions and hear their stories (Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park, 2024). Many local and foreign tourists show great interest in the Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park (Çanakkale Travel, 2022). The Turkish Tourism Promotion and Development Agency (2024) anticipates that the park will eventually transform into a globally renowned diving location, where divers can explore historical sites underwater. A total of 2347 individuals dived at the Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park in 2022, followed by 3690 in 2023. By March 2024, the number of visitors had reached 45, according to the Çanakkale Wars Gallipoli Historical Site Directorate.

The Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park includes SS MILO, Massena and Saghalien Shipwrecks, Maria Delle Vittorie and Vincenzo Florio Shipwrecks, Tuzla Network, HMS Louis, Arıburnu Layter, H.M.S. Majestic Wreck, Helles Barrages, Lundy, Arıburnu Barch, Küçükemikli Barrels, Mania Network, Bebek Rocks, HMS TRIUMPH as diving

spots (Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park, Diving Points, 2024). Due to limitations of the study, not all diving spots in the park are being revealed. Instead, details of select diving spots from the field studies are provided.

Divers have the opportunity to explore H.M.S. Majestic at Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park. Divers consider Majestic Wreck to be the most fascinating and popular diving spot (Çanakkale Diving Points, 2024). H.M.S., a Majestic-class armored warship, served as the lead vessel for the canal fleet defending the southern shores of England during her initial deployment. Additionally, the ship was designated to provide support to other navy ships in the Çanakkale Naval Battle. Once it became clear that victory at sea was unattainable, the conflict transitioned to land warfare. As a result, following the landing that began on April 25, 1915, Majestic carried on with his responsibility of assuring the soldiers on the land that the navy had not left them and giving them moral backing. The German submarine U-21 torpedoed and sank it on 27 May 1915. The U-21 holds the distinction of being the first submarine in military history to successfully sink an enemy vessel using a torpedo, and is renowned for its role in sinking two warships. The Majestic Wreck lies between 18 and 23 meters deep and, despite missing its guns, it mostly retains its original shape. While diving into the shipwreck, the wide variety of flora and fauna in and around the ship stands out. The surface of the wreck is strewn with unexploded cannonballs of various sizes. During the shipwreck, observers can also spot the cable-shaped gunpowder that burns underwater, as well as the front and rear turrets, the tower that fractured during sinking, and the double chimney that made it a target (Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park, H.M.S. Majestic Wreck, 2024).

Diving enthusiasts can explore Bebek Rocks in the Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park. Bebek Rocks, which has been the subject of numerous rumors, has multiple diving spots that allow divers to witness hundreds of colors and species while experiencing underwater currents is highly populated with underwater flora and fauna (Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park, Diving Points, 2024). Bebek Rocks, known for its vibrant walls and abundance of marine life such as red starfish, sea snails, moray eels, and scorpion fish (Top, Yolak and Thomas, 2013), is a popular spot for underwater photographers (BYEMdive, Our Diving Spots, 2024). According to Yaşar (2011:38), Bebek rocks rank among the top 10 most favored diving locations in Turkey.

The Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park includes HMS TRIUMPH as a diving spot. HMS TRIUMPH is a battleship in the Swiftsure class that is part of the British Navy's fleet. The ship was part of the canal fleet along the southern coast of England until 1909. When World War I started, it was tasked with attacking Tsing Tao alongside Japanese vessels. By January 1915, it had arrived at the Bosphorus to participate in the Çanakkale operation. The German submarine U-21 sunk it after torpedoing it during the bombardment of Kabatepe on 25 May 1915. The shipwreck lies 72 meters deep in Kabatepe (Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park, HMS TRIUMPH, 2024).

## Methodology

The main objective of the research is to emphasize the importance of Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park for diving tourism. Diving school managers or instructors were requested to ascertain the strengths and weaknesses of Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park when contrasted with other diving sites. The study involved using the interview technique, a qualitative data collection method, to collect data through a semi-structured interview form developed by the researchers. Consequently, the study persisted until the sample was saturated with data.

The first step in the study involved scanning documents pertaining to the Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park. In this context, the Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park website, printed materials describing the Park, and media reports from local and international sources were examined. Following that, discussions were conducted with the Çanakkale Wars Gallipoli Historical Area Directorate concerning the Çanakkale Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park, leading to the acquisition of information. The interview questions were formulated in order to reveal the importance of Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park in terms of Çanakkale tourism and to evaluate Çanakkale and the regions near the Park in terms of factors such as accommodation, food and beverage, and transportation from the perspective of diving school managers or instructors, in the light of information obtained. The interview questions were developed with the input of the Gallipoli Historical Area Directorate of the Gallipoli Wars, an academic who specializes in diving in Çanakkale, and a manager from a diving school. Consequently, a set of 20 semi-structured interview questions was developed. In adherence to Scientific Ethics, the identities of the participants were anonymized. Consequently, participants were assigned the codes K1, K2, K3, K4, K5, and K6.

The study population consists of 10 diving schools that are located in Çanakkale province and are part of the Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park website. All of these schools have been contacted. From the interviews, it was determined that four diving schools operate within the Park. Other diving schools mentioned that they were unable to dive in the Park because of issues like expenses and equipment availability. Consequently, interviews were conducted with four diving schools.

The participants who consented to be recorded provided a voice recording, while those who did not consent filled out a written interview form. Managers and diving instructors from four diving schools operating in the Park were interviewed in September 2022, totaling six participants. The interviews lasted, on average, for 1 hour. The study data was analyzed using descriptive and content analysis methods, and a word cloud was generated with an analysis tool to interpret the findings.





K3: *"The season is short, the water is cold, the shipwrecks are far away."*

K4: *"Current and meteorological conditions."*

K6: *"Inexperienced divers' contact with shipwrecks may cause a disadvantage to existing life. But shipwrecks have no disadvantages."*

Participant K6 viewed the potential harm inexperienced divers could inflict on the historically significant shipwrecks as a drawback of the Park.

The participants were asked, "What dangers might you face when diving in the Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park, and do you have any solutions in mind?". The participants identified currents as the primary risk in the Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park. Furthermore, other mentioned risks include diving with a certificate obtained after brief training, absence of a vault system in shipwrecks, and cold-water temperature. Proposed solutions suggest that installing a buoying system on the shipwrecks can mitigate the risks at hand. Furthermore, having a pressure chamber for treating diving-related accidents near the diving site is crucial. It was highlighted that activating the pressure chamber in the University hospital is vital and essential for any diving-related emergencies.

The participants were prompted with the question, "Is there a site you consider comparable to the Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park? If yes, please indicate. The majority of the participants claimed that no shipwreck matched those found in the Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park. Participant K4 was the only one who considered the shipwreck of Captain Francos and the Battleship Mesudiye in Havuzlar Bay, known for its red corals, to be on par with the other shipwrecks in the Park. The participants' answers to the question are outlined below.

K1: *"A single location with numerous shipwrecks does not exist."*

K2: *"While the shipwrecks in Malta and Egypt are deemed to be of equal significance, they do not possess any notable stories."*

K3: *"No other place can compare to this one in terms of its natural attributes."*

K4: *"In the Havuzlar bay, the wrecks of Captain Francos and the Mesudiye Battleship are surrounded by visually striking red corals."*

The participants were asked, "How can diving tourism be improved at Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park?". According to the participants, to promote diving tourism in the Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park, Diving schools should receive incentives, the Park should be promoted more, divers need to be educated comprehensively, the region requires increased investments, and academic assistance should be offered. A few participants also noted that sportive diving could be carried out within close proximity, such as 5 m., and they pointed out that building ship replicas in the area would impact the growth of diving tourism.

K1: *"Incentive, group organizations, package tour."*

K2: *"These spots are newer additions. Individuals with time constraints for training could undergo trial dives at 5m depths using replicas, there should be logistics points on land, economic incentives should be given. Those performing this task require training and a certified diver guide is necessary."*

K3: *"Promotion, international fairs, publishing real publications, making inter-university agreements, organizing international symposiums."*

K4: *"Investment and support, incentives, support for diving centers in terms of investment."*

K5: *"Replica shipwrecks can be built at shallow depths for trial divers."*

K6: *"There needs to be a boost in promotions."*

The participants were asked for their opinions on the accommodation options in Çanakkale and if they had any suggestions for improvement. This question was left unanswered by K5. The majority of the participants mentioned that the lodging possibilities in Çanakkale were satisfactory. Participant K6 mentioned that the prices for accommodation were expensive.

Participants were queried about transportation issues to Çanakkale, with a follow-up question on potential solutions. K5 did not provide a response to this question. Some participants mentioned an issue with transportation to Çanakkale. They highlighted the Çanakkale Bridge as a positive development for transportation, but pointed out the absence of air travel as a drawback.

The participants were questioned about transportation challenges they may face when traveling to diving spots and were encouraged to share their proposed solutions. According to the participants, accessing the diving sites in the Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park posed difficulties. This was attributed to the scattered and remote locations of the spots. Participant K1 expressed that they had no issues reaching the diving spot in their area. To address the issue of distant diving points, it is recommended to establish storage areas for diving centers in close proximity to the points.

K1: *"We have access to diving spots within our region and don't need to travel to Çanakkale for shipwrecks."*

K2: *"Acknowledged that they are facing difficulties due to the scattered diving spots and the high fuel prices."*

K3: *"The distance between them and the scattered shipwrecks."*

K4: *"Identifying diving spots using buoys and making sure boats are secured without anchoring to protect bottom-dwelling creatures and shipwrecks."*

K5: "Dive centers near diving locations can construct container-style material storage areas."

K 6: "Some diving spots are scattered, making certain locations hard to access. Having storage facilities in these areas would simplify the situation."

Participants were inquired about any food and beverage issues in the area, along with their suggested solutions. Participant K1 pointed out the likelihood of difficulties in the area, linking them to the specific diving location he works in. According to participants K2, K3, and K4, there were no issues, and participant K5 proposed that food and beverage venues could be established near popular diving sites. Participant K6 expressed dissatisfaction with the food and beverage options in the area and suggested the need for more opportunities.

The participants were asked, "Can you describe the characteristics of tourists who dive in the Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park? Participants reported that experienced divers visited Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park for diving. Local and international tourists visit the area for diving activities. According to participants, the majority of foreign divers visiting the Park come from countries like England, Germany, New Zealand, France, and Libya. The word cloud corresponding to the specific inquiry is displayed in Figure 2.



Fig. 2 Tourist Profile Diving in Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park

The participants were questioned regarding the average duration of tourist dives in the Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park. Tourists who come to Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park for diving purposes typically stay for 2-4 days, as indicated by participants.

Participants were surveyed on their opinions regarding the adequacy of tourists' diving durations for diving tourism, and potential methods to prolong the diving period. The majority of the participants feel that the amount of days spent diving in the Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park is not enough. In relation to the matter at hand, participant K1 put forward the idea of introducing package tours, K2 recommended the creation of trial diving spots, and K5 proposed the potential opening of technical diving locations.

The participants were inquired about the viewpoints held by tourists who dive in the Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park. Participants indicated that tourists expressed positive opinions.

The query posed to participants was whether those visiting Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park for diving are interested in exploring all wrecks or have a specific wreck in mind and the rationale behind selecting a shipwreck more often than other options. According to participants K2, K3, and K4, the Majestik Shipwreck is the preferred diving spot for tourists. Participant K6 highlighted that the nationality of divers is linked to the shipwreck they choose to dive at. K6 emphasized the significance of having a diving badge and the high demand for divers. This highlights the crucial role of education and compliance with diving regulations.

Participants were questioned about the source of information for tourists engaging in diving tourism at the Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park. According to participants, tourists obtained information regarding the Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park through advertisements, news, and the Gallipoli Historical Area Directorate website. Figure 3 displays the word cloud associated with the question.



Fig. 3 Source of Access to Information About the Park for People Diving

Participants were questioned about whether divers revisit the Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park. All participants responded positively to this question.

Finally, participants were asked whether they had any opinions on the questions administered to them. Participant K1 suggested that diving tourism in Çanakkale could benefit from the organization of package tours. Participant K3 proposed establishing agreements between countries regarding the Battle of Gallipoli or the Anzacs to draw in diving tourism to the area. Participant K4 stated that there should be more promotions about the Park. The responses provided by participants K1, K3, and K5 are as follows.

*K1: "Someone must intervene and offer guided tours in bundles."*

*K3: "By establishing protocols and projects with the Anzacs or the countries involved in the war, tourists can be enticed to visit."*

*K4: "I believe that by effectively displaying and promoting the historical shipwrecks in Çanakkale and the Bosphorus, as well as providing support for diving centers, this region has the potential to become a prominent diving destination, since underwater tourism is only done in the Aegean and Mediterranean regions in Turkey."*

The objective of this study is to examine the benefits and drawbacks of underwater diving tourism in Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park by consulting diving school managers or expert divers. In this context, Çanakkale and the regions near the Park were assessed based on aspects like lodging, dining, and transportation, and it is offered suggestions to make the Park more accessible to visitors and improve its visibility.

The findings indicate that it is viable to engage in diving activities at the Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park for a period of 4-8 months, with the potential to extend this timeframe to 12 months by using appropriate equipment.

Taking into consideration the climate and sea water temperature of Çanakkale, the ideal months for diving in the Park fall between May and October. According to the field studies and data collected, diving activity in the area increases during periods of elevated sea water temperatures.

A key feature of the Park is its shipwrecks dating back to World War I, each with stories of great significance to various people and nations. This benefit draws in both local and international tourists, making it a popular diving spot. The research by Yarmacı, Keleş, and Ergil (2017) revealed that the sunken aircraft wreck from World War II is the most favored diving location in Kaş. Given this information, it can be concluded that natural and historical shipwrecks capture more attention and curiosity, influencing people's preferences.

It is highly significant to incorporate Çanakkale into underwater diving tourism given its wealth and significance in terms of underwater plant and animal life. Yaşar (2011) highlighted the importance of including the rich flora and fauna of the coasts of Çanakkale (Saros Gulf coasts) in international underwater diving tourism.

The study determined that one of the key benefits of the Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park is its diverse plant and animal life. Additionally, the Region's plentiful flora and fauna heighten its charm.

One key observation is that the main issue with the Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park relates to transportation. Despite the belief that significant investments in road transportation will solve the problem, it is crucial to highlight the deficiencies in transportation modes. Furthermore, the Park's extensive size, absence of agencies, and infrastructure challenges are significant drawbacks concerning the matter. Dağlıoğlu and Sürme (2019) found that the inadequate development of diving tourism in Turkey can be attributed to limited transportation options and insufficient tour offerings by travel agencies. The current study points out the disadvantages related to transportation and travel agencies for diving tourism in Çanakkale. The study's results align with Dağlıoğlu and Sürme's research outcomes, emphasizing the significance of factors like transportation and agency in diving tourism.

Currents pose the most significant risk in the Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park. Participants in the interview recommended a buoyation system as a solution for mitigating current-related risks. Following the negotiations, the Gallipoli Historical Area Directorate of the Gallipoli Wars conducted studies on implementing a buoy system on the shipwrecks, which are ongoing. The Çanakkale Wars Gallipoli Historical Area Directorate's dedication to advancing the proposed project is obvious in this situation. Moreover, the project has the endorsement of local government units and the Gallipoli Historical Area Directorate of the Gallipoli Wars, demonstrating support from public institutions.

The study highlights the importance of encouraging diving schools to boost diving tourism in the Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park. Field studies revealed that the diving schools in Çanakkale were not up to par with those in well-known diving destinations. The development of diving tourism is considered highly dependent on the encouragement of diving schools through incentives. Research conducted on the Park will aid in the advancement of diving tourism within the Park's boundaries. To enhance diving tourism in the Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park, it is also recommended to construct replicas in shallower waters. The research by Mercan, Sünnetçiöğlü, and Uşak (2021) suggested that underwater sculpture museums and underwater archeoparks might enhance the progress of diving tourism in Çanakkale. The results from the current study are consistent with the results from the study mentioned.

Apart from natural wreck diving, having dive sites like those mentioned is essential to cater to diverse diving interests. Eren, Yıldırım and Adak (2020) determined that divers who engage in multiple dives in Çanakkale throughout the year perceive the destination as less appealing. As per the study findings, in order to uphold the interest in diving tourism in Çanakkale, it is necessary to establish new regulations and carry out activities in that direction. Replicas being built will attract tourists to Çanakkale for diving for an extended duration.



## Theoretical implications

This research holds significance as it marks the pioneering evaluation of the Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park for diving schools in Çanakkale. The research also uncovered the challenges faced by diving schools. This case could serve as a model for upcoming studies, particularly in the tourism sector.

## Practical implications

The consensus is that by equipping divers with the right gear and incentivizing diving schools with investments, the time spent diving in the Park's regions can be prolonged. The organization of air transportation during high diving tourism seasons in Çanakkale is believed to have the potential to attract more foreign tourists.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University Scientific Research Projects Coordination Unit supported this study. Project Number: SBA-2022-4043. Furthermore, a summary of the study's data was shared at the National Underwater Scientific Research and Values Symposium on 20-22 October 2022.

## CREDIT AUTHOR STATEMENT

All authors have contributed equally. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

## DECLARATION OF COMPETING INTEREST

The authors declare that there are no competing interests.

## REFERENCES

1. Arcos-Aguilar, R., Favoretto, F., Kumagai, J.A., Jimenez-Esquivel, V., Martínez-Cruz, A. L. & Aburto-Oropeza, O. (2021). Diving tourism in Mexico – Economic and conservation importance, *Marine Policy*, 126: 104410. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2021.104410>
2. Brauwer, M. D., Saunders, B. J., Ambo-Rappe, R., Jompa, J., McIlwain, J. L. & Harvey, E. S. (2018). Time to stop mucking around? Impacts of underwater photography on cryptobenthic fauna found in soft sediment habitats, *Journal of Environmental Management*, 218, 14-22. <http://doi: 10.1016/j.jenvman.2018.04.047>.
3. BYEMdive. (2024). Dalış Noktalarımız, Bebek Kayalıkları. Retrieved from <https://byemdive.com/hizmetler.php> (accessed 07.03.2024).
4. Çanakkale Dalış Noktaları. 2024, Çanakkale Savaşı Batıkları. Retrieved from <https://canakkaledalishnoktalari.com/canakkale-savasi-batiklari/> (accessed 08.03.2024).
5. Çanakkale Dalış Noktaları. 2024, Çanakkale Boğazı Dalış Konumları. Retrieved from <https://canakkaledalishnoktalari.com/canakkale-bogazi-konumlari/> (accessed 08.03.2024).
6. Çanakkale Travel. 2022, Çanakkale'de Dalış Turizmine İlgi Artıyor. Retrieved from <https://www.canakkaletravel.com/haber/canakkalede-batik-turizmине- ilgi-artiyor.html> (accessed 08.03.2024).
7. Çanakkale Valiliği. (2021). Gelibolu Tarihi Sualtı Parkı açıldı. Retrieved from <http://www.canakkale.gov.tr/gelibolu-tarihi-sualti-parki-acildi> (accessed 01.10.2022).
8. Çanakkale Savaşları Gelibolu Tarihi Alan Başkanlığı. (2024). Official letter from the Gallipoli Historical Area Presidency.
9. Çanakkale İl Kültür ve Turizm Müdürlüğü. (2024). Retrieved from <https://canakkale.ktb.gov.tr/TR-70467/cografya.html> (accessed 01.04.2024).
10. Dağlıoğlu, T. & Sürme, M. (2019). Sualtı dalış turizmi tercih nedenlerini belirlemeye yönelik bir araştırma, *Akademik Araştırmalara ve Çalışmalar Dergisi*, 11(21), 377-385. <https://doi.org/10.20990/kilisiibfakademik.532058>
11. Dimmock, K. & Musa, G. (2015). Scuba Diving Tourism System: a framework for collaborative management and sustainability, *Marine Policy*, 54, 52–58. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2014.12.008>.
12. Dinç, Y. (2021). Sualtı turizmi ve Türkiye'de sualtı dalış noktaları hakkında görgül bir araştırma (Ayvalık Örneği), *Sosyal, Beşeri ve İdari Bilimler Dergisi*, 4(5): 469-486. <https://doi.org/10.26677/TR1010.2021.730>
13. Eren, E., Yıldırım, H. M. ve Adak, B. (2020). Dalış turizmüne katılanların destinasyon imajı algılarının belirlenmesine yönelik bir araştırma: Çanakkale örneği, *Sivas İnterdisipliner Turizm Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 3(2), 26-35.
14. Gelibolu Tarihi Sualtı Parkı. (2024). Dalış Noktaları. Retrieved from <https://divinggelibolu.com/tr/anasayfa>. (accessed 07.03.2024).
15. Gelibolu Tarihi Sualtı Parkı. (2024). Hakkımızda. Retrieved from <https://divinggelibolu.com/tr/hakkimizda>. (accessed 07.03.2024).
16. Gelibolu Tarihi Sualtı Parkı. (2024). H.M.S. Majestik Batığı, Retrieved from <https://divinggelibolu.com/tr/anasayfa> (accessed 07.03.2024).
17. Gelibolu Tarihi Sualtı Parkı. (2024). HMS Triumph. Retrieved from <https://divinggelibolu.com/tr/anasayfa> (accessed 07.03.2024).
18. Haddock-Fraser, J., & Hampton, M. P. (2012). Multistakeholder values on the sustainability of dive tourism: Case studies of Sipadan and Perhentian islands, *Malaysia. Tourism Analysis*, 17(1), 27-41. <https://doi.org/10.3727/108354212X13330406124016>
19. Hawkins, D.E. (1998). The relationship of tourism-related revenue generation to coral reef conservation. In: *Coral Reefs: Challenges and Opportunities for Sustainable Management*, 224, 93–95.
20. Hillmer-Pegram, K. C. (2014). Understanding the resilience of dive tourism to complex change, *Tourism Geographies*, 16(4), 598-614. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14616688.2013.851268>



21. Hodeck, A. Tüchel, J., Hente, L. & Reibnitz, C. (2021). The importance of sustainability in diving tourism—the case of German speaking diving tourists. *Sustainability*, 13 (11), 6485. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13116485>
22. Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, (2024). Sualtı ve Suüstü turizmi ve parkur alanları. Retrieved from <https://canakkale.ktb.gov.tr/TR-70498/su-alti-ve-su-ustu--turizmi-ve-parkur-alanlari.html> ( accessed 18.03.2024)
23. Lucrezi, S., Martina Milanese, M., Markantonatou, V., Cerrano, C., Antonio Sara, A., Marco Palma, M. & Saayman., M. (2017). Scuba diving tourism systems and sustainability: Perceptions by the scuba diving industry in two Marine Protected Areas, *Tourism Management*, 59, 385-403. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2016.09.004>
24. Lucrezi, S. & Saayman, M. (2017). Sustainable scuba diving tourism and resource use: Perspectives and experiences of operators in Mozambique and Italy, *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 168, 632-644. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2017.09.041>
25. Mercan, Ş. O., Sünnetçioğlu, A. & Uşak, C. E. (2021). Çanakkale ili dalış turizmi potansiyelinin incelenmesi, *Anemon Muş Alparslan Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 9(3) 723-734. <https://doi.org/10.18506/anemon.821781>
26. Musa, G. & Dimmock, K. (2013). Scuba diving tourism. Scuba Diving Tourism (ed. by Ghazali Musa ve Kay Dimmock). Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 3-14. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203121016>
27. Top, B., Yolak, U. & Thomas, L. (2013). Foça özel çevre koruma bölgesi sportif dalış turizmi fizibilite çalışması. Retrieved from [https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/migration/tr/17\\_Foca-Ozel-Cevre-Koruma-Bolgesi-Sportif-Dalis-Turizmi-Fizibilite-Calismasi.pdf](https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/migration/tr/17_Foca-Ozel-Cevre-Koruma-Bolgesi-Sportif-Dalis-Turizmi-Fizibilite-Calismasi.pdf) (accessed 01.03.2024).
28. Türkel, İ. Ş. & Gökdemir, S. (2021). Dalış turizmi kapsamında, Çanakkale Boğazı ve çevresinde bulunan batıkların dalış rotalarının belirlenmesi, *Turist Rehberliği Nitel Araştırmalar Dergisi*, 2(1), 44-74.
29. Türkiye Turizm Tanıtım ve Geliştirme Ajansı. (2024). Gelibolu Tarihi Sualtı Parkı Dalışa açılıyor. Retrieved from <https://tga.gov.tr/basin-odasi/basin-bultenleri/gelibolu-tarihi-sualti-parki-dalisa-aciliyor> (accessed 08.03.2024)
30. UNWTO. (2024). Glossary of Tourism Terms. 10.02.2024 tarihinde <https://www.unwto.org/glossary-tourism-terms> adresinden ulaşıldı.
31. Yarmacı, N., Keleş, M. Ç. & Ergil B. (2017, Bahar). Sualtı dalış turizminin mevcut durumu, sorunları ve geliştirilmesine yönelik öneriler: Kaş örneği, *Güncel Turizm Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 1(1), 66-87.
32. Yaşar, O. (2011). Saros Körfezi Kıyılarında Sualtı dalış turizmi, *Zeitschrift für die Welt der Türken*, 3(1), 33-55.

