

# Souk Waqif: A Landmark In Doha, Qatar Rehabilitation, Social And Economic Sustainability.

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## Abstract

Heritage and tourism have become during the last two decades dynamic areas of development in the world. The idea of heritage is crucial to the critical decision-making process as to how irreplaceable resources are to be utilized by people of the present or conserved for future generations in a fast changing world. In view of the importance of 'heritage' to the development of a tourist destination the emphasis on developing appropriate adaptive reuse strategies cannot be overemphasized.

In October 1999, the 12th general assembly of the ICOMOS in Mexico stated, that in the context of sustainable development, two interrelated issues need urgent attention, cultural tourism and historic towns and cities. These two issues underscore the fact that historic resources are non-renewable, belonging to all of humanity. Without adequate adaptive reuse actions to ensure a sustainable future for these historic resources, may lead to their complete vanishing.

The growth of cultural tourism and its role in dispersing heritage to everyone is developing rapidly. According to the World Tourism Organization, natural and cultural heritage resources are and will remain motivating factors for travel in the foreseeable future. According to the experts, people choose travel destinations where they can learn about traditional and distinct cultures in their historic context.

The Qatar rich urban heritage is now being recognized as a valuable resource for future development. This paper focuses on the role of heritage tourism and its implications for urban conservation in the context of Old Doha, therefore, in order to use heritage wisely, it will be necessary to position heritage as an essential element of sustainable development, giving particular attention to cultural tourism.

Conservation for the sake of conservation appears to be an outdated concept. Many irreplaceable natural and cultural sites are being compromised because local authorities are not giving economic consideration to the value of rehabilitating such sites. The question to be raised here is how can heritage be used wisely for tourism without compromising its educational and social role in enhancing and pertaining the local cultural identity of the city?