

AN INSTITUTIONAL APPROACH TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL PRACTICES OF GOLF COURSES

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ABSTRACT

As it is well known, in many tourist destinations the number of golf courses has increased exponentially, which has generated public debate about its environmental impact, in an attempt to reconcile economic development with respect for the natural environment.

In many Spanish destinations, such as Andalusia, this sport has become one of the products with greater weight in their tourism services, with significant economic impact in this territory.

All this has prompted the generation of a highly institutionalized context that directly affects environmental protection policies that affect this type of facilities.

This paper attempts to analyze the context and the main practices that derive from it and to test empirically, in a sample of golf courses located in Andalusia, the relationships between these practices and the institutional context with its corresponding coercive, normative and mimetic mechanisms. Finally, its relationship with the performance of these organizations is established, testing if a direct or indirect relationship, through the search for legitimacy, exists, as suggested by the Institutional Theory, taken as the theoretical framework of this research.

Keywords: Institutional Theory, golf, tourism, environmental management.