

РЕГИОНАЛЬНАЯ ПРОБЛЕМАТИКА ТУРИСТСКИХ ИССЛЕДОВАНИЙ

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ECOLOGICAL TOURISM IN THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN: CURRENT STATE AND PROSPECTS OF DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract. The article reveals the content of the concept of eco-tourism, as well as considerable attention is paid to the characteristics of its impact on the environment, as well as the growth of this trend in the modern tourism industry. Ecotourism is a sustainable form of tourism, which implies a trip to relatively untouched places by man, as well as the preservation of the original cleanliness of the area. Ecotourism fights for the preservation of natural nature, the survival and preservation of endangered species of plants and animals, and also tries to preserve natural monuments. Every year the number of people who have chosen the field of eco-tourism is steadily growing, which means that business ideas in tourism, in particular environmental, are gaining popularity.

Kazakhstan has a powerful resource potential for the development of eco-tourism, as one of the areas of tourism in general. Currently, eco-tourism is the optimal type of tourism and is the main direction of tourist development. The characteristic features of Kazakhstan's specially protected natural territories are highlighted, the description of these objects of ecological tourism is carried out. According to this, the article identifies the main problems of ecotourism development in the country. The authors proposed a number of recommendations for the further growth of the industry in the republic. To solve problems with nature conservation in Kazakhstan, it is necessary to develop ecotourism as a means of supporting protected natural areas, promote the social and economic development of the local population and increase the level of education in the environmental field, create a specialized reference and information system on natural and historical and cultural attractions, routes and tours. Develop a certification system for ecological routes and trails, create new facilities and modernize existing ones. Engage in information support and promotion of ecotourism products to the international market.

Keywords: ecotourism, environment, ecotourists, protected areas, national park, nature reserve.

ЭКОЛОГИЧЕСКИЙ ТУРИЗМ В РЕСПУБЛИКЕ КАЗАХСТАН: СОВРЕМЕННОЕ СОСТОЯНИЕ И ПЕРСПЕКТИВЫ РАЗВИТИЯ

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Аннотация. Статья раскрывает содержание понятия экологического туризма, значительное внимание уделяется характеристике его влияния на окружающую среду, а также рост данного направления в современной индустрии туризма. Экологический туризм представляет собой устойчивую форму туризма, подразумевающую под собой путешествие в относительно нетронутые человеком места, а также сохранение первоначальной чистоты местности. Экологический туризм борется за сохранность естественной природы, выживание и сохранение исчезающих видов растений и животных, старается сохранить природные памятники. С каждым годом количество людей, выбравших сферу экологического туризма, неуклонно растет, а это значит, что и бизнес-идеи в туризме, в частности, экологическом, набирают популярность.

Казахстан обладает мощным ресурсным потенциалом для развития экологического туризма как одного из направлений туризма в целом. *В настоящее время экологический туризм представляет собой оптимальный вид туризма и является главным направлением туристического развития.* Выделяются характерные особенности Казахстанских особо охраняемых природных территорий, проведено описание данных объектов экологического туризма. Согласно этому, в статье определяются основные проблемы развития экотуризма в стране. Авторами был предложен ряд рекомендаций по дальнейшему росту отрасли в республике. Для решения проблем с сохранением природы в Казахстане необходимо развивать экотуризм как средство поддержки охраняемых природных территорий, содействовать социальному и экономическому развитию местного населения и повышению уровня образования в экологической сфере, создать специализированную справочно-информационную систему по природным и историко-культурным достопримечательностям, маршрутам и турам. Развивать систему сертификации экологических маршрутов и троп, создавать новые объекты и модернизировать уже имеющиеся. Заниматься информационным обеспечением и продвижением продуктов экотуризма на международный рынок.

Ключевые слова: экотуризм, окружающая среда, экотуристы, ООПТ, национальный парк, заповедник.

I*ntroduction.* The modern mass development of tourism in Kazakhstan exerts an increased anthropogenic load on natural and cultural-historical tourist resources, in proportion to the growth rate of tourist visits. All this points to the need to search for new methods and forms of solving the problems of preserving and restoring recreational resources of Kazakhstan, as well as special forms of organizing tourist activities aimed at using natural ecosystems in conservation mode. Currently, there is a transition from mass unorganized outdoor recreation to eco-tourism. This is due to the fact that this transition is aimed at solving environmental problems. Ecotourism is one of the activities that ensure optimal environmental management. All this underlines the need to develop eco-tourism as one of the most priority areas in the implementation of the concept of sustainable tourism development.

Research methods. The methods of theoretical and practical analysis, statistical, system-structural, functional and the method of empirical analysis were used.

Research results and their discussion. Ecological (eco — awareness) tourism, outdoor activities, hiking to natural attractions and adventures away from civilization are a fast-growing sector of the travel industry. Every year around the world, the number of supporters of such a holiday is growing by tens of percent. Ecotourism has become mainstream in many countries, providing extensive opportunities for both business and socio-economic development at the local and even national levels. Ecotourism, also known as ecotourism or green tourism, is a form of sustainable travel that supports the local environment instead of increasing pressure on it and excessive use of natural resources [2].

Ecotourism appeared as a result of the needs of tourists themselves, manifested in the demand for ecological tours, therefore the term «ecotourism» was proposed not by scientists and tourism analysts, but by marketers. If earlier tourism organizations that form the tourist offer were engaged in sustainable development, then eco-tourism began as a result of the emergence of new group and social needs for the study and protection of nature, cultural heritage, that is, as a result of demand. Let's analyze what ecotourism really is.

Ecotourism is a sustainable form of tourism, which implies traveling to relatively untouched places, as well as preserving the original cleanliness of the area. All this means that a participant in green tourism must adhere to several principles: minimize their impact on the environment, try to convince other people to

respect nature, make eco-tourism mutually beneficial, both for tourists and for the host country, encourage local residents to maintain the cleanliness of the area and nature protection, well, and do not skimp so that the region developed and continued to please all parties. Every year the number of people who have chosen the field of eco-tourism is steadily growing, which means that business ideas in tourism, in particular environmental, are gaining popularity [5].

All business ideas of tourism (ecological) are similar in one thing: self-propelled vehicles that affect the environmental situation are not used to move tourists. That is, you have to travel either on foot or on horseback. It is also allowed to use bicycles, boats, kayaks, etc.

Ecotourism

The economic potential of eco — tourism in Kazakhstan is almost unlimited — Shchuchinsk-Borovskaya zone, «Sary-Agash», «Arasan — Kapal», «Moyaldy», «Bayanaul», «Zhanakorgan», «Caspian» is not a complete list of «pearls» of Kazakhstan.

The main types of eco-tourism do not differ so much from international ones, except for the absence of a sea exit (Fig. 1).

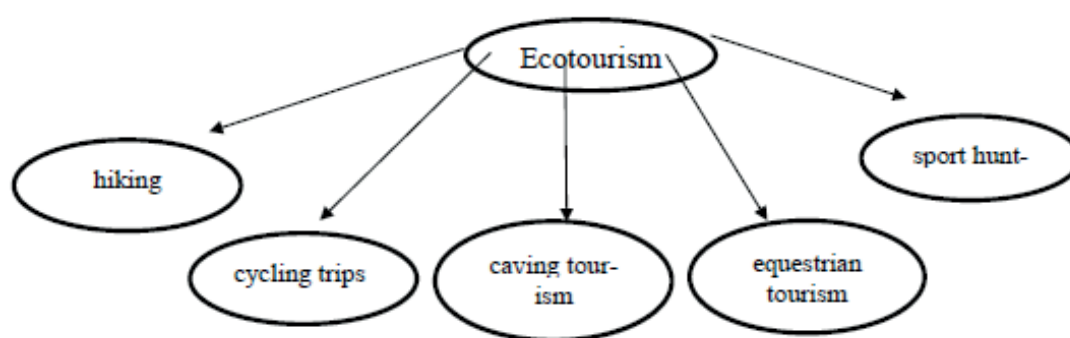


Figure 1. The main types of ecological tourism in the Republic of Kazakhstan

The greatest potential for the development of ecotourism is specially protected natural areas, but it is necessary to choose priority areas for the development of ecotourism [3].

To date, there are 118 specially protected natural territories on the territory of the republic, including 12 state national parks of particular interest to eco-tourists. Each of these places is unique in its own way, so wherever the lover of nature is poisoned on the next hike, unforgettable impressions are provided to him [1]. Kazakhstan, with an abundance of spectacular natural landscapes, unique ecological trails, untouched and pristine natural objects, has a huge potential for the development of ecotourism. The total area of specially protected natural territories of the country is 26 million. ha, which is ten times more than in a number of countries with well-developed ecotourism. At the same time, the number of tourists is only 2 million people a year. In the world's leading countries for the development of ecotourism, the USA and Australia, for example, countries have achieved successful results thanks to a well-established tourism management system in national parks and natural areas regulated by law. Today Kazakhstan ranks 81st out of 136 countries in the global tourism ranking of the World Economic Forum. The total contribution of tourism to the total GDP of Kazakhstan is only 6%, so there are all conditions and prerequisites for a more dynamic development of this sector of the economy. Practical actions are needed both on the part of the government, regional authorities, and the population of the country itself [5].

Let's consider the main objects of ecological tourism in the Republic of Kazakhstan.

As we noted above, there are now 12 national parks in Kazakhstan. The very first of them — Bayanaul — was created in 1985 in the Pavlodar region. On the territory of the park with an area of 68,452 hectares there are six lakes, around three of them — Zhasybai, Sabyndykol and Toraigyry — there are recreation centers where you can stay. There are ecotopes on Mount Akbet. Tourists are also interested in visiting the Konyr-Aulie cave and there are many opportunities for active tourism. Here you can do rock climbing, hiking, cycling and boating, and in winter — skiing, or just swimming in the clear water of the lakes.

You can get to the park from the city of Ekibastuz, which is 100 km away. Buses run from the city to the park to the airports closest to the park — in the cities of Pavlodar (230 km) and Karaganda (260 km).

The next park is Burabai. It is located in the Akmola region and covers an area of 129,299 hectares. This place is often called «Kazakhstan Switzerland» because the park is located in the middle of the steppe, there are 14 lakes surrounded by pine forests. The most famous of them is Borovoe. A bike path runs through the park, from the point of view of health improvement, visiting coniferous forests is popular. There are many recreational areas for swimming on the shores of lakes. In winter, you can ride snowmobiles, skis or sleds here.

The nearest city to the park is Astana. You can get to the park from the capital by commuter train or by car: the distance to the park is 257 km.

The largest park in Kazakhstan is Katon — Karagay (643,477 hectares). In addition to its size, it is notable for being under UNESCO protection. The Altai Mountains are considered a place of power, and many come here to experience mystical experiences from merging with their nature. You can do this, for example, by walking or driving along an Austrian road 150 km long, which runs through gorges and passes, past lakes and rivers. There are many waterfalls in the park — Arasan, Yazovy, Kokkol, lakes — Rakhmanovskoye, Yazevoye, the pearl of the park is Belukha Mountain with a height of 4,506 m. It attracts many tourists and climbers. The mountain is located in the very center of the continent and is equidistant from the four oceans.

You can get to the Katon-Karagai National Park from Ust-Kamenogorsk by bus or car. The distance to it from the city is 500 km.

Charyn National Park is located in the Almaty region, 200 km from the city of Almaty. It occupies the valley of the Charyn River and stretches for 200 km. The profiles of the canyons allow us to look deep into the history of the Earth 12 million years ago. The most popular route in the park is the Valley of Castles. Another interesting object of the park is the relict ash grove.

Also in the Almaty region there is another national park of Kazakhstan — Kolsai Lakes. The park is a cascade of three lakes at an altitude of 1800 to 3500 m. The lower lake is the most accessible, so there are always a lot of tourists on it. The way to the second lake lies through the spruce forest and meadow areas. Also in the park is Kaindy Lake, formed as a result of a landslide 100 years ago, which formed a natural dam in the valley. Its depth is 30 m.

Despite the large number of ecotourism facilities in Kazakhstan, there are many problems in the development of this type of tourism. One of the main problems is the lack of equipped parking lots for transport, campsites, modern sanitary cabins. Low eco-culture of tourists

According to experts, for the development of ecological tourism in Kazakhstan, it is necessary to implement the following measures:

- adjustment of feasibility studies of state national natural parks and state natural reserves in terms of the development of master plans for infrastructure development in order to form an ecotourism infrastructure in protected areas;
- dissemination of information and popularization of ecological tourism;
- promotion of the use of alternative energy sources in the creation of guest houses and environmentally friendly modes of transport in the organization of eco-tours;
- cooperation with international organizations on the development of ecological tourism.
- monitoring of the actual impact of ecotourism activities on the environment;
- development of ecotourism based on local communities;
- implementation of cooperation with governmental and non-governmental organizations in the field of environmental protection [5].

Conclusion. The Republic of Kazakhstan has rich natural resources, but so far it cannot fully earn on ecological tourism. The reasons are traditional — infrastructure, regulatory regulation, misunderstanding of the problem and underfunding. Eco-tourism is an important tool for the sustainable development of territories, because it contributes not only to the development of the industry and the creation of a favorable image of Kazakhstan, but also serves as a motivation for the preservation of natural wealth. Today, eco-tourism is beginning to gain popularity among people. This type of recreation is still quite new in the Republic, but more and more tourists are beginning to be interested in it.

Of course, eco-tourism is very good for Kazakhstan, but there is no type of recreation that does not include negative aspects. Consider the disadvantages of the development of this type of travel in the territory of this area.

It should begin with the fact that the reverse side of the coin of the development of ecological tourism is the fear of environmental pollution and the disappearance of primordial natural landscapes.

It is not advisable for people who are unprepared for life in nature to abruptly start trying to engage in ecotourism. Another serious disadvantage is the unavailability of all the desired places to travel. The final disadvantage will be the animals that live in the wild. If a tourist goes on such a hike, he should be ready to meet the animals that live there.

At the moment, Kazakhstan occupies a very modest place in the global ecotourism market. The essence of the problem associated with the low tourist attendance of Chinese national parks lies in the poorly developed ecotourism infrastructure in these territories, low financing, weak marketing and image of objects.

To solve these problems, it is necessary to develop ecotourism in Kazakhstan as a means of supporting protected natural areas, promote the social and economic development of the local population and increase the level of education in the environmental sphere, create a specialized reference and information system on natural and historical and cultural attractions, routes and tours. Develop a certification system for ecological routes and trails, create new facilities and modernize existing ones. Engage in information support and promotion of ecotourism products to the international market.

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