

ANNOTATION

for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in the specialty **6D090200 – Tourism**
on the topic «The role of ecological tourism in the development of rural areas»

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Relevance of the topic. At the present stage, tourism activity is gradually turning into a huge industry, a dynamically developing sphere of tourism services. The intensification of entrepreneurial activity in this sector not only defines a new industry in the economic structure of many countries, but also makes it a priority economically forming sector of the national economies of a number of states of the world.

The scientific study is devoted to the problem of development of ecological tourism (ecotourism) in rural areas, on the example of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the relevance of which is determined by the importance for the country of a balanced socio-economic development of the village, including solving the problems of environmental sustainability, employment of the local population, conservation of natural resources, and so on, with In this regard, ecological tourism is considered as an effective tool for solving the identified problems.

Currently, the stimulation of economic activity and entrepreneurship in rural areas through the development of ecological tourism has significant advantages over other types of employment, since it requires a minimum of capital costs and allows you to operate even in times of crisis, economic instability and taking into account the seasonality of agricultural production.

Summarizing the above, we can state that the relevance of the study is due, on the one hand, to the growing popularity of eco-tourism in the world and the significant potential of Kazakhstan for the development of this direction, on the other hand, the presence of unresolved issues regarding the organization of sustainable ecotourism activities in rural areas. At the same time, the need to substantiate the theoretical and methodological basis for solving the problem and further practical implementation of this solution is obvious.

The purpose of the work: determine the role and opportunities of ecological tourism for a balanced socio-economic development of rural areas of Kazakhstan based on the principles of sustainability.

Research objectives:

1) to analyze the formation and state of ideas and scientific foundations of ecological tourism in the context of the development of rural areas;

2) to study and systematize the applicable experience of ecological tourism for the development of rural areas;

3) assess the current state and possibilities of ecological tourism for the development of rural areas of Kazakhstan;

4) develop methodological and advisory support for managing the development of ecological tourism in rural areas of Kazakhstan.

Object of study: ecological tourism in rural areas.

Subject of study: models and mechanisms for integrating ecological tourism into the system of socio-economic development of rural areas of the Republic of

Kazakhstan.

Research methods. The following research methods were used in the work: scientific and theoretical analysis and generalization of data from primary and secondary sources of information, methods of systemic and comparative analysis, graphical methods for displaying information, cartographic methods, analytical survey, SWOT analysis and expert evaluation methods. When creating cartographic material, the computer program "ArcGIS Pro" (from ESRI LLP) was used.

Description of the main results of the study:

In the course of studying various materials, scientific papers and articles, the results of research by foreign and domestic scientists, we were able to formulate and present the author's, unique for the Kazakhstani scientific space, definition of the concept of "ecotourism". The author's definition is as follows: Ecotourism is a type of tourism that creates and satisfies a person's desire to communicate with nature, prevents negative impacts on the environment, and makes tourism potential serve for the benefit of nature and socio-economic development, regardless of its spatial - territorial location.

In the dissertation work, we were able to determine that the concept of ecotourism has gone through a number of stages of development - from "individual" research and natural history, little known to most people, to actively developing, one of the highly promising types of international tourism. Specialized international conferences, symposiums, congresses and exhibitions are often held, which made it possible to form and continue to develop the global ecotourism community, this illustrates the reliability of its position in the global travel market.

Attempts by various authors to give ecotourism the role of a supra-specific concept of tourism development are largely unjustified, and ecotourism itself does not need to be given any special status. His theory, methodology and practice over the past half century have been rapidly developed, within which there is all the necessary information to create a strict classification of both ecotourism itself and individual ecotours. As part of this, we have developed an author's classification of ecological tourism, which allows us to competently and purposefully structure the activities for the development of ecotourism in Kazakhstan.

To obtain practical indicators, within the framework of the study, the authors conducted a social survey using the "snowball" method. The survey was conducted in the city of Almaty, in an open format, on the campus of NAO "Al-Farabi KazNU" for three days, from June 19 to 21, 2018. 221 respondents took part in the survey (the main contingent - students and teaching staff of NAO "KazNU named after al-Farabi"). Through this survey, we were able to determine that ecotourists: love nature; want to learn new things about nature and ecology; prefer a varied and interesting vacation; love mobile and active pastime; prefer a "flexible" ecotour program; choose an ecotour responsibly; expect opportunities for self-improvement and development, gaining new experience and knowledge of the world around them; prone to adventurous acts, but not supporters of extreme sports; have not too high demands for comfort and infrastructure; ready to adapt to local and "simple" living conditions.

As a result of the research, we have studied and analyzed the development of

ecotourism in different countries of the world, ranging from popular eco-destinations to countries where ecotourism is very strongly tied to the countryside. Based on the results obtained, we were able to identify the features of the development of ecotourism in more than 30 foreign countries of the world, and compare them with each other within the framework of one scientific work.

The sustainable development of the territories involved in the sphere of ecotourism based on and taking into account foreign experience is ensured by the creation of a tourist infrastructure corresponding to world eco-standards, the organization of new jobs in rural areas, the involvement of the local population in the service sector, as a result of which the living standard of the local population rises, it is consolidated in native territory.

We would also like to note that, at the moment there is no integrated application or platform in the tourism market of the Republic of Kazakhstan that could fully provide visitors to the country, as well as domestic tourists, with all the necessary information, this also applies to eco-tourism. Currently, tour operators offer almost the same tour packages (visiting the most famous attractions). We proposed to expand the range of offers and increase information accessibility with more creative, innovative solutions, which would increase the number of return trips and visits.

As part of the study, the author's model for organizing tourism activities in accordance with the principles of ecotourism was proposed. The model is a set of requirements for the organization of tourism activities and contains a list of organizational measures, the implementation of which will ensure compliance with the fundamental principles of eco-tourism in rural areas. The author's model will ensure that both the final tourist product and the process of its production or the provision of individual tourist services comply with the principles of ecological tourism. In the model itself, 21 requirements for the organization of ecotourism activities and 81 activities for its successful implementation were identified.

The main provisions for defense:

1. Systematization and study of transforming ideas about ecotourism made it possible to form the necessary scientific support for its development in rural areas.
2. Descriptive analysis of successful regional and national models of ecotourism organization in rural areas serves as the basis for the formation of a system of effective solutions and experimental developments for the conditions of Kazakhstan.
3. The development of rural territories of Kazakhstan can be carried out on the basis of the identification of ecotourism potential and the development of a system of general mechanisms for managing the development of ecotourism in rural areas.

Scientific and practical significance of the work: The theoretical significance of the results of the study lies in supplementing the science of tourism development with the author's definition of ecological tourism and the classification of the main directions of its development. Based on the consideration of foreign experience, the model for the development of ecological tourism in Kazakhstan has been optimized, ensuring its sustainable, balanced, safe and effective development.

The practical significance of the work. The empirical findings of the study can be useful for eco-tourism service providers, both in terms of a broader and deeper

understanding of the diversity of eco-tourism, and in terms of providing the necessary information that can contribute to the development of innovative ideas regarding the development of eco-tourism in rural areas. territories in line with the expectations of domestic and foreign tourists.

The results of the dissertation research as a whole, as well as its individual components, in particular, cartographic materials, SWOT analysis and others, can be used for planning the cluster development of the tourism industry by government agencies, used in the educational process, make a significant contribution to the development of Kazakhstani science in in the field of tourism, complementing a number of studies of a scientific and academic nature.

Justification of the novelty and importance of the results obtained:

The author's definition of ecotourism was proposed, a modern classification that would take into account the features and current state of development of the tourism industry in the Republic of Kazakhstan as a whole, and could fill the void that is now visible in targeted state programs and plans for the development of ecotourism in the country;

A qualitative assessment was carried out on the study and implementation of a modern model for the development of ecotourism in rural areas of Kazakhstan based on the application of the positive experience of foreign countries;

Using modern software, a unique map of the potential for the development of ecotourism in rural areas was created in the context of the regions of the Republic of Kazakhstan;

The share of the author in scientific work. During the study, the author analyzed the literature on this topic, identified the goals and objectives of scientific work, collected and statistically processed data, performed mathematical calculations and analyzed research results. He also personally participated in the writing and preparation of the dissertation.

Communication with research work and government programs. The dissertation work was carried out on the basis of the State Program for Infrastructure Development "Nurly Zhol" for 2020–2025, the Concept for the Development of the Tourism Industry of the Republic of Kazakhstan until 2025, the State Program for the Development of the Tourism Industry of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2019–2025.

Approbation of work. The main provisions and results of the dissertation work are set out in the reports of republican and international scientific and practical conferences:

– International scientific and practical conference “Tourism and service activities: problems and prospects for development in the Republic of Kazakhstan within the framework of the creation of the EAEU”. (Almaty, April 14-15, 2015).

– International conference HLST 2016 "International conference on Hospitality, Leisure, Sports and Tourism". (Bangkok, Thailand, January 13, 2016).

– 2nd International Conference on Sustainable Tourism and Hospitality (ICSTH 2016). (Penang, Malaysia, February 24, 2016).

– International Conference "Tourism and Service Industry: Fame, Image, Brand" (Belgorod, Russia, June, 2017)

Publication of research results.

The manuscript of the dissertation work was thoroughly prepared at the Department of Recreational Geography and Tourism of the Faculty of Geography and Environmental sciences of the Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, and after preliminary consideration of the dissertation at an extended meeting of the department, it was recommended for defense. Based on the main results of the research work, 17 scientific articles were published in scientific publications, of which 3 articles and 1 thesis - in the collections of international scientific and practical conferences, 6 articles - in publications recommended by the Committee for Control in Education and Science of the Ministry of Science and High Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan, in the journals "Bulletin of KazNU", Geographic series; Central Asian Economic Review, NARXOZ University; "Bulletin of KazNPU", Economic series; "Economics: strategy and practice", Journal of the Institute of Economics of the Science Committee of the Ministry of Science and High Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan and 3 articles - published in journals included in the international database Scopus and Web of Science: «GeoJournal of Tourism and Geosites» (Hungary) and «Transylvanian journal of tourism and territorial development» (Hungary).

Structure and scope of work. The dissertation consists of an introduction, 3 chapters, a conclusion, an appendix, 122 references and contains 141 pages, 23 figures and 4 tables.