

CONGRESS PROCEEDINGS (STUDENTS SECTION)

VI International Scientific Congress
SOCIETY OF AMBIENT INTELLIGENCE 2023

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PRAHA
2023

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Editors:

Serhii HUSHKO, Prof. DSc, State University of Economics and
Technology (Ukraine)

Hanna PURII, Assoc. Prof. PhD, State University of Economics and
Technology (Ukraine)

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Mavlonova Ruxangiz

Bukhara State University,

e-mail: ruxangizmavlonova07@gmail.com, Uzbekistan

Supervisor - Omonova Nilufar, Bukhara State University,

e-mail: omonova.nilufar@gmail.com, Uzbekistan

THE ROLE OF ECO-TOURISM DESTINATIONS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM. IN CASE OF BUKHARA, SHAFIRKAN DISTRICT

Abstract. The article discusses the overview of ecotourism, which allows Uzbekistan to take a strong position in the international ecotourism services market, which is competitive in the world community. The possibilities of integration into the world trends of the development of tourism services and the growth trends of Uzbekistan are being studied in this short research paper. The advantages of the ecotourism zones of our country, the success of the ecotourism sector in the implementation of state programs to attract ecotourists and encourage foreign investments are analyzed. The importance of using the experience of ecotourism developed countries is emphasized. Therefore, this work is dedicated to those who are intended to take a deep glance at the most prosperous and promising type of tourism in Uzbekistan.

Keywords: ecotourism, tourism, sustainable environment, economy, destination, heritage.

Introduction

Uzbekistan, landlocked country in Central Asia. It lies mainly between two major rivers, the Syr Darya (ancient Jaxartes River) to the northeast and the Amu Darya (ancient Oxus River) to the southwest, though they only partly form its boundaries. Uzbekistan is bordered by Kazakhstan to the northwest and north, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to the east and southeast, Afghanistan to the south, and Turkmenistan to the southwest (Uzbekistan: *Geography & Travel*, 2023).

Uzbekistan is not only famous for the architectural monuments included in the UNESCO Cultural Heritage List, not only for the ancient cities, but also for the amazing flora and fauna, picturesque mountains, caves, deserts and crystal-clear lakes, rivers and waterfalls.

The tourism opportunities of the country are very diverse and rich: these are Ugam-Chatkal National Park, and the tugai forests in the Amu Darya River Delta, the Kitab Nature Reserve, recently opened for tourists, testifying to the appearance of life on our planet, the region of the “ecological catastrophe” near the Aral Sea,

steppe areas and the Kyzylkum desert, Nurata mountains and Aydarkul Lake, and many other wonders of the nature (*Uzbekistan Travel, 2023*).

Analysis of recent research and publications. International trends, improvement of the theory and methods of eco-tourism as part of development of the economy at the international level are the issues included into the circle of scientific interests of such foreign scientists as Feiyang Lin, Liudmyla S. Golovkova, Yulia O. Yukhnovska, Khava Zaburaeva, Natalia Pankiv and local authors like SH.B.Toyirova, Salnikova E. A., Mahmadiyeva Ch., Mahmudova A. These scientists carried a profound scientific research in the sphere, however, the eco-touristic destination that is being discussed in this article has never been discussed in previous publications.

Therefore, **the research is aimed** at outlining international trends in eco-tourism, identifying problems and prospects for its development on the global and local scale.

To solve the set tasks, the following methods are used: general scientific methods of cognition (the system approach, structural and comparative analysis, regularity trends, subjective and objective cognition) to determine the essence, and tools of eco-tourism; analytical methods to analyze the dynamics of eco-tourism in the world; forecasting methods to forecast the volume and efficiency of ecological tourism.

People will have a wonderful experience with nature-based tourism. This kind of tourism offers a great deal of facilities that tourists explore unique features of the environment. In this case, both tour operators and local people generate revenues. Particularly, local performances in rural areas rise the interest of foreign people, simultaneously indigenous people preserve their customs. Ecotourism guided tour activities offer various social benefits. Regarding to natural benefits the tourism makes a contribution to conserving natural resources. Ecotourism emphasizes on mostly the quality of natural environment (*Matysek and Kriwoken, 2003*), protected and preserved areas. Tour operators (*Gopal, 2014*) are important contributors as environment and culture protectors since they can directly influence consumer choices, supplier practices, and destination development patterns. In general, ecotourism tours may differ from one country to another relying on the tourism development level and capacity of natural resources, geographical location of the country and business sector responsibilities (*Harrison and Schipani, 2007; Rigatti, 2016*). For this reason, the business sector can earn a lot of money from ecotourism. Natural resources bring benefits to the economy and local communities generate benefits from tourist activities. Flora and fauna of a particular area, seas, rivers, forests, and mountains are prior tourist attractions (*Ralf Buckley, 2004*), a great number of people visit parks, national parks and reservoirs and they are destinations for both locals, and foreign guests. Many parks use icons attractions

which are very popular around the world. Today tourism industry accounts for about \$ 500 billion per year (*WTO, 2002*), and conservation worth \$250billion (*Toyrova, 2022*). Thus, America's economy benefits \$250 billion per annum. According to *NEAT (2000)* eco, nature and adventure tourism contain one-third of the economy contribution. Ecotourism gives the opportunity to view nature even closer than ever before. Eco-tours seem more exciting watching animals than being at a local zoo. Through such activities a person can feel as a part of wildlife, natural habitat. Such interactive way of tourism one exposes to a nature side that there is no other witness option. While participating in ecotourism activities, people learn much, receive an abundance of information about the natural environment. Observing animals in their habitat.

In 2022, 5.2 million tourists from foreign countries visited Uzbekistan. This is approximately 3 times more than in 2021 (1.8 million). In particular, a total of 4,364.8 thousand tourists arrived from neighboring countries last year, which is 283% more than in 2021. In addition, 606.4 thousand tourists arrived in our country from the rest of the Commonwealth of Independent States (291% more than in 2021), from non-CIS countries - 261.6 thousand (198% more than in 2021) (*Uzbekistan Travel, 2023*). Apparently, approximately 45% of those visiting the country's various parts made up mostly extreme and eco-tourists who are nature conscious and enjoy the peace of the planet.

Advantageous geographical location of Uzbekistan at the intersection of routes from east to west and from the south to the northern countries, climatic features a unique network of protected natural areas and a rich variety of landscapes offer great opportunities for the promotion of eco-tourism routes. Currently, the system of protected areas includes 8 reserves, 2 natural national and one national park, 1 biosphere reserve, 12 nature reserves, 7 natural monuments.

The Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Germany to Uzbekistan Naythart Höfer-Wissing has said: – We always interest in exchange of views on the international level for the development of tourism. Today, tourism revenues in Germany are more than 100 billion Euros, or about 4% of GDP. We aim to develop the so-called “soft tourism”, in which it is applied the best efforts to preserve the environment and natural resources. After all, along with a positive economic factor and expansion of inter-cultural dialogue, there is also the factor of depletion, pollution and destruction of natural areas, historical sights, infrastructure overload. I hope that during this conference it will be found ways towards minimizing the negative impact of these factors on the sustainable development of nations. Within the framework of cooperation with Uzbekistan, the German Agency for International Cooperation – GIZ supports the reforms in the sphere of protection of natural resources, and has already implemented a number of joint projects in this area. In the framework of them our experts have advised Uzbek partners on the development of individual and ecological tourism (*Uzbekistan Travel, 2023*).

One of the nature gifts of Uzbekistan lies in a remote part of the country. A district in Bukhara region embraces a truly eco-tourism destination which is not discovered by tourists yet. Lake "Ayaok ogitma" of Shafirkon district is 14,000 ha area which has been shaped by the rain and collector water. The name is derived from the metaphorical conception meaning "leg aching" because of its difficulties in reaching and walking. The area around is also called the same.

The flora and fauna of the area is diverse, being habitat for wild ducks, geese, swans and species as pelican and kazarka which are listed in the Red Book of Uzbekistan. The lake and its surrounding area is a key source for those birds breeding and feeding. Furthermore, whiskered fish is common in the lake.

At the upper part of the lake there is a pilgrimage site called "Hazornur". The village, main inhabitants of which comprise kazaks, is home to different types of camels, horses and other cattle. The milk got from those cattle is considered curative and beneficial.

A hot spring nearby is another source which can develop not only eco-tourism, but also wellness tourism as well. Since the water which is 72 ° C, and rising from the inner part of the ground can treat bone, skin and muscle disorders.

A person's eyes will be happy after seeing very beautiful scenery! But unfortunately, not many people know about these places. Why? Can't we share these places with others? A tourist zone must be established in these places!

Conclusions

There are several issues waiting for the solution:

This place is about 40-50 km away from the inhabited place. The first thing that needs to be done is the installation of road signs. This will definitely make it possible to reach the desired destination easily and without getting lost.

Secondly, it is not possible to go to this place by big buses due to the unevenness of the road and inconvenience for car traffic. I think the only road to the diversion lake should be built.

Thirdly, after you move away from the center of Shofirkon district and enter the desert part, mobile communication devices and mobile phones get disconnected absolutely. Tourists visiting Lake Oghitma cannot contact anyone until they leave, that is, they cannot make a phone call or go directly to their social networks. There are no live streaming options available anywhere. Communication means or, if not, antennas must be placed on this road. Fourthly, this place should be developed not only for external tourism but also for internal tourism. Most of the people are in favor of cheap and fun travel arrangements. There is a regular route from Bukhara to other districts. It is necessary to organize a route from the center of Shafirkon district to this lake. This will certainly be cost-effective and will make this place known to everyone.

The concept of ecotourism currently is not accepted as just being in natural areas, it is more than this, it is about protecting the whole planet. This remains a major conservation strategy combining benefits of economy and further protection of biodiversity of world countries. This is one of the widely growing spheres of tourism. Modern tourists are willing to explore not just chosen location with nature, but they learn something new from this. Uzbekistan's diverse ecology from deserts to glaciers, from mountains to valleys supports the country with great eco- tourism potential. Such opportunities are plentiful and distinct including natural wildlife breeding center, national parks and state reserves like Lake Oghitma and pilgrimage site "Hazornur". Though Uzbekistan has a high potential being one of the best ecotourism hubs, still many obstacles in the field that should be paid more attention.

Current tour operators can hardly promote ecotourism in the country accepting many barriers. Infrastructure of ecotourism in Shafirkan should be comprehensively modified with such abundance of natural resources neither climate nor other challenges should be barrier for the country's ecotourism. Instead, summer heat in the desert area in Shafirkan can also be used as a kind of brand.

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