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ЭКОЛОГИЧЕСКИЙ ТУРИЗМ: ЕГО СОЦИАЛЬНО-ЭКОНОМИЧЕСКАЯ РОЛЬ В СОВРЕМЕННОМ МИРЕ

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ECOLOGICAL TOURISM: ITS SOCIO-ECONOMIC ROLE IN THE MODERN WORLD

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Abstract. The work touches upon the issues of conceptual definition of ecotourism activity, formation and development of ecotourism concepts in domestic and foreign science and practice. Particular attention is paid to the analysis of the main definitions and principles of ecotourism. The authors identify the main directions and types of ecotourism, as well as the most important problems of development of ecotourism in Uzbekistan.

Keywords: ecological tourism; mountain peaks; national parks; waterfalls; picturesque landscapes.

Today, tourism has turned into one of the leading branches of the world economy. Export of goods and services, tourism equal to the industry, chemistry, electronics, food, and even to the automobile industry. According to the world tourism organization information, 10 % of the world's gross domestic product (GDP), 11 % of global investments is accounted for tourism. Every year the number of tourists increases at 4–5 % [1].

Uzbekistan has huge resources for the development of many types of tourism. A rich cultural and historical heritage, ancient traditions of crafts and art could attract fans of cultural, cognitive, archaeological and ethnographic tourism. The presence of important for the followers of the three major religions of the world (Islam, Christianity and Buddhism) places of worship is the basis for the development of pilgrimage tourism. In the republic there is a large number of



unique natural objects (lakes, mountain peaks, river floodplain forests, etc.), which could serve as a basis for the development of ecological and adventure tourism. Currently, the totality of types and directions of tourism, which are considered to be ecological, totals dozens of units. In particular, the majority of specialists distinguish such areas as green, adventure, nature-oriented, non-technical, biological, rural, agro ecological, mild, recreational, health and others. And this list can be continued for a very long time. The reason for this is the lack of a clear definition and boundaries of ecotourism activities. "Ecosystem" in Greek means "home, motherland". So, the science that studies the relationship between man and his environment, at home is ecology. A number of authors in the field of ecological tourism include trips related to the satisfaction of amateur, professional and scientific interests, with training and education. It can include such types of tourism as religious, ethnic and health-improving. Therefore, natural and historical and cultural monuments, specially protected territories and places of compact residence of peculiar ethnic groups of the population that have preserved their customs and traditions that may be of interest to recreants from other regions and countries can be objects of ecological tourism.

It is necessary to define ecological tourism as an activity based on the following principles:

- travel to nature, and the main content of such travel – familiarity with wildlife, as well as with local customs and culture.
- minimizing negative environmental and socio-cultural impacts, maintaining environmental sustainability.
- promoting the protection of nature and local socio-cultural environment.
- ecological education and enlightenment.
- participation of local residents and their receipt of income from tourism activities,

which creates for them economic incentives for nature protection.

- economic efficiency and contribution to sustainable development of visited regions.

Eco-tourism is not necessarily a walking tour for physically fit people with a heavy backpack on their shoulders. It can be quite comfortable, but not at all costs, especially when it comes to untouched nature. This is one of the main postulates of ecotourism.

In other words, the proposed tours or routes must comply with the principle of environmental friendliness, which implies:

- the use of environmentally friendly transport – bicycles, non-motorized boats, paragliding, etc., or an ecological type of fuel;

- organization of halts, bivouacs, toilets, fires, cooking (from environmentally friendly local products) in strictly designated places;

- competent disposal of garbage (garbage is not thrown out on the route, but collected, after which it comes for special processing);

- attracting tourists to solve local environmental problems (garbage collection, etc.);

- picking berries, medicinal plants, any natural souvenirs only in the allowed zones;

- the construction of recreational facilities - shelters, huts, hotels, camping, cable cars, etc. from environmentally friendly materials and so as not to disrupt the normal ecological development of the surrounding landscape.

If you carefully study the proposal for eco-tourism, it becomes clear that all of them, as a rule, involve visiting specially protected areas (reserves, national parks) and acquaintance with nature monuments (caves, waterfalls, picturesque landscapes, etc.), unique species of flora and fauna.

Landscapes of ancient estates and monasteries are also objects of ecological tourism. However, they can also be areas with a disturbed ecology, the study of which and become the goal of travel.



In order to correctly choose the route of the future travel, it is necessary, first, to determine its purpose, and secondly, to designate its main object.

As for the first, it is necessary to decide whether you want to simply admire the beauty of the wild nature and photo or videotape as a result of the trip you will completely arrange or, watching the nature, you want to get some ecological knowledge, or maybe you, like a specialist, has its own professional travel purpose. From the second depends on the content of the tour, and sometimes the form of its organization. If the purpose of your trip, for example, is bird watching, therefore, the journey planned by you will have an ornithological focus. Where and when is it better to «hunt» for birds, is determined by what kind of birds you would like to consider and what is the ultimate goal of your naturalistic experiences – admiring birds or studying them. We all yearn for some ideal of spiritual beauty. Who knows, maybe the passion for eco-tourism will direct

the search in the right direction? After all, eco-travel not only introduces the natural resources of the surrounding world, but also reveal a great variety of cultures and religions. And, of course, they satisfy the infinite cravings of humanity to travel.

Ecotourism, which contributes to the preservation of the environment, should become a promising type of tourism. Uzbekistan can offer a wide network of services in landscape, mountain and natural tourism. The presence of national parks and nature reserves, lakes and rivers allows this area to grow steadily. The income from such trips is usually used to finance conservation projects for future generations.

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