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МИНИСТЕРСТВО НАУКИ И ВЫСШЕГО ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ РЕСПУБЛИКИ КАЗАХСТАН
ЕВРАЗИЙСКИЙ НАЦИОНАЛЬНЫЙ УНИВЕРСИТЕТ ИМЕНИ Л.Н. ГУМИЛЕВА

MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND HIGHER EDUCATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN
L.N. GUMILYOV EURASIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY



**"ЖАСЫЛ ЭКОНОМИКАҒА" КӨШУ ЖАҒДАЙЫНДА
ҚАЗАҚСТАН РЕСПУБЛИКАСЫНЫҢ ТҰРАҚТЫ ДАМУЫ:
ЕУРОПАЛЫҚ ОДАҚ ЕЛДЕРІНІҢ ТӘЖІРИБЕСІН ҚОЛДАНУ"
ХАЛЫҚАРАЛЫҚ ҒЫЛЫМИ-ТӘЖІРИБЕЛІК КОНФЕРЕНЦИЯСЫНЫҢ
ЕҢБЕКТЕР ЖИНАҒЫ**

**СБОРНИК ТРУДОВ
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**WORKS
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DEVELOPMENT OF ECOLOGICAL TOURISM AS A PRIORITY DIRECTION OF TOURISM IN THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN

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Ecotourism is the fastest growing sector of the tourism industry, accounting for 25% of world tourism. According to the World Tourism Organization, the number of eco-tourists is increasing by 20% annually.

The International Ecotourism Society defines ecotourism as responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment, supports the well-being of the local population, and includes sightseeing, outreach and educational activities.

Ecological tourism aims at environmental education of the general population, especially young people who want to deepen their knowledge in the field of ecology. The driving force behind the growing interest in eco-tourism is the steady deterioration of the quality of the environment. The environmental nature of ecotourism lies in the mandatory preservation of the diversity of flora and fauna of recreational areas. To achieve this goal, environmental technologies developed by the practice of ecological tourism, as well as scientific recommendations of fundamental and applied science are used [1].

The development of ecotourism in the world is impressive. According to the International Ecotourism Society, since 2004 the industry has grown at three times the rate of traditional tourism.

According to preliminary estimates, TIES, sustainable tourism that can not harm the environment, over the next six years, may well account for 25% of the global tourism market; at the same time, the turnover of this type of tourism will amount to 473.6 billion US dollars per year. As a result, eco-resorts are expected to thrive, with early-stage investors reaping the highest returns.

The international community is making great efforts to develop ecotourism. Dozens of symposiums and conferences dedicated to ecotourism are held annually. Every year, world congresses are held, bringing together hundreds of travelers and scientists, businessmen and politicians.

Ecotourism has great potential for development in Kazakhstan. The country has boundless territories of virgin nature. Vast steppe and semi-desert zones prevail here, which convey to the visitor a sense of freedom and solitude. You can freely move around the exciting terrain, since in fact there are no barriers in this hospitable country. Mountains and rivers are a valuable addition to the attractiveness of Kazakhstan, as well as the local rural population, which has an innate talent for hospitality.

The goal of the development of ecological tourism in Kazakhstan is to improve the economic condition of remote territories that do not have alternative opportunities for lifting.

The development of ecotourism should contribute to the establishment of harmony between man and nature, accommodating, like a wide cradle, grandeur and beauty. We must understand that

the feeling of joy that gives us communication with nature, overflowing with pure and sacred gifts, is a biologically determined need of man, as part of living nature.

Research and survey (about 10,000 questionnaires) conducted in Germany, Great Britain, France, South Korea and Japan showed that among foreigners there is a high interest in ecological tours to Kazakhstan [2].

The main tourist product of Kazakhstan is ecological tourism, which has a weak competitiveness in the international market. Potential interest in this tourism product is 8.9 million people (or 63% of the total potential). It occupies the best position in the world tourism market and should be one of the key ones for development in Kazakhstan. What can we offer to the international tourism market today? These are our natural resources, untouched landscapes amazing in their beauty. Despite this, ecotourism is not a priority for state tourism policy today. This type of tourism, which has a pronounced social aspect, is not singled out in any strategic state document. KTA, representing the interests of the tourism market, clearly understands that ecotourism can bring income both to the country's budget and to the tourism market. Therefore, in 2003, KTA conducted a preliminary analysis to assess the potential for the development of ecotourism in Kazakhstan. Based on the results of the work done, it became clear that ecotourism needs to be developed and our close attention. Moreover, each region of The Republic has unique natural resources for the development of ecotourism [3].

Ecotourism does not require large investments, which often involve high economic and environmental risks. Putting the principle of preserving the environment at the forefront of the goals really makes the most important goal of ecotourism worth attention: it is a clean and beautiful natural environment. Seeing the vast uninhabited territories and remembering the cultural past based on a nomadic lifestyle, it is not surprising that Kazakhstan is associated precisely with nature and original culture - two components that form the basis of tourism (the possibility of spending leisure time) in the country [4].

In the south there are a number of natural attractions, in the center of which stands the Tien Shan mountain range. In the mountains you can find an amazing variety of flora and fauna, as well as a magnificent mountain landscape, incl. lakes, forests, waterfalls, glaciers and gorges that can be explored on foot or on horseback. The mountainous terrain allows the development of sports tourism, incl. downhill skiing/snowboarding, mountain climbing, mountain climbing and paragliding. The Tien Shan Mountains are easily accessible to tourists from Almaty and nearby villages such as Zhabagly, located to the west of Almaty in the South Kazakhstan region.

In addition to the mountains in the south, there are other places of interest: the Charyn Canyon to the east of Almaty is an impressive landscape in sharp contrast to the steppe landscape, as is the Singing Dunes a little further east in the Altyn-Emel National Park.

In the east of Kazakhstan, the mountainous landscape continues. The Altai mountain ranges (which divide Mongolia, Russia and China) have already become a recreational area with excellent opportunities for activities such as rafting (rafting), trekking and mountain climbing. Further south close to the Chinese border is Lake Alakol with its "Bird Island", which is home to a range of birds, including flamingos. Along with the changing mountain landscape, from Lepsinsk one can begin to explore the flora and fauna of the mountain ranges of the Dzungarian Alatau, which, despite being less famous than Altai or the Tien Shan, is a landscape of equal beauty.

In the west of Kazakhstan, the attraction is the Caspian Sea with an interesting natural world, but considered more from the side of extracting natural resources and obtaining caviar. However, with sufficient protection from ecotourism extermination, attractions such as flamingos, seals, and cranes can be built in this area.

Northern and Central Kazakhstan is dominated by the vast open steppes, the Sary Arka, and there seems to be less opportunity for tourism in this part of the country. However, one of the best natural places in Kazakhstan is located in this territory. Kokshetau National Park, 200 km from Astana, includes one of the most popular holiday destinations in the country - Borovoe. In this valley of lakes, forests, mountains, known as "Little Switzerland", the main activities are swimming, sunbathing, hiking and horseback riding in the summer season and skiing and ice skating in the winter.

Closer to the new capital, but still not so well known, is the zone of the Korgalzhyn State Reserve. Designated as a World Heritage Site, the main attraction of this natural area is the huge variety of birds that feed and nest in this sector, where two major migratory routes intersect. Pink flamingos are the most famous of the bird species that live in the area. More than 30,000 individuals can be counted in this northernmost colony of pink flamingos in the world. Between Pavlodar and Astana is the Bayanaul National Park – a zone of mountains and lakes surrounded by steppe, home to a number of wildlife, although not as diverse as in the Korgalzhyn Reserve. A mountainous area with a similar landscape is the Burguly mountain range, located 130 km south of Karaganda, and about the same distance east of the city is the Karkaraly National Park, a mountainous area with impressive granite forms. Lake Balkhash, one of the largest lakes in the world, is another distinctive natural characteristic of Kazakhstan: half of the water in it is salty and the other half is fresh.

Along with the aforementioned natural places, the traditional way of life in these places should be noted. It will be of interest to tourists and is not specific to a particular place. The yurt, the traditional dwelling of nomads, represents the uniqueness of this part of the world and is the center of attention and demand among tourists.

Traditional Kazakh dishes and drinks are also an interesting element of tourist recreation (although one must take into account the difference in the types of meat consumed and parts of animals served on the table). In addition to these elements, there are various sports, home decoration, music and dance that originated in the past, and now can be part of entertainment, shows and festivals, and their elements can be used in local souvenirs, which can then be sold.

Another element inherent in many natural areas is the possibility of fishing and hunting. If managed well, they can be compared to conservation activities and can be a source of significant income that can be used for these purposes.

The advantage of the large territory of Kazakhstan is that here you can see different natural areas, but at the same time, the disadvantage is the long distances and time required to move from one place of interest to another. Foreign tourists generally have 1-2 weeks for vacation, and they, of course, do not want to spend it on moving from one object to another. The underdeveloped transport infrastructure means that to see a few natural spots, you need to either spend time on a long road (often with a minimum of amenities) or spend money on a domestic flight.

Therefore, it is not surprising that the Almaty region has become the main object of visit for foreign tourists, within which picturesque places are located at a relatively short distance from each other. Also, most international flights arrive in Almaty.

Thus, ecotourism remains a relatively new phenomenon for development in Kazakhstan. However, interest in it has grown in recent years. This has contributed to the development of a number of initiatives and strategies that are important for the future development of this sector of the economy.

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