Ecotourism as an effective direction for a healthy lifestyle

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Abstract. Ecotourism is one of the effective ways to ensure a healthy lifestyle. The paper is devoted to the study of the possibilities of developing ecotourism at the Crimean resorts in the northern Black Sea region of Russia. Today, eco-tourism is becoming increasingly popular. Every year more people are looking for outdoor recreation, away from noisy cities and all-inclusive hotels. This paper also substantiates the idea that ecotourism in Crimea is not only an opportunity to enjoy the natural beauty of the peninsula, but also to gain new emotions and impressions. Crimea is a unique region where you can visit the mountains, the sea coast, steppe plains or virgin forests. Such a variety of landscapes makes it possible to create eco-tourism programs that find their admirers. Accommodation in eco-estates is another option for those who want to relax in nature. Some of them offer truly unusual living conditions, for example, in artificial caves, where there is everything you need for a comfortable stay. Keywords: ecotourism, Virtual Reality, schools of ecotourism, model, simulation, Digital twin

1 Introduction

The concept of ecotourism dates back to the 80s, not that long ago. It reached Russia literally 5-7 years ago, along with a basic understanding of respect for the environment. “Green tourism” is a journey aimed at communicating with nature, preserving its uniqueness and purity.

There are no strict frameworks limiting the wide range of eco-tourism. You don’t have to live in tents. You can also stay in hotels while making field trips. There is also no great need to climb the mountains. It could be some kind of historical area, a village with the preserved way of life of the local peoples. In general, you can live on a farm and help the owners with their farm. This is agro tourism, but it also falls into the same area as “eco”.

The main thing you need to learn: 10 rules formed by TIES - International Ecotourism Organization. Just 10 commandments

1. It must be remembered that the Earth is vulnerable.

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2. You can only leave your own traces, take only photographs, kill only time.
3. It is necessary to get to know the world in which you find yourself: nature, geography, local customs and culture.
4. Treat local residents with respect.
5. Do not buy products from manufacturers that pollute the environment.
6. Walk only on well-trodden paths.
7. Support environmental protection programs.
8. Use different methods to protect the environment wherever possible.
9. Support those organizations that care about the conservation and protection of nature.
10. Travel with companies that adhere to the principles of ecotourism.

In general, if you forget about the pathos of the above, the rules are simple: do not litter, do not take anything with you: not a pebble, not a blade of grass. Hit the hands of those who throw bottles and napkins into the bushes. Do not step off the trail; respect the privacy of the local population [1-10].

Those who choose ecotourism in Crimea can combine relaxation and spiritual development, thanks to the huge number of nature reserves, botanical gardens and wildlife monuments. Often they help to understand how much beauty there is on earth and how carefully we need to treat nature. But in order to understand the essence of ecotourism, it is necessary to correctly understand its features and possible directions of development.

2 Schools of ecotourism

Many researchers distinguish two schools of ecotourism. One of them was formed on the American continent and its ideas are supported in English-speaking countries - the USA, Canada, Australia, Great Britain, etc. Characteristic of this school is the idea of travel and recreation in nature, little changed by human activity, with natural and protected landscapes. An obligatory feature of ecotourism, in accordance with the ideas of the American school, is environmental education and enlightenment. Caring for traditional cultures is an integral part of ecotourism.

The European school of ecotourism, which reflects the ideas of German, Austrian and Swiss specialists best, also primarily emphasizes the natural basis of ecotourism. Any human activity, including tourism, should not exceed certain limits and lead to a decrease in the ability of natural ecological systems to maintain them in a stable state. The European School of Ecotourism focuses more on the social responsibility of tourism and solving the economic problems of the region with its help. Ecological tourism of the Russian Federation has absorbed all the best directions of both schools.

3 Types of eco-tourism

When considering the types of ecological tours, it is necessary to note the following points. For many tourists, the cultural values of the areas visited are as important as natural resources. Therefore, it is quite fair to talk about such a form as eco-cultural tourism. One of the types of ecological tourism is agro tourism, which involves recreation in rural areas, on farms, hamlets, and in comfortable peasant houses. This makes it possible not only to immerse you in the niche of holistic nature, but also to participate in traditional rural work, get acquainted with the values of folk culture, applied arts, national songs and dances, local customs, and take part in traditional holidays and festivals. Ecotourism goes well with medical and recreational holidays, since many picturesque protected natural areas have significant recreational resources. Of course, sports tourism, if it is carried out in environmentally friendly forms, without the use of technical means that pollute the

environment, can be classified as a separate type of ecological tourism. However, the main type of ecological tourism is nature-educational tourism with a wide variety of orientations and themes - botanical, faunal, ornithological, geological, etc. Typically, ecological tours are conducted by qualified naturalist guides and specialists in the field of environmental education. Moreover, the forms of implementation of these tours can be very different: from relatively passive, with a stay mainly in environmental educational centers with short excursions along educational nature trails, to long trips along educational and tourist routes. Active tourism involves a wide variety of forms of ecological tours. Hiking is the best way to get the most out of nature.

The hiking route follows ecological trails, which minimizes damage to the natural environment.

Cycling trails exist in many regions, but in national parks and reserves they are only allowed in certain areas, especially mountain biking. One of the most interesting routes is in the Crimean Mountains.

Horseback riding is one of the most exotic forms of ecotourism. Horses, walking along specially laid ecological trails, do not harm the environment and provide tourists with an unforgettable experience. You can travel on horses, elephants, camels. Among the equestrian routes that are widely known are horseback riding through the mountains of Crimea, including the Crimean forest reserve.

Traveling by water, both inland waters and sea cruises, is especially attractive. These ecological tours can be made both on comfortable ships and on yachts, boats, canoes, kayaks, glass-bottomed boats, scuba diving or snorkeling. The most popular marine ecological tourism areas in the world include the following: Prince William Sound (USA), Gulf of California (Mexico), barrier reef (Belize), Galapagos Islands (Ecuador), Svalbard (Norway), Cape Aya in Crimea, etc.

4 Other types of ecotourism classification

In the works of famous scientists one can find other types of classification of ecotourism. V.V. Khrabovchenko highlights his classification of ecotourism:

1. Scientific tourism. During scientific ecotourism, tourists participate in various types of nature research and conduct field observations.

2. Nature history tours. These are trips related to knowledge of the surrounding nature and local culture. As a rule, such tours are a combination of educational, popular science and thematic excursions that run along specially equipped environmental trails.

3. Adventure tourism. This type unites all travel associated with active methods of movement and outdoor recreation, with the goal of obtaining new sensations, impressions, improving the tourist's physical fitness and achieving sports results. 4. Travel to natural reserves, specially protected natural areas (SPNA). The high attractiveness of unique and exotic natural objects and phenomena located in protected areas attract many tourists.

The research of A.A.Tishkov, who talks about the following types of ecotourism activities, is also of interest:

1. ecological excursion tourism,
2. ecological popular science tourism,
3. ecotourism associated with limiting the number of tourists and their categories,
4. research tourism,
5. resort and health tourism.

An important classification feature for identifying forms of ecological tours is the age and health status of the participants (in many countries with developed traditions of ecological tourism, there are, for example, special tours for the disabled), as well as the number of groups. It is quite clear that the content of tour programs and their organizational

features will be fundamentally different for children's hikes and for expeditions designed for adults, as well as for small compact and large groups of participants.

In general, considering the types of ecological tourism, it can be noted that the most widespread and popular are tours with visits to national parks and reserves to get acquainted with their nature, most often these are hiking and horseback riding. These are not small in number, but higher in cost, tours for the purpose of scientific research of nature and specialized tours. For example, interest in bird watching has now increased, and "bird watching" clubs are being created all over the world.

5 Global trends in the development of eco-tourism and the motivating reasons for the growth of interest in it

Trends in the development of eco-tourism are determined by the World Tourism Organization (WTO). According to the forecasts of this organization, ecotourism is one of the five main strategic areas of development for the period until 2030. According to expert estimates, the number of people concerned about the state of nature is growing. Environmental distress develops in some people the need to change their own attitude towards nature, in others - to actively participate in its protection and conservation, and in still others (the most conscious) - in its restoration. Some people, not limiting themselves to their own efforts, seek to attract supporters to their active work.

The main flow of ecotourists in Russia is residents of industrialized countries who are interested in nature and life preserved in the virgin corners of the planet. Of particular interest are the exotic nature and culture of the northern Black Sea regions. The targeted policy of the Crimean resort region contributes to the formation of a large flow of ecotourists.

Positive forecasts from experts regarding the development of ecotourism in a number of regions of Russia until 2025 are close. In their opinion, the growth in the volume of ecotourism trips will be facilitated by: the growing importance of everyday environmental problems in many tourist countries; increasing the target ecotourist group by including children, who are instilled with a conscious attitude towards environmental protection; increasing efforts made to provide eco-tourism. Among the arguments against the development of ecotourism are the following: ecotourism is a fashion trend; the added value for sustainable tourism reduces the magnitude of the flow; insufficient willingness to comply with environmental requirements will negatively affect the number of ecotourists.

Taking into account the above, we will consider the main promising directions of eco-tourism in the resort areas of the northern Black Sea region of the Russian Federation.

6 Ecological trails

An ecological trail is a specially equipped route passing through various ecological systems and other natural objects, architectural monuments of aesthetic, environmental and historical value, on which those walking (walkers, tourists, etc.) receive oral (with the help of a guide) or written (stands, sold-out, etc.) information about these objects.

Organizing an ecological trail is one of the forms of educating environmental thinking and worldview.

The history of organizing such routes in nature goes back more than 60 years. Initially, such trails arose in protected areas - in national parks in North America, and later in Western Europe. Currently, this area of eco-tourism is intensively developing in Crimea. Historical trails are being restored and reconstructed. Among them is the Tsar's Trail in

Yalta, the Golitsyn Trail in Sudak. New ones are being created. For example, the Great Sevastopol Trail.

The main purpose of nature trails is to foster a culture of human behavior in nature. Thus, they perform an environmental function. With the help of such trails, excursionists' knowledge of the nature around them (flora and fauna, geological structure of the area, etc.) is deepened and expanded, and their understanding of the patterns of biological and other natural processes is improved. This increases people's responsibility for preserving the environment, helping to foster a sense of love for nature and their homeland.

To create this type of cognitive trail, there are a number of important starting points. It is most advisable to lay such trails near heavily visited recreational areas. This allows you to direct the main flow of vacationers along a specific route and reduce the anthropogenic load on the natural environment. Visitors can expand their natural history knowledge. In addition, the trail must be accessible for transport. It is advisable that the trail area be well visited by the local population. The route is best laid along an already established path - a path network. When choosing it, it is important to take into account the attractiveness of the surrounding landscape. Areas with monotonous, uniform natural communities should be avoided. It is necessary to alternate open spaces with forest paths, corners of untouched nature with areas that have been subject to significant anthropogenic impact.

Along with its attractiveness, another important quality of the trail is its information content. The information received here can be divided into cognitive, educational and prescriptive. Each type of information has its own objects on the route and its own signs - symbols (reminiscent of road signs). Natural objects act as a source of predominantly cognitive information. These are types of plants, animals, landforms, soils and other elements of living and inanimate nature. The most popular among children and adults are biological objects: plants, mushrooms, animals. They are the ones who are most exposed to human influence, especially in recreation areas. Therefore, it is important that the selected species or observed process allows one to clearly demonstrate its role in creating or maintaining the ecological state of the environment. A number of objects in the trail area can be created with your own hands, skillfully fitting them into the surrounding landscape. Specific excursion objects on the trail are natural monuments, for example, ancient trees that are witnesses to events of the distant past. Nearby are elements of the anthropogenic landscape, these can be transport routes (roads, power lines), architectural structures, water sources, protected areas, the recreation zone itself, as one of the types of environmental management.

All interesting objects of nature and history are indicated by nearby sign boards; numbers or symbols. And information boards installed at certain distances and near particularly interesting objects allow you to quickly obtain relevant information and direct the movement of visitors along a given route. The ecological trail is equipped with billboards and signs. An ecological trail is a place not only for acquiring, but also for promoting one's behavior in the natural environment, the example an adult sets for the younger generation.

7 Main directions of development of eco-tourism in the Crimean resort area

Places for ecotourism are usually parks, nature reserves, arboretums, and "green trails." These are places where you can observe nature and not interfere. And Crimea is perfect for a green holiday. It has 6 large nature reserves, 9 unique tracts, 30 parks, 73 natural monuments! The author will tell you about the main nature reserves and trails.

8 Reserves of the Crimean tourist destination

The Crimean National Park, created in 1923 is the largest and oldest. It stretches from Yalta to Alushta, where the highest mountain of Crimea Roman-Kosh (1545 m) is located. Some rivers begin there, so the reserve is a fresh water accumulator on the peninsula.

The slopes are covered with forests: oak, beech, coniferous. On the yailas are flat pastures, on the tops there are meadows. The park is home to red deer, roe deer, wild boars, as well as black vultures and griffon vultures. There are walking routes. Also you can come on a tour or by your own car. Almost the entire path runs along mountain serpentine roads. The route starts in Alushta and ends in Massandra; there are many stops and observation platforms along the way. This park is the most famous, so it welcomes ecotourists (Figure 1-2).

Fig. 1. Mount Ai-Petri (photo taken by the authors).

The Kazantip Nature Reserve is located in the north of the Kerch Peninsula. If the Crimean National Park is forests, then the steppe prevails here. Its coastal part is indented with coves and bays, there are dunes and grottoes. Also 420 species of butterflies are living there.

In the Kazantip Nature Reserve, the ruins of the ancient city of Heraclea are preserved. It existed from about the 3rd century BC to the 3rd century AD. One can watch the remains of Roman estates, a well, part of a wall, fragments of ceramics and utensils. For those who like to touch history, this is a significant object.

There are 4 routes in the reserve, following the footsteps of antiquity or along the rugged coast of the Azov Sea. You can walk, you can ride bicycles, you can ride horses. It is better to go to the reserve in the spring, when the steppe is in bloom. Then the routes are limited so as not to trample the flora, but it is a very beautiful sight. At the end of summer or autumn, everything around seems lifeless. The Opuk Nature Reserve is located in the south of the Kerch Peninsula. There is also an ancient city there, Cimmeric, but this is not what the reserve surprises with. Koyash Lake on its territory is salty, like the Dead Sea, and

pink. Of course, it is pink not always, but at the peak of the heat, when the dunaliella algae bloom and the Artemia crustacean lives vigorously. At the same time, salt "icebergs" stick out of the water. The spectacle is quite fabulous.

Fig. 2. Gurzuf (photo taken by the authors).

In spring, the entire Opuk is wrapped in blooming Schrenk tulips. There also lives an amazing pink starling, which you will not find anywhere else in the world, and in general this reserve is an ornithological paradise. There are 3 walking routes in Opuka, and even 1 sea route. Walking on foot is not at all difficult, the trails are 5-6 kilometers long.

Between Sudak and Feodosia, near Koktebel there is the Karadag nature reserve (Figure 3). It is not big, and appeared about 100 years ago. Conventionally it is divided into 3 zones: upper, where hornbeam forests and rocks; medium with thickets of fluffy oak; lower - steppe.

Fig. 3. Sudak (photo taken by the authors).

The natural monument of this reserve is the Golden Gate rock, a natural arch standing in the sea. Because of the lichens, the stone there is golden in color, and it seems that it is not a rock at all, but something precious.

The reserve has ecological trails. Boat trips are also organized. Rocks and grottoes are visible from the sea.

9 Prospects for estate ecotourism in the Crimean resort area

In 2024, ecotourism in Crimea will be even more developed. You will be able to choose between various programs that combine excursions, active outdoor recreation and exciting activities for the whole family. Several options for ecological estates as promising objects have been considered.

"Eski Kermen" (Bakhchisaray district). This incredible estate in all respects is chosen by travelers who are looking for interesting and unusual accommodation options. Here tourists are accommodated in artificial caves. The rooms look racy: each cave has a real stone fireplace, a king-size oak bed and animal skins. Medieval exoticism is complemented by a modern shower room, a toilet and a disguised refrigerator.

Estate "Gartenthal" (Donskoye village). The complex is a real tourist haven for lovers of ecological recreation. Amazing living conditions have been created here. There is a large selection of rooms of different categories in wooden buildings. The estate invariably pleases with its developed entertainment infrastructure. Guests can enjoy not only leisurely contemplation of the surrounding beauty, but also horseback riding, fishing, excursions and cultural entertainment.

10 Conclusions

The format of the article allowed us to give only a few examples of what the Crimean ecotourism industry could offer in 2024. Outdoor recreation associated with ecotourism has become for many people not only an opportunity to get an unforgettable experience, but also a concern for the future of the planet.

Every year, eco-tourism has an increasingly positive impact on the global economy and is an integrating element in uniting people of different countries, cultures and nationalities. In addition to the increasing interest in travel among tourists, various new types of eco-tourism are emerging. By participating in them, it is easier for a person to understand the culture of a people, to get in touch with their history and traditions.

From the above, it is reasonable to conclude that ecotourism is a promising and attractive destination for tourists in the Crimean resort area; its development will stimulate the effective formation of a tourist destination for the entire region.

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