

Distinctive Features of Assessing Opportunities to Enhance the Effectiveness of Ecotourism Businesses in Regions

*D. Hidayberganov**, *O. Turayev*, *M. Raimboyeva*, *D. Bobojonova*, *D. Kuranbayeva*,
and *Sh. Ruzmetov*¹

Urgench state university, Urgench, 220100, Uzbekistan

Abstract. The article examines the efficiency of ecotourism enterprises, their importance, objective necessity, features and opportunities for improvement. Based on this, the study substantiates the need to improve the efficiency of ecotourism enterprises, taking into account the current conditions of various regions. The methods of implementation and factors of influence for establishing priority areas for assessing the efficiency of ecotourism enterprises are considered. Based on various definitions of ecotourism given by economists.

Keywords. Tourism, ecotourism, efficiency, evaluation, resource, business, tourism industry.

1 Introduction

Ecotourism is considered one of the most socially responsible types of tourism. In this area, various approaches play an important role at the initial stage and are based on changes as one of the types of tourism. Ecotourism business becomes a balance that can provide employment, sustainable income and preserve the integrity of the environment. This type of tourism is also seen as one that values sustainability and the natural world. This, in turn, leads to the protection of the environment. These opportunities demonstrate the high potential of the ecotourism industry in countries around the world. In order to ensure employment of the population of mountainous and remote areas and desert regions by diversifying tourism services and accelerating the implementation of investment projects in our country, creating more favorable conditions for the development of ecotourism through the rational use of the country's available resources and attracting foreign direct investment, as well as creating additional opportunities for business entities in order to expand their source of income, the Resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PP-21 was adopted. The adoption of this regulatory document directly serves to assess the potential of the regions to improve the efficiency of the ecotourism business. Since the issue of improving the efficiency of the ecotourism business is one of the most important issues in the field of tourism [1].

*Corresponding author: dilshod.x@urdu.uz

2 Material and methods

In this article, methods such as analysis, synthesis, comparative analysis, logical analysis, systematic analysis, and questionnaires were effectively used to identify the distinctive features for assessing opportunities to enhance the effectiveness of ecotourism businesses in different regions.

Research conducted to improve the efficiency of ecotourism business in the tourism sector is directly based on the efficient development of ecotourism and the efficient use of these types of tourism in accordance with its principles. Because in this area, as a result of using all the same ecological principles, there will be a nationwide change in attitudes towards green. However, the health crisis has had a negative impact on the tourism sector. Because the health crisis affects the efficiency of the hospitality industry and the activities of environmental factors in protected natural areas. This type of tourism is organized in protected natural areas as a business activity. Analyses show that negative factors in the tourism sector hinder the efficiency of the hospitality industry in specially protected natural areas, indicating excess supplies in natural areas. The tourist's perception of the risks of the tourist route and the territorial boundaries of the natural area play a key role in the efficiency of tourism [2]. Scientists have given different definitions of ecological tourism. Specifically, according to some studies, ecotourism is interpreted as maximizing its positive impact on the tourism sector [3]. Based on this, according to research, ecotourism is aimed at stimulating the preservation of the biodiversity of landscapes in countries.

In other studies, ecotourism is a type of responsible travel that emphasizes sharing the positive results of tourism activities among all participants. To develop this type of tourism, local people are hired to provide employment for the local population. Training and capacity building programs are provided and allow for professional development in the tourism sector. This is determined by ensuring access to opportunities for members of society, reducing unemployment, and increasing economic growth. Therefore, fair wages, benefits, and working conditions for the local population engaged in the ecotourism business will be important for economic stability. Equal income sharing systems, fair labor practices, and transparent wage policies are used to distribute economic benefits. Ensures social justice and distributive equality based on the promotion of cooperation between tourism enterprises, host communities, and other stakeholders.

Other research focuses on sustainable smart ecotourism using smart technologies such as smartphones, artificial intelligence, and the Internet of Things, reducing harm to natural and cultural ecosystems, and promoting education and environmental protection. This approach is aimed at studying the concept of sustainable smart ecotourism, analyzing existing literature, its components, problems, and increasing its contribution to sustainable development on a global scale [4]. Sustainable ecotourism businesses are based on loss reduction. This seeks to balance the needs of present and future generations. It will focus on maximizing resource utilization, stimulating local economic expansion, and equitable distribution of socio-economic resources. This includes taking measures to create long-term employment opportunities, create sufficient amenities for the local population, and mitigate resource scarcity. However, more consideration should be given to the evidence that such goals can be achieved in environmental impact and sustainable ecotourism.

Research recognizes ecotourism, conservation of natural resources, and the way of life of the local population as a topic of global discussion. It is considered a nature-based tourism and is characterized by two different characteristics. Specifically, these include improving livelihoods and preserving biodiversity. This will identify challenges for future research and review integrated literature on ecotourism to understand different perspectives [5].

Other studies focus on developing the ecotourism business and ensuring its safety. It is important to assess the ecological safety of ecotourism in protected areas, and these areas

play an important role in protecting biodiversity and natural resources [6].

Other studies consider the protection of the ecotourism business to be a key priority. This is because this study implements the evolutionary behavior of local governments, tourism enterprises, and the population to analyze sustainability strategies in ecotourism protection [7]. The results are that the system of ecotourism business protection development can form a sustainable strategy in various conditions. In this case, the influence of limiting factors on strategic choices plays a more important role than stimulating factors. State preferences allow for the selection of strategies for protecting tourism enterprises and control strategies for the population. The nature of the ecotourism business is directly focused on improving the well-being of the local population. Ecotourism, as a sustainable activity and means of living in protected areas and their surroundings, can balance the preservation of biodiversity with the livelihoods of the local population [7].

Other studies present existing solutions for the restructuring of enterprise operations in the context of existing problems. In this regard, ecotourism business centers are characteristic of business entities that have experienced this problem and face serious problems in their activities. In addition, it is necessary to implement approaches aimed at eliminating barriers related to this type of business [9].

According to the conducted research, the effectiveness of the ecological business of tourism is based on the main concept of reducing the use of the environment and resources in the production of goods and services. The ecological effectiveness of tourism can be measured using various research methods. Including lifecycle costs, lifecycle assessment, and input-output analysis. The criteria for assessing the ecological effectiveness of tourism include several indicators, such as the efficient use of tourist resources, the quality of the ecological environment, and the economic benefits of tourism [10]. By studying and evaluating the ecological effectiveness of tourism, researchers can provide useful information and guidelines for the sustainable development of the tourism industry.

Other studies require the following data set to calculate the efficiency coefficients of ecotourism for any type of activity, economic sector, or region: energy use and economic circular movement [11]. However, these analyses do not take into account energy requirements, costs, or the multiplier effect. This is because all databases are sufficiently important for these calculations.

3 Results

Tourism is a sector vulnerable to a risky situation caused by external factors, such as economic crises, natural disasters, attacks, and epidemics. However, there are global problems in this area, which have led to social and economic consequences. In other words, the impact of the crisis on the tourism sector led to losses due to a sharp decline in demand for it.

In addition to the purely economic impact, the tourism business ensures the restoration of human vitality and the rational use of free time. The tourism business effectively contributes to relieving nervous tension based on various impressions, contradictory changes in the current situation and activities. Therefore, tourism plays an important role in the development of personality. This allows for an increase in tourists' intellectual level in the process of their active participation in educational and cultural programs.

At the same time, many tourists want to contribute to the protection of the natural areas they visit. They should be given sufficient opportunities for this. This will reduce the negative impact of tourism. This situation indicates the possibility of increasing the positive impact of tourism on the benefits of settlements. It is based on well-thought-out planning, management, and monitoring of ecotourism. This is one of the main conditions and differences between types of ecological tourism.

The ecotourism business has changed thanks to new technological solutions that increase efficiency and sustainability. Integrating digital connectivity, mobile apps, and online platforms can improve decision-making, resource management, and tourist experience through continuous communication, collaboration, and coordination. Eco-tourism businesses can better respond to changing market conditions, communicate with guests in real time, and improve service delivery using digital technologies. With smartphone apps, augmented reality, and virtual travel, visitors can have a better time, find their way more easily, and learn more about conservation efforts, cultural heritage, and the natural environment. The ecotourism business can leverage technology by making the experience of visitors to places more interactive, informative, and memorable. This further increases participants' satisfaction, loyalty, and protection.

The business of ecotourism, as a sector of the tourism industry, is based on connections between tour operators and tourists. This requires people to know more about the ecotourism business and to avoid actions that pose a negative threat to the environment in their lives. In this regard, the main problem facing responsible ecological tourism is the education of tourists and the dissemination of accurate information about how to behave towards nature among them.

In our view, increasing the efficiency of the ecotourism business should be carried out in various directions (Fig. 1).

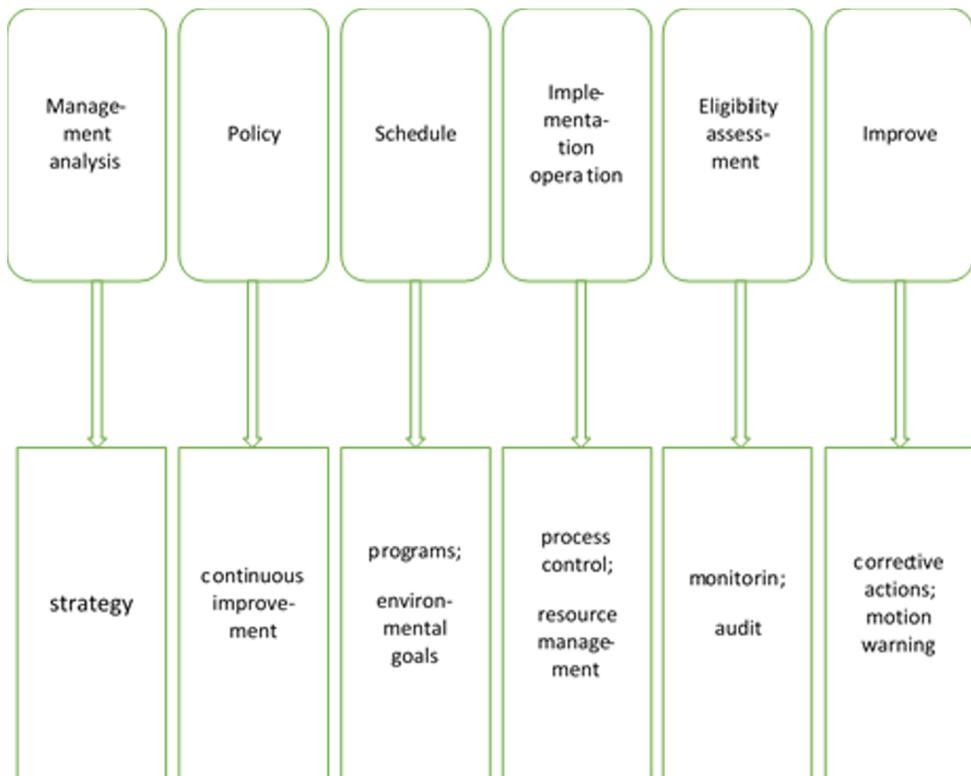


Fig. 1. Directions for increasing the efficiency of the ecotourism business.

Based on this image, to increase the efficiency of the ecotourism business, it will be necessary to ensure economic growth of local communities, actively encourage people to live an environmentally sustainable life, provide tourists with the opportunity to communicate with nature, reduce the impact of tourism on nature, and encourage the active work of the local population.

There are also the following indicators aimed at increasing the efficiency of the ecotourism business, the structure of which is divided into social and economic indicators:

Social indicators:

- number of qualified personnel in the field of ecotourism;
- the level of environmental education and awareness in the region;
- the number of tourists who visited during the year;
- the length of stay of tourists;
- the number of conflicts between tourists and the local population;
- the proportion of the local population who are satisfied with the development of ecotourism;
- the number of complaints from local residents about tourists;
- the proportion of tourists who are satisfied and dissatisfied with the development of ecotourism;
- the number of existing medical institutions;
- the availability of a waste treatment system;
- the number of man-made accidents and disasters;
- the level of tourist safety;
- crime rate.

Economic indicators:

- the amount of income from ecotourism;
- the volume of investments in the ecotourism sector;
- the share of employment in ecotourism;
- the effectiveness of the enterprise (tourism services, ensuring the lifestyle of tourists, maintenance of the material and technical base of ecotourism);
- the effectiveness of developing certain types of ecotourism.

Before taking the first steps to develop the ecotourism business, it is necessary to decide whether the development of tourism is justified and promising for the region. This information can be obtained from many sources. This includes previous studies, reports from researchers and service providers, surveys of the local community, surveys of tourists, and much more. Not all aspects are at the same level for specific projects. In this way, other issues related to the situation are added to the catalog. The evaluation of these cases is divided into the following groups:

- rapid evaluation. This method is based on approximate quantitative calculations and partially on reasonable assumptions. Several scenarios may be suggested based on these different assumptions. The results of the operational assessment allow us to identify the development of tourism in the region, as well as to understand the potential and risks associated with the development of the industry.

- express evaluation. This method allows for reliable decisions about the prospects and validity of tourism development. The next stage is based on a serious analysis to develop the concept.

- assessment of tourism potential. This method is recommended for planning the invitation of a tourism specialist. This method is crucial at the stage of developing a concept for the development of tourism activities.

4 Discussion

Indicators for evaluating the effectiveness of the ecotourism business are necessary to assess the contribution of tourism to the economy. The use of these indicators in conjunction with generally accepted indicators allows us to see the true state of development of the ecotourism business in the region. Because traditional indicators are insufficient, special attention is paid to the specifics of tourism. In this regard, social and economic indicators are used to reliably assess the ecotourism business in the region. It also takes into account the ecological (natural) and humanitarian parts.

The ecotourism business justifies its main characteristics. These characteristics include the recreation of people directly in contact with the natural landscape, lack of technical justification, adherence to the norms of behavior in the natural environment, involvement, respect for the traditional culture, life, and customs of the local population, the social structure of the local community, mutual understanding between tourists and the local population, and the ability to communicate with the local population, a portion of the profit is determined by eliminating inevitable disruptions in the natural landscape and directing it to the economic development of regions where ecotourism is developing. This list of features allows for the separation of ecotourism types from strong ecotourism, non-ecotourism, and other types of tourism.

However, ecotourism is not only associated with unfavorable trips to "wild" nature. According to its existing principles, sailing on a liner can also be considered an ecological journey. According to this, tourists will get acquainted with the local nature, local culture and environmental problems of the region only if this tool is perfect from an ecological point of view and tourists leave the ship for boat, walking or horseback riding routes. They simply contribute to local environmental projects by providing genuine funding. At the same time, greening the community also plays an important role in increasing the efficiency of the ecotourism business in the region. According to him, ecotourism has had a significant impact on tourism in recent years.

Especially during the holidays, many tourists combine 2-3-week "beach" programs with ecological excursions. Although they prefer comfortable recreation, this activity is carried out in environmentally friendly conditions, encouraging hotel owners and resort administrators to care about the protection of the environment and the widespread introduction of environmentally friendly technologies in the tourism industry.

Therefore, alongside ecotourism, ecotourism is also emphasized in enhancing its effectiveness. Since the ecotourism business is a developing trend in the tourism industry, it is not always understood the same in different countries, and its forms have dynamic characteristics. Like other types of ecotourism, ecotourism is classified according to many criteria, the classification of which consists of the method of travel, the composition of participants, the duration, the boundaries of the country where tourists live, and others. The ecotourism business refers to common and generally accepted types of natural or nature-oriented tourism. As a direction for increasing efficiency, ecotourism is based on the fact that nature is both the goal and the reason for travel, as well as the environment in which the tourist lives directly.

According to various accepted traditions, depending on the form of business, the types, forms, and diversity of ecotourism are divided into the following main classes:

- ecotourism within the borders of specially protected areas (water zones). This concept was formed on the American continent. His ideas are supported in the United States, Canada, Australia, the United Kingdom, and others. The development of such types, as a classical direction of ecotourism, refers to eco-tours in a narrow sense. Its distinctive feature is determined by the idea of travel and recreation in nature, slightly altered by human activity, natural and protected landscapes. This interpretation is supported by representatives of the

"green" movement.

- ecotourism (cultural tourism) beyond the boundaries of specially protected areas and aquariums. These include all types of ecotourism, except for the upper tour, which includes various characteristics. It is a European school of ecotourism, reflecting the ideas of German, Austrian and Swiss specialists. First and foremost, he emphasizes the natural foundation of ecotourism. However, this tour, along with agrotourism, includes ecologically oriented types of tourism up to cruise on a convenient liner. In this case, human tourism activity should not exceed a certain limit.

Finally, an important classification feature for determining the forms of ecotours is determined by the age and health of the participants. Countries with developed ecotourism traditions also have special tours for people with disabilities. In this case, the content and organizational characteristics of excursion programs for children's trips and expeditions intended for small, compact, and large groups of participants are fundamentally different. It should be noted that ecotourism refers to amateur tourism, which is popular. Therefore, all types of ecotourism, as a broader set, are part of amateur tours. As a result, the implementation of the ecotourism business will be integrated into the main directions.

5 Conclusion

Ecology and tourism come together to develop ecotourism business. This form of tourism has gained popularity in recent years. Although ecotourism has proven successful as a model for preserving both nature and business, a balance must be maintained between the two. This approach is essential to creating natural beauty in rural areas. Without a balanced approach, ecotourism destinations will become indistinguishable from regular tourist destinations. Ecotourism business aims to protect the environment and develop the local community economy. This type of tourism allows visitors to interact with nature and encourages them to adopt an environmentally friendly lifestyle.

It seeks to minimize the impact of tourism on nature. Ecotourism business also has a positive impact by promoting sustainable lifestyles, facilitating interaction with nature and encouraging sustainable development of these areas. At the same time, ecotourism is also considered an entrepreneurial activity. If it is not economically viable, it cannot provide economic benefits to the protected area and local communities and may even worsen existing problems. The development of ecotourism business in the region is aimed at increasing its profitability and competitiveness. This is taken into account through clearly defined projects and practical measures. Indeed, the development of ecotourism business allows to simultaneously increase economic activity and stabilize the regional economy. All service sectors will be in special demand. That is, the need for food production, transport, hospitality, services, guides and tour guides, cultural workers, translators, builders, tourism managers, economists and others will increase. Based on this, increasing the efficiency of ecotourism business allows to implement the following measures: - support for initiatives to form environmental awareness;

- conservation and efficient use of natural resources;
- further strengthening of local community activities;
- consistent development of the economy of local communities;
- analysis and understanding of the structure of local culture;
- increasing knowledge and skills about the environment;
- maintaining aesthetic values and ecological balance.

References

1. Hidayberganov, D., Jumaeva, Z., Abdullaeva, Z., Matmuratova, N., Ozodova, F., & Farxodova, S. Strategic solutions for sustainable environmental waste management. In *E3S Web of Conferences*, Vol. 538, p. 03021. EDP Sciences. (2024).
2. Francisca J. Sanchez-S´anchez, Ana M. Sanchez-S´anchez. Ecotourism and COVID-19: Impact on the efficiency of the Spanish hospitality industry. // *Journal of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism* 43 (2023). pp. 1-11.
3. By Joan Crawford, Mary Mulvey. *Ecotourism handbook for Ireland*. Dublin, 2009. p. 6.
4. Yin Zhang, Bin Deng. Exploring the nexus of smart technologies and sustainable ecotourism: A systematic review. // *Heliyon* 10 (2024). pp.1-21.
5. Rajashree Samal, Madhusmita Dash. Ecotourism, biodiversity conservation and livelihoods: Understanding the convergence and divergence. // *International Journal of Geoheritage and Parks* 11 (2023). pp. 1–20.
6. Parvaneh Sobhani, Hassan Esmaeilzadeh, Isabelle D. Wolf, Azade Deljouei, Marina Viorela Marcu, Seyed Mohammad Moein Sadeghi. Evaluating the ecological security of ecotourism in protected area based on the DPSIR model. // *Ecological Indicators* 155 (2023). pp. 1-11.
7. Yong Sun, Baoyin Liu, Jie Fan, Qin Qiao. The multi-player evolutionary game analysis for the protective development of ecotourism. // *Environmental Science and Policy* 126 (2021). pp. 111–121
8. Gadinga W. Forjea, Martin N. Tchamba, Manasseh Eno-Nkub. Determinants of ecotourism development in and around protected areas: The case of Campo Ma’an National Park in Cameroon. // *Scientific African* 11 (2021). pp. 1-13.
9. Seyyed Mehdi Hosseini, Mohammad Mahdi Paydar, Mostafa Hajiaghaei-Keshteli. Recovery solutions for ecotourism centers during the Covid-19 pandemic: Utilizing Fuzzy DEMATEL and Fuzzy VIKOR methods. // *Expert Systems with Applications* 185 (2021). pp. 1-14.
10. Yufeng Cheng, Kai Zhu, Quan Zhou, Youssef El Archi, Moaaz Kabil, Bulcsú Remenyik, Lóránt Dénes Dávid. Tourism Ecological Efficiency and Sustainable Development in the Hanjiang River Basin: A Super-Efficiency Slacks-Based Measure Model Study. // *Journals Sustainability*, Volume 15, Issue 7. p. 2-3.
11. Stefan Gössling, Paul Peeters, Jean-Paul Ceron, Ghislain Dubois, Trista Patterson, Robert B. Richardson. The eco-efficiency of tourism. // *Ecological Economics*, Volume 54, Issue 4, 15 September 2005. pp. 417-434.