

Czech University of Life Sciences Prague

Faculty of Economics and Management

Department of Economics



Bachelor Thesis

**Analyse and explain Ecotourism and its implications in
Kazakhstan**

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The aim of the bachelor thesis is to analyze ecological tourism and its development in Kazakhstan. Based on the goal, the following tasks will be solved: first, to define and establish particular characteristics of ecotourism in Kazakhstan; second, analyze the ecological tourism sector in Kazakhstan.

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The bachelor thesis consists of two parts: theoretical part and practical part. Analysis, induction, synthesis and descriptive methods will be used in the thesis.

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Declaration

I declare that I have worked on my bachelor thesis titled "Analyse and explain Ecotourism and its implications in Kazakhstan " by myself and I have used only the sources mentioned at the end of the thesis. As the author of the bachelor thesis, I declare that the thesis does not break copyrights of any their person.

In Prague on 23rd of March 2020

Kymbat Zorlykbayeva

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Analyse and explain Ecotourism and its implications in Kazakhstan

Abstract

The present bachelor's thesis deals with the analysis of ecotourism and its development in Kazakhstan. This study uses methods of analysis, induction and synthesis. Present work consists of 2 parts: theoretical and practical.

The theoretical part addresses the concept of ecotourism, the forms of ecotourism and the current development of ecological tourism globally. The chapter on the concept of ecotourism discusses the different points of view of experts on the nature of ecotourism. The chapter, which deals with the forms of ecotourism, shows how varying forms of ecotourism differ. The final chapter of the theoretical part examines the current developments in ecological tourism in the world.

The practical part examines the ecological tourism sector in Kazakhstan and analyzes the ecotourism enterprises in the country. In the practical part of the work, the general features and potential of ecological tourism in Kazakhstan are characterized. The chapter analyzes ecotourism, analyzes its strengths and weaknesses and discusses specific examples of ecotourism in different regions of Kazakhstan.

Keywords: Ecotourism, Kazakhstan, Environment, Impact.

Analýza a vysvětlení ekoturizmu a jeho dopady na Kazachstán

Abstrakt

Současná bakalářská práce se zabývá analýzou ekoturizmu a jeho rozvojem v Kazachstanu. V dané práci se aplikují analytické metody jako indukce a syntéza. Aktuální práce se skládá ze dvou částí – teoretická a praktická.

Teoretická část obsahuje pojetí o ekoturizmu, druhy ekoturizmu a současný vývoj ekologického turizmu celosvětově. Kapitola o pojetí ekoturizmu popisuje různé názory odborníků na přírodu ekoturizmu. Kapitola, která se zabývá druhy ekoturizmu, ukazuje, jak se liší druhy ekoturizmu. Poslední kapitola teoretické části zkoumá současný rozvoj v ekologickém turizmu celosvětově.

Praktická část zkoumá ekologicko-turistickou část v Kazachstanu a analyzuje podniky, které se zabývají ekoturizmem v daném státu. V praktické části dané práce všeobecné rysy a potenciál ekologického turizmu v Kazachstanu jsou charakterizované. Kapitola se zabývající analýzou ekoturizmu, analyzuje silné a slabé stránky a probírá určité příklady ekoturizmu v různých oblastech Kazachstanu.

Klíčová slova: Ekoturizm, Kazachstan, životní prostředí, dopad

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List of abbreviations

NES- National Ecotourism Strategy

UNWTO-United Nations World Tourism Organization

UNESCO-United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

NGO-Non-governmental organizations

KKSNP-Katon-Karagay State National Park

ETPACK-Ecological Tourism and Public Awareness in Central Kazakhstan

KTA-Kazakhstan National Tourism Association

WTO-Western Kazakhstan Oblast

1 Introduction

Growth in the interest of countries and companies in ecotourism is largely based on the fact that the industrial development of various countries and regions has contributed to significant environmental pollution. Tourism, which did not take care of the ecological aspects of tourism operations, has led to an increase in the number of polluted areas, which are popular tourist destinations.

The above-mentioned fact has become a significant catalyst for a worldwide increase in awareness of the need to develop tourism that would protect the environment and save the heritage of tourism. It can be argued that the rise of ecotourism has been triggered by demand (tourists in different countries have more frequently favored environmentally friendly tourism) as well as by supply (some countries and companies have begun to understand the value of maintaining the tourist potential of regions). It can be argued that ecological tourism has great potential for development, as it contributes to the conservation of the planet's resources, while allowing people to be in natural conditions and to become acquainted with the unique nature.

2 Objectives and Methodology

2.1 Objectives

The aim of the bachelor thesis is to analyze ecological tourism and its development in Kazakhstan. Based on the goal, the following tasks will be solved: first, to define and establish particular characteristics of ecotourism in Kazakhstan; second, analyze the ecological tourism sector in Kazakhstan.

2.2 Methodology

The bachelor thesis consists of two parts: theoretical part and practical part. Analysis, induction, synthesis and descriptive methods will be used in the thesis. The method of analysis is used to evaluate information on ecotourism in Kazakhstan. The induction method allows to understand a broader context of different findings on the growth of ecotourism in Kazakhstan. Finally, the method of synthesis is used to formulate the general conclusions of the issue

3 Theoretical part

Theoretical part of the present thesis discusses various definitions of ecological tourism from the moment of its emergence to the current period of time. Furthermore, theoretical section studies different types of ecological tourism that are widespread across the whole world.

3.1 Definition of ecological tourism

Following 1970, with the effects of global industrial pollution, when large oil spills polluted thousands of tons of oil, which ruined marine ecosystems and beaches, ecological principles, sustainable growth, eco-tourism were slowly becoming an alternative route for development. Eco-tourism is a shorter version of the term “ecological tourism”.

According to Tisdell and Wilson, the relationship between tourism and living things and their environments is the main concern of eco-tourism. Nevertheless, in practice eco-tourism has been more narrowly defined and has a number of meanings (Dorobatu, 2012)

The term “ecological tourism” has no single definition at present, and all current definitions of eco-tourism reinforce or complement each other and have at core the universal values and principles that reflect eco-tourism. In accordance with these values, eco-tourism should be based on natural resources and must contribute to environmental education, maintaining the social and cultural environments at the local level, providing economic benefits and sustainable development of the regions.

Ecotourism's traditional environmental interpretation is mostly undamaged natural structures or single components. The goals of the eco-tourism are practical ways in which an individual communicates with the environment and how the negative consequences of this interaction are minimized .Eco-tourism has certain recreational characteristics.

It can be argued that the main purpose of ecotourism is to provide physical recovery thanks to the stay in environmentally friendly areas, greener facilities that include different and healthy types of activities and rest. (Golubeva, Tuskaya, Tsekina, 2016)

Ecotourism was a response to the demand for more sustainable tourist industry practices that began in the second half of the 1980s. In the past few years, a great deal of misunderstanding has arisen as a result of all the definitions of eco-tourism that have been established, the often misunderstood understanding of eco-tourism and its overlap with other types of tourism, such as adventure tourism, nature-based tourism and others.

How can it be possible to define ecotourism and what are its characteristics? In the first place, it should be acknowledged that it is not realistic to have only one common interpretation of ecological tourism. Academic research proves that there are common features that differentiate ecotourism from other forms of sustainable tourism, which include the destination (1), its environmentalist objectives (2), its educational components and activities (3), the effects of ecotourism (4) and motivational framework of ecotourism enterprise (5).

With regard to the first factor-destination-the researchers agree that ecotourism is a type of tourism based on nature, indicating that tourists have their travel destinations in natural or protected areas or in areas close to nature in order to enjoy local natural environments. (Schwanborn, 2014)

E.Y. Kolbovski finds ecotourism to be a complex concept containing three parts. Each component implies blocks of specific actions and settings: 1) cognitive (emotions, knowledge, perceptions); 2) athletic (bodily effort); 3) consumer (nutrition, recreation, entertainment). We therefore concentrate on the two most common ecological tourism concepts.

Mexican ecologist and economist Hector Cébállos Lascurain proposed the First one in 1983. He interpreted ecotourism as a “travel in relatively undisturbed or pure plots of wildlife with the specific objectives of the study, as well as admiration and the pleasure of admiring the landscapes and their inhabitants, all manifestations of culture found in the area”. The Ecotourism Society provides us with the second definition: “ecotourism is a responsible travel to natural areas that promotes conservation and improves the well-being of local people” (Golubeva, Tuskaya, Tsekina, 2016)

Boo (1990) refers to eco-tourism as a nature-tourism. The approach of Tickell (1994) is different and describes eco-tourism as 'travel to enjoy the world's amazing diversity of natural life and human culture without causing damage to either'. Further, the National Ecotourism Strategy (NES) of the Australian Commonwealth Department of Tourism (1994) characterizes eco-tourism as a natural tourism that includes awareness, knowledge and ecological preservation of the natural environment. Eco-tourism is a form of sustainable tourism and any sort of nature tourism that is planned, put into effect and sustainably managed. Also, cultural and rural tourism can be regarded as eco-tourism. (Postica, Caedoso, 2014)

“It (the UNWTO description of ecotourism – author’s note) is focused on natural resources and surrounding areas, stressing their role as ecotourism attractions and the need for their conservation. The UNWTO ecotourism perspective is fully inclusive of local communities, since they are expected to benefit from the responsible management of the environment around them.” (Azara, 2018)

According to McCormick (1994) eco-tourism implies conscious travel to natural areas to observe the nature and natural history of the region, taking care not to change the dignity of the ecosystem and creating economic opportunities that will benefit local people from the protection of natural resources.

World Conservation Union (Brandon, 1996) states, that environmentally sustainable travel to relatively unspoiled natural areas to fully appreciate nature that encourages conservation, has low detrimental effect and provides for beneficially active socio-economic participation of local populations.

According to Honey (1999), travel to delicate, untouched and typically protected areas usually has minimal impact. It supports traveler education, offers environmental support, directly benefits local community economic development and political empowerment, and encourages respect for diverse cultures and human rights.

Weaver argues (1999) that the interest in ecotourism, now popular among tourism designers and marketers, is rationalized by several common beliefs about the potential economic, environmental and socio-cultural benefits of the industry. The above-mentioned author (Weaver, 2001) suggests that ecotourism in its related cultural context is a form of tourism that promotes opportunities to learn and appreciation of the natural environment. (Kiper, 2013)

Parks, Parks and Allen (2009) suggest that the concept of ecotourism should comprise of several elements: nature-based, active participation, educational travel, social and cultural elements, local community involvement and ecological sustainability. Singh, Slotkin and Vamosi (2007) query whether it is possible to have a “pure form” of ecotourism that efficiently maintains an economic, social and natural environment, because not all sustainable tourism is inherently ecotourism, therefore, sustainability by itself does not describe ecotourism. (Paço, Alves, Nunes, 2012)

“However, when correctly regulated, ecotourism can provide numerous benefits like: long-term sustainable resource preservation, empowerment of local people living in that

community, promotion of public and private cooperation and material for scientific and educational research.” (Paço, Alves, Nunes, 2012)

Cristureanu C. (2006) identified ecotourism as one of the types of tourism established in areas with a widely valued natural and cultural potential. Nistoreanu P. (2003) reported that ecotourism is a response to the growing interest in nature awareness and warning signs coming from the planet's most remote places. It states that ecotourism should be sustainable, deliver visitor satisfaction and relaxation, benefit people from the local environment and be adequate to their cultural environment as well as any other form of traditional tourism. (Dorobantu, 2012)

Ecotourism is about putting together biodiversity, the environment and sustainable travel. It implies that the following ecotourism guidelines should be practiced by those who adopt and engage in ecotourism activities:

- ✓ Reduce impact
- ✓ Raising awareness and respect for the environment and community
- ✓ Provide positive experiences to travelers and hosts
- ✓ Provide direct economic benefits to conservation
- ✓ Provide local population with financial gains and empowerment
- ✓ Improving sensitivity to the political, environmental and social conditions of host countries. (Crawford)

The definition of the term illustrates the fact that ecotourism is seen as a step beyond sustainable tourism and is essentially less generalized. Ecotourism is considered a green replacement to other forms of tourism. The term green alternative is self-explanatory; different or experimental form of sustainable tourism is another potential interpretation of ecotourism. Therefore, the ecotourism framework is of essential importance for the promotion of sustainable tourism as it can be seen as a hallmark that demonstrates an ecological and environmental consciousness.

Ecotourism was initially intended to take place in remote regions, which usually ensured a relatively small population. Ecotourism aims to raise awareness of the environment by studying biodiversity and habitats, and by offering ecological experiences. Actively participating in ecology and getting valuable experiences of how ecosystems work affect the way people think, which eventually raises concerns of biodiversity and protection. (Obenaus, 2005)

3.2 Types of ecotourism

“Ecotourism exists within the broader classification of tourism types which, at an initial level, can be divided into ‘mass tourism’ and ‘alternative tourism’. Mass tourism is seen as the more traditional form of tourism development where short-term, freemarket principles dominate and the maximization of income is paramount.” (Weaver, 2001)

Table 1: Conceptual model of tourism

Unsustainable Tourism	Sustainable Tourism
Mass Tourism	Alternative Tourism
	Socio-Cultural Tourism, Adventure Tourism, Ecotourism

Source: T.Kiper, 2013

Table 1 demonstrates that eco-tourism, as well as socio-cultural tourism and adventure tourism, is considered to be a sustainable tourism, as opposed to Mass tourism which has unsustainable character.

Table 2: Distinct characteristics between mass tourism and ecotourism

Characteristics of mass tourism.	Characteristics of ecotourism
Large groups of visitors	Small groups of visitors
Urban	Rural
Touristic general marketing activities	Eco-marketing activities.
Average prices for purposes of market penetration	High price with purpose of filtering the market
Impact on natural environment	Little impact on the natural environment
Advanced control options	Limited possibilities of control
Management based on macroeconomic principles	Management based on local economic principles
Anonymous relationship between visitors and local community	Personalized relationships between visitors and local community
General development goals	Local development objectives
Behavior-oriented leisure activities/entertainment, opponents to education and training actions	Loyalty in the process of training and education for appropriate conduct for the natural environment
Intensive development of tourism facilities	Reduced development of tourism facilities

Source: T.Kiper, 2013

There are obviously a wide range of ecotourism concepts. There are also a wide variety of tour operators and companies that have embraced the logo in various interpretations of the label. The ecotourism forms are therefore described and used in the array of definitions.

The 'strong' and 'soft' dimensions of ecotourism are defined by Laarman and Durst (1987). Such terms refer to the ecotourist's level of commitment to the journey as concerning the physical hard work and the amount of interest in the environmental attraction. Devoted ecotourists have a significant level of engagement and often experience

in the issue; for example, they may have a deep passion for whale watching or other types of nature observation.

Furthermore, ecotourists have various preferences for the level of physical difficulty and comfort they want to experience or are willing to tolerate. In order to fully 'experience' nature, a dedicated ecotourist is purposefully trained and may even want to live with a very few comforts and travel in challenging conditions in a remote setting for long periods. (Weaver, 2001)

“Ecotourism is a growing tourism market. Further, ecotourists are now influencing general travellers’ preferences. Until recently, there has been little market information on ecotourists’ characteristics, preferences and motivations, and one gap in information has been their accommodation preferences.” (Ryan, Page, 2012)

The 'soft' ecotourist, on the other hand, has vague interest in the environmental attraction but would like to encounter the attraction on more of a shallow and structured basis. Likewise, the soft ecotourist is less willing to accept pain and physical suffering as part of the experience and may be happier to spend a great deal of their time in an interpretive center surrounded by other visitors. Hard ecotourists are frequently engaged in specialized ecotourism travel, while soft ecotourists have rather short-lived interest in eco-tourism. (Weaver, 2001)

Miller and Kaae (1993) identified the diverse range of meanings and implementations of the ecotourism concept as part of a vast spectrum related to the environment. The spectrum of frameworks for ecotourism is characterized by opposite poles. In one pole is the belief that all tourism (including ecotourism) has adverse effects on the natural world. In other words, irrespective of the management strategies in place, people have an inherent effect by their very existence.

Consequently, in this view, ecotourism is unrealistic because any form of tourism has a negative impact. On the other hand, people are considered to be living creatures – fauna – whose behavior is ultimately "normal." In other words, humans, like all other living beings, are part of the natural world and therefore, human behavior is 'normal' and leads to the natural development of life.

This view suggests that because humans are a part of "nature," they are a part of the "natural process" and therefore simply cannot be abnormal. Thus, there is no distinction in their 'naturalness' between ecotourism and other types of tourism, thus all tourism is eco-

tourism. Both of these are drastic and impractical positions. In fact, ecotourism forms can be considered to lie between these polar extremes. (Weaver, 2001)

“Nature-based tourism is ultimately based upon the factors that allow an area to display the characteristics of perceived and actual naturalness. These factors include accessibility, numbers of visitors and the relative naturalness as defined by distance from permanent human structures and ecological integrity.” (Higham, 2007)

Forms of ecotourism can also be categorized according to their ability to adhere to their degree of effect on the natural environment. This classification is linked to a consideration of ecotourism ethics. A number of authors view the concern as an integral part of any ecotourism debate. Nevertheless, it is difficult to view ecotourism in any other way; for the idea that ecotourism is seeking to 'do the morally correct thing' is implicit in almost all meanings of ecotourism. The previously discussed concepts of conservation, sustainability and sustainable tourism have a common ethical dimension and are definitions strongly tied to that of ecotourism.

The variability within the field of ecotourism concerns what is in fact the 'morally right thing.' Without looking deeper into fundamental biology and environmental ethics, Aldo Leopold's often-quoted statement is a valuable simple guideline for ecotourism. 'A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise.'

Therefore, ecotourism projects that contribute meaningfully to natural environment development can be regarded as 'better' or as being more progressive and responsible. Procedures which damage the quality of the natural environment can be called 'worse' or more exploitative and irresponsible. Between these forms of ecotourism are those types which can be considered as more neutral and inactive, actions which simply seek to mitigate their effect on the natural environment.

This type of analytical approach can be illustrated as a diagram. It recognizes that many various kinds of ecotourism exist but believes that some are greater than another. Indeed, this typology has been used as a framework for arguing that the duty of ecotourism companies and organizations should be to encourage transfer on this spectrum from less acceptable states to more desirable ones. (Weaver, 2001)

Large tourism and Alternative Tourism. Although sustainable forms of tourism and ecotourism were originally intended as responses to the effects of mass tourism, the interpretations and claims of modern tourism made by popular authors find ecotourism to

be a part of mass tourism and alternative tourism. It seems clear that alternative tourism has arisen as a response to the negative impacts of the growth of mass tourism.

This doesn't necessarily imply however that alternative tourism is less risky than mass tourism. The degree of sustainability guaranteed by some form of tourism significantly depends on its agenda and decisions. The program can be regarded as contributing to sustainable development if alternative tourism strategies include approaches to acceptable, eco-, responsible or managed development. (Obenaus, 2005)

„Alternative tourism emerged in the early 1980s as part of the adaptancy platform. The term was conceived to encompass products and activities that were thought to be more appropriate than conventional mass tourism. Alternative tourism may therefore be regarded as an early form of engagement with the idea of sustainability.” (Weaver, 2007)

Tourism based on nature versus Ecotourism. Because of the limited meaning of these two words, nature-based tourism and ecotourism are easily considered to be the same. However, this is not practically the case because nature-based tourism is more damaging than ecological tourism, due to its effects on ecosystems. Definitions of these two types of tourism sometimes intersect because they both offer activities linked to natural and wildlife ecosystems.

Given the before-mentioned meanings of both concepts, ecotourism is certainly one aspect of nature-based tourism. A very extensive definition is adopted by all forms of nature-based activities and integrates environmental awareness. The very specific nature of ecotourism forms part of the large definition of nature-based tourism, or ecotourism can be defined in terms of a nature-based tourism activity.

Nature-based tourism as a wide term is rather directed towards offering this experience regardless of the impact it may have on natural environments. Often nature-based tourism has many negative environmental impacts and hence it can be considered as a human-oriented tourism rather than nature-oriented. Eco-tourism, on the other hand, has been "applauded as the right salvation for endangered wildlife populations" as a particular aspect of nature-based tourism. It focuses much more on rescuing ecosystems and wildlife, rather than providing experiences to tourists. (Obenaus, 2005)

“Nature-based tourism is undoubtedly one of the most significant areas of research in tourism studies today. Nature-based tourism includes tourism in natural settings (e.g. adventure tourism), tourism that focuses on specific elements of the natural environment (e.g. safari and wildlife tourism, nature tourism, marine tourism), and tourism that is

developed in order to conserve or protect natural areas (e.g. ecotourism, national parks).” (Hall, Boyd, 2005)

Even though both forms are part of alternative tourism, the differences can be shown by the following example. Wherever there is an environment with undisturbed living wildlife and an intact ecosystem, nature-based tourism will seek to bring as many visitors as possible and give them the best experiences there.

If run in the same region, ecotourism will seek to bring as few visitors as possible to ensure the capacity of wildlife to survive in its natural habitat and to keep the ecosystem as intact as possible. Accordingly, it can be noted that nature-based tourism is rather quantity-oriented, while ecotourism is rather quality-oriented and therefore tries to protect this particular quality.

There can be a debate about the distinction between adventure tourism and ecotourism. Considering the history of these forms of tourism, a number of similarities can be found. It is the countryside and outdoor lifestyle that certainly inspires people to spend their recreational time away from their everyday lives and spend time around nature. Recreation in nature is therefore one of the most important factors in the development of modern tourism.

This phenomenon can be expected to support the development of ecotourism which is true to some extent. However, it should be noted that outdoor, nature-based or entertainment tourism is economically viable only if certain limitations are not exceeded. It appears that there are many intersecting concepts between the definitions of adventure tourism and that of ecotourism as mentioned earlier.

The ecotourism is more oriented to passive exploration of nature and adventure tourism is defined by active involvement, which is an important way to distinguish these two forms of tourism. For a better definition of the term adventure tourism it is worth noting that there must always be a factor of uncertainty for the individual to be interested in an experience in adventure tourism.

The aim of adventure tourism is to create exciting and thrilling experiences for tourists in nature surroundings. Ecotourism, on the other hand, aims to educate tourists about nature and why it needs protection. It helps people to feel more in harmony with their environment and to appreciate nature. Furthermore, ecotourism aims to increase environmental awareness for nature and ecosystems. (Obenaus,2005)

3.3 Contemporary development of ecological tourism in the world

“At the end of the twentieth century, the world witnessed growing interest in outdoor recreation and traveling to various virgin natural places, national parks and reserves. Ecological tourism became a logical response to the evolving need of the population to have a rest in the environmentally clean areas, in national parks and reserves.” (Nikolaeva, Bogoliubova, Shirin, 2015)

The development of environmentally friendly tourism is connected to the rise of mass tourism, which cause a series of environmental problems in numerous countries. People came to an understanding of nature’s value and the necessity to protect biodiversity which led to a further development of ecological tourism. The statistics illustrate that ecotourism has been developing quickly in the last several years: in 2014 the share of ecotourism reached more than 25 % of the overall tourism market. Every year the number of ecological tourists increases by 20%.

Ecotourism is also linked to country’s image. The ecological well-being of a country depends greatly on its national wellbeing. Looking at the World Economic Forum’s statistics, correlations can be found between countries with the highest Environmental Performance Index and the 10 most developed and competitive economies. (Nikolaeva, Bogoliubova, Shirin, 2015)

Ecotourism is a quickly developing global movement aiming to create a better, greener and more ethical tourism. Beside evaluating the impact of world’s tourism businesses on the environment, people should at the same time seek ways to support the local economy, communities and culture. That would lead not only to a more ethical and greener tourism but would as well be of greater interest to people who wish to alter their way of traveling.

A constantly increasing number of travelers want their journeys to be less invasive, socially and culturally, and economically more profitable to the communities of visited areas. As shown by the International Ecotourism Society, since the 1990s, the market has grown at a rate of 20-34 per cent per year, depending on the location. The growth rate of world tourism in general is more than three times higher. (Crawford)

“Travel companies which specialise in selling ecotourism holidays, such as responsibletravel.com, Explore, Exodus, The Adventure Company or Tribes Travel continue to grow from strength to strength. They knew what was coming, established a strict ethical framework early on, and have been able to build upon it as demand grew.” (Crawford)

The participation and involvement of local people is extremely important and absolutely necessary for the development of the touristic attraction, particularly for the ecotourism growth. One aim in the development of eco-tourism is to offer an alternate option enhancing living and job standards, so that the community can be actively involved from the start of the preparation process and the implementation of the growth of eco-tourism.

The next significant concept in eco-tourism growth is to promote community involvement through the exchange of ideas, activities, policy-making and participation in the production of ecotourism activities. The activities that were established later are supposed to provide a foundation for symbiotic mutualism, community and shared advantage among tourists. Engagement of local people is a necessity for the effective growth of green tourism. (Siswanto, 2015)

Accommodation for ecotourism should be provided by the local community. They usually inhabit their house as homestay for the community. The eco-tourism village concept could serve as stimulus for active tourism creation by local people. In Wahyuni (2016) Inskip (1991) has mentioned that a tourism village is the type of tourism in which several guests live or stay in an isolated settlement, discovering their life style and setting. (Giriwati et al., 2019)

“Another definition of tourism village is an integration between attractions, accommodation and supporting facilities that are presented in a structure of community life that is integrated with prevailing procedures and its attached traditions. In the ecotourism development, it is important to empowering local people in all development process.” (Giriwati et al., 2019)

The International Ecotourism Society defines the standard 'eco-tourist' as getting 'more' of everything. They are more educated than most other visitors and typically have more income. Nonetheless, ecotourism should not be limited to this 'more' tourist as the ecotourist does not need to represent a stereotype.

The UNWTO expected this new way of thinking about tourism when it published its Global Code of Ethics for Tourism in 2001. For anyone who wants to gain a greater understanding of ecotourism, this document is a must-read. It discusses "the contribution of tourism to mutual understanding and respect between peoples and societies" and distances itself from the traditional language of sustainable development. (Crawford)

Sustainable development via ecotourism is a global concern today. Numerous countries ensured their regional development in the framework of ecotourism. In this context,

ecotourism and regional development will take place simultaneous in a location. Ecotourism development dimensions apply to the environmental, cultural, and social aspects of tourism growth and an appropriate balance must be formed between these dimensions in order to maintain its sustainability in the long-term. (Kiper, 2013)

„An essential feature of ecotourism is sustainability – and sustainable development by implication. Suffice it here to say that, despite the ambiguity surrounding it, the concept of sustainability is fundamental to the positioning of any tourist experience as alternative. Environmentally sustainable tourism has come to be fundamentally identified with alternative tourism.” (Wearnig, Neil, 2013)

Ecotourism works for one or more of the eco-friendly alternatives for natural resource economic use compared to mining, fishing, farming etc. Through introducing tourists and locals to nature and conservation, ecotourism encourages increased awareness of the natural habitats and environmental education. Ecotourism is widely regarded as protecting natural areas and thus contributing to biodiversity conservation.

Ecotourism aims to learn and understand nature, flora and fauna, biodiversity and natural habitats, in addition to exploring cultural artefacts from the area. During the planning of ecotourism activity, the most important aspect is the environment and how to protect it. The planning of an ecotourism destination should always include the environmental concern in it. Further, the availability of water resources during the ecotourism activity provides certain benefits with regards to utilization and visuality.

The area's climate features directly and indirectly affect tourism and play the critical role in tourism growth. Some appealing components of ecotourism are plants since they draw interest thanks to their size, age or appearance. Plants that blossom are important ecotourism resources. Historical, cultural, and traditional values are important factors for ecotourism.

As Soykan writes, one of the key appeals for the growth of ecotourism in one area is traditional commercial products. This is because there are cultural differences in the whole production cycle from planting to harvesting and processing, and majority of them are done in traditional ways. Ecotourism has the potential to have a significant impact on local communities, primarily due to ecotourists' predisposition to be more interested in the culture and nature of the areas they visit as compared to mass tourists.

Ecotourism destinations are often environmentally sensitive as ecotourism practices directly involve various environmental activities like bird watching, trekking,

mountaineering, horse riding and elephant riding in the wild natural paths, researching flora and fauna, basic bush walking, fishing, observing animal behavior and ecological research. (Kiper, 2013)

“Ecotourism always incorporates various activities in nature (hiking, mountain climbing, observing the living beings in their natural habitat, etc.), but it may include cultural activities, too. Ecotourism is an important educational component, it is a chance to learn respect for nature, for the local culture, and for some it is a chance to self-reflection being inspired by the beauty of the surroundings.” (Kiper, 2013)

While the growth of eco-tourism is still in its infancy, authentic tourism has the capacity to offer a win - win approach to ensuring nature conservation and economic development as a result of careful eco-tourism planning and management. The UN has genuinely sought to promote the principles of eco-tourism, both from the point of view of visitors and tourism companies, and to contribute to the development of sustainable tourism.

In addition, tourism activities should integrate the management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and esthetic needs can be met while preserving cultural identity, vital ecological cycles and biodiversity. The eco-tourism industry is likely to face significant challenges in a highly competitive marketplace in order to meet the objective of sustainable development, particularly sustainable eco-tourism. (Kumar,Ramaswamy, 2010) Managing organizations such as the central government, regional self-governing bodies, public agencies, citizens, NGOs, research institutions, and private agencies support ecotourism. Depending on the characteristics of the primary manager, ecotourism led by the central government, local self-governing bodies, or public agencies is regarded as ecotourism initiated by the government and ecotourism led by citizens or private agencies is regarded as ecotourism initiated by the people.

For the successful management of ecotourism resources, the formation of governance led by the managers and operators of ecotourism is needed. Governance makes reference to the Integrated Policy Making Forum. It is an advisory group that mediates the strategic goals and preferences of each investor through official and non-official communications.

Governance can be established through a government-led top-down approach or a citizens-led bottom-up approach. With the top-down approach, the path and goal of ecotourism growth set by the central government is effectively distributed. This strategy will lead to rapid results, as a major investment can be made in a short time. It is also fairly easy to

provide consulting resources to residents through collaboration with specialists. (Choi et al., 2017)

“With this approach, however, considerations of the unique characteristics of the specific attraction, tourist demand, resident participation and discussions on the distribution of income may be undermined. The bottom-up approach may require more time and costs to find the local uniqueness and reach a resident consensus but it can enable community participation and facilitate discussions on income distribution.” (Choi et al., 2017)

Ecotourism encourages the conservation and conservation of the environment and biodiversity of a tourist destination. The driving factors for sustainable ecotourism are the knowledge, culture, historical and natural background of the region to ensure that the local ecosystem is considered and protected. In addition, part of the sustainable ecotourism revenue is allocated to the protection of natural resources and part of the income is distributed in the region. The main focus of this position is the promotion of an ethical approach to ecotourism. (Rostami, Froozanfar, 2014)

4 Practical Part

This part of the thesis considers common characteristics and special traits of ecological tourism in Kazakhstan. Further, it contains an analysis of ecological tourism in Kazakhstan on the basis of several examples of eco-tourism products.

4.1 Ecological tourism in Kazakhstan

Ecotourism can be considered as an integral part of a stable tourism sector. Stable tourism is directed towards providing 3 key targets: quality – tourism should influence the quality of life of all the tourism process participants; optimality – exploitation of natural resources should be optimal and should ensure their renewal; balance – distribution of benefits among the participants of tourism process should be fair.

In Kazakhstan, ecological tourism is growing slowly. However, the number of eco-tourism initiatives is increasing, and we should foresee an increase in the supply in this market segment in the years to come. Protected natural areas have the greatest potential for the development of ecotourism, but it is important to select priority areas for the development of ecotourism. (Kairova, Yesimova, Malikova, 2018)

The growth of ecotourism in Kazakhstan is one of the priority tasks for improving the economic situation in the country and creating the requisite conditions for the development of related industries. There are all the necessary prerequisites for this: the state possesses unique natural resources and a distinctive culture and heritage of nomads. (Daribaeva, Shulenbaeva., 2016)

In the past few years there was a significant growth of global interest in Kazakhstan as a touristic destination and, therefore, the spectrum of tourism services provided by local guides to attract more travelers also enlarged. Beside natural sights, Kazakhstan is rich with historical and cultural monuments located along the Great Silk Way which have global significance.

Organization of various transit tours along the Great Silk Way is currently especially important because it should provide Kazakhstan an opportunity to cooperate with such countries as Japan, Malaysia, China, Korea, as well as European countries. Touristic potential of Kazakhstan has unique opportunities for development nearly all types of tourism, starting with learning interest tourism – related to visiting cultural and historical objects, ecological tourism which includes observation of rare types of flora and fauna, as well as adventure and other active categories of tourism.

On the state level, tourism is recognized as one of the priority sectors of the economy. The leading role in the growth of the industrial-innovative economy in Kazakhstan belongs to the network of domestic clusters. The tourism cluster has a special role in this system. On 19 May 2014, the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan adopted a vision for the growth of tourism in the region.

The above-mentioned conception determines 5 national tourism clusters: Astana, Almaty, Eastern Kazakhstan, Southern Kazakhstan and Western Kazakhstan. One of the main goals of the conception is the development of ecotourism and ecological enlightenment, including the areas that are specially protected. (Daribaeva, Shulenbaeva, 2016)

Ecotourism can be regarded as the main tourism product of Kazakhstan which, however, has weak competitiveness at the international market. Potential interest for this tourism product amounts to 8,9 million people (in other words, 63 % of the whole population of Kazakhstan). Unfortunately, today, ecotourism is not a priority for Kazakhstan's state tourism policy. This form of tourism, which has a distinct social dimension, is not stated in any of the State's strategic documents.

Ecotourism in Kazakhstan is growing slowly, but a number of projects on this theme are increasing and growth in the tourism sector can be anticipated in the following years. Specially protected areas have the greatest potential for the growth of ecological tourism. Nevertheless, it is important to give priority to certain areas for the creation of ecotourism rather than others.

Based on the study of natural resources and recreation opportunities in Kazakhstan, the following indicators have been identified: favorable climate conditions, ecological attractiveness of the environment, opportunities for recreation, biodiversity, availability of natural sights, culture. (Kiryushchenko, Itaeva, 2019)

A number of tourists show increasing interest in reserved zones of Kazakhstan, making the development of ecological tourism a new perspective in organized tourism (bike, horse, water...). The need of this development is not only caused by economic factors, such as creation of new jobs or the development of remote communities, but also for the need for a more systemic approach to complex problems like health protection and use of free time. The World Tourism Organization has issued statements defining ecological tourism as one of the most popular instruments to sustainable state development. (Shevyakova, Tyugina, Arystan, 2018)

4.1.1 Features and Potential of ecological tourism

The special trait of ecotourism is that it allows to combine tourism in natural condition with cultural peculiarities of touristic destination. With the growing commodification of cultural heritage and Kazakhstan's desire for ecotourism, tourists can explore the country with tourism operators partnering with home-stay providers that have historical ties to the settlements. The rebirth of cattle production encouraging travelers visiting Kazakhstan to encounter semi-nomadic cattle breeders' lives, and the desire for authentic cultural heritage experiences is gradually contributing to a variety of new nature and cultural tourism items offering the insights of indigenous communities as eco-cultural tourism attractions.

International organizations shall provide some authentication, also referred to as certification procedures or, in a broader sense, accreditation of cultural heritage artifacts, such as the UNESCO World Heritage Sites List. These certifications are often used as an efficient way of promoting the cultural heritage of local communities. They also ensure an appropriate level of environmental performance for commercial tourism products. (Tiberghien, 2019)

Ecotourism includes such a form of tourism as an eco-village stay. The key principle of eco-village is to use a limited amount of autonomous energy from renewable sources such as wind, water and sun. In addition, only renewable and ecologically sustainable materials are used for the building of eco-houses. Throughout the course of realizing eco-village within Kazakhstan, yurts can be built in which visitors can learn about the national style of accommodation, national cuisine and traditions.

Nutrition in these types of settlements is rational and, as a rule, is realized at the cost of organic agriculture and farming, which can as well involve inhabitants of neighboring villages and tourists themselves. This can contribute to the development of not only ecotourism, but also agritourism. Furthermore, the majority of ecovillages have their policy which consist in stable agriculture, forest use and the encouragement of healthy lifestyle.

Creation and development of national parks and wildlife preservations undoubtedly compose the basis of the development of ecological and rural tourism. In Kazakhstan there are officially 12 functioning national parks which together with ecovillages could become and object of global interest. Such type of settlements represents one of the modern forms of ecotourism realization which propagates harmonious interaction between human and nature, while at the same time trying to limit human's negative anthropogenic influence on nature. (Usenova, Razdobudko, 2017)

While developing an eco-tourism market, it is important to offer tourism correctly, given that Kazakhstan has a unique nomad culture and a rich natural diversity. Kazakhstan's supplying sector of eco-cultural tourism involves a variety of actors namely community members (home-stay suppliers), decision makers (public officials from the Republic of Kazakhstan's Ministry of Tourism and Sport), and tourism developers such as tour operators, local and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs). (Tiberghien, Bremner, Milne, 2018)

Nearly all actors involved in the growth of eco-cultural tourism in Kazakhstan emphasize the importance of ecological and cultural factors in the experience of tourists. Cultural practices and cooking rituals are also a key component of the quality of tourism experience offered to travelers by tourism providers.

Whereas most home-stay providers stress the value of protecting nature and history, NGO coordinators stress the concept of authenticity as a special and significant aspect synonymous with the country's eco-cultural tourism activities and tours. A revival of nomadic rituals is important for state authorities for tourism growth purposes, as it helps to

affirm the attractive perceptions of nomadic culture and the Silk Road by travelers. (Tiberghien, Bremner, Milne, 2018)

Table 3 Classification signs of assessment of ecotourism potential of the territory of Kazakhstan

Primary conditions	Secondary conditions	Limiting conditions
Diverse climatic Conditions	A sharp continent Climate(the possibility of developing summer and winter tourism)	Complicated climate transition
Ecological Attractiveness of landscape elements (mountains, rivers, ponds ,glaciers, canyons, natural parks, waterfalls, caves)	Travel comfort: availability and condition of roads, transport accessibility	Ecological state of lands, forests, waters, air
Biodiversity: plants, rare animals	Availability of emergency medical care	Dangerous and poisonous species of plants, animals, bloodsucking and parasitic insects
Recreational opportunities (beaches, ecotours, rivers, lakes), Natural monuments	Availability of well-maintained infrastructure elements, information support	Pollution of recreational areas: environmentally polluting emissions, discharges
Culture: local customs, preservation of traditional way of life	Diversity of natural monuments	Preservation of environmental safety

Source: Kairova, Essimova ,Malikova 2018

Group of primary conditions factors includes main natural and cultural conditions which have been forming during decades and centuries. Secondary conditions consist of conditions created by state on the modern level, therefore factors that can be changed and altered by states and owners of tourism enterprises.

Limiting conditions are predetermined by barriers which occur both naturally (dangerous and poisonous species of plants,animals) and superficially (pollution of recreational areas: environmentally polluting emissions, discharges). Some of these limiting factors can be eliminated (for example, pollution of recreational areas), while others (for example, dangerous and poisonous species of plants, animals) refer to the natural potential of Kazakhstan and its flora and fauna despite also being classified as limiting conditions.

4.2 Analysis of ecological tourism in Kazakhstan

In 2003 several international NGOs financed the project of introduction and implementation of ecotourism principles in Kazakhstan. In the framework of the project several ecovillages were created for tourists – ecosystems (overall 15) and the term

“ecotourism” began to be used widely. It is difficult to call them ecosystems because there is something reverse in international practices that includes villages where inhabitants invite guests according to the concept of rural ecotourism. For example, about 50 families lived in 25 villages in Kazakhstan. The cost of living in such villages is quite high: about 50 dollars a day which usually includes accommodation, food and baths in the outside area. (Gazizova, Fakhrudanova, Titova, 2019)

Stable tourism is closely connected to ecotourism. The following functions of stable ecotourism can be mentioned:

1. Stable tourism implies the highest possible level of “green technology” use in its processes (“green energy”, “green food”, “green housing” etc.)
2. Stable tourism, unlike mass tourism, is a personalized tourism which is directed towards helping ecology and saving the environment.
3. Stable tourism requires constant monitoring of how human affects the character of supplying the necessary preventive and/or corrective measures when it is needed.

Breach of these functions and rules leads to the fall of ecotourism and the life cycle of product. Distortion happens when the idea of stable tourism turns into a simple tourism product of mass consumption. As was mentioned before, the conception of stable tourism is not yet developed and widely spread in Kazakhstan.

Tour operators in Kazakhstan have recently began to use prefix (brand) “Eco” in order to attract visitors since it significantly increases the price of tours. However, the amount of unique natural objects led to the creation of ecological tours on the basis of existing tours and routes of mass tourism. It is difficult to follow the principles of stable tourism where mass tourism routes take place.

4.2.1 Strengths and weaknesses of ecotourism

Places of ecological tourism lack “green technologies” such as solar batteries, biological water cleanse etc. Cottages and other housings are built next to objects (for example, lake Kolsai, Almaty region), while electricity and electric poles surround every house and summer house. Nevertheless, it is necessary to determine whether living in yurts (ethnic housing made of felt) can be considered as ecotourism if it is located next to contemporary cottages. (Gazizova, Fakhrudanova, Titova, 2019)

In the area of tourism development in Kazakhstan in general and ecotourism in particular there is a number of significant problems. As experts argue, one of the key factors behind

the underdeveloped tourism industry in Kazakhstan is the absence of local governments accepting tourism as an economic practice. Tourism growth in a country relies first of all on the growth of an educated and professional labor. For this purpose, technical courses must be opened to build the requisite professional workers, and work trainings should be designed to boost current tourism skills.

Kazakhstan's main tourism challenge is "demand insufficiency." This may be due to a lack of successful marketing. The countries of the region in particular should develop a growing marketing strategy. For Kazakhstan an ambitious image strategy has to be implemented and product creation, special regulations on marketing, pricing and protection have to be made. (Procedia Economics and Finance, 2016)

Analysis of the development of stable tourism in Kazakhstan showed that international incoming tourism in the country has a slow rate of development and as a result the life cycle of a product is at the level of fast decay. The highlighted reasons for shortening of the production life cycle of ecological tourism production allow to give certain recommendations: strengthening of state regulation, introduction of ecological control, inspections and certification of ecological routes as well as introduction of state support for ecotourism monitoring of its main indices. (Gazizova, Fakhruzenova, Titova, 2019)

4.2.2 Eastern Kazakhstan

One of the main regions of ecotourism in Kazakhstan is the Eastern Kazakhstan region. In the framework of cluster development of this area, the region will be a center of ecotourism development and will be positioned as the "World of nature miracles". The main tourism products that will be developed in the given cluster include active and adventure tourism, both in mountains and lakes. In the framework of research, 100 potential touristic destinations were identified and the 27 most attractive direction in the Eastern Kazakhstan were evaluated including their economic, social and ecological stability, priority tourism clusters were identified as well. (Shabanova, Lomakin, 2017)

From the standpoint of ecotourism, in Eastern Kazakhstan Special attention should be given to the territory of the Kazakh Altai, which is part of the ecological zone Altai-Sayan. Because of its diverse environment and ecology, this area is listed in 200 priority global ecological areas, identified by the "WWF Living Earth" International Organization. Ecotourism growth in the East Kazakh region needs fresh impetus. East Kazakhstan has

large unspoiled nature areas, but sadly the production of ecological tourism in the region has been largely undeveloped until recently (Duisebayeva, Akasheva, 2018)

There is strong demand for intense tourism in East Kazakhstan and the Altai Mountains including gliding with bicycles. Kazakhstan's southern and west regions rely on the natural environment and Islamic cultural and historical landmarks. It's intended to do tours of camels in Atyrau region. In the Korgalzhyn Nature Reserve, near the town of Nur-Sultan (Astana), saline lakes and large waterfowl birds can be found which are attractive for ecotourists. There are approximately 750–800 tourism companies operating in Kazakhstan and interacting with at least 80 countries, of which about 10 to 15 percent are active in tourist attraction and local touristic services.

On this ground, the Government is creating several conditions for local tourism growth. Most of the country's scenic and beautiful locations remain inaccessible to the public, and the most significant issue in the republic's tourism sector is the challenge, which is hard to resolve. First of all, in order to find a solution, creative information technology, including the development of websites, must be used to improve Kazakhstan's tourism capacity on the Internet. (Kenzhina, Kulmaganbetova, Huszi, 2017)

The Katon-Karagay State National Park (KKSNP) is the largest of Kazakhstan's nature reserves and ecosystem protected areas. Overall, in the context of national eco-tourism management, the KKSNP has the best preconditions for the geo-tourism sector, strongly competitive with other mountain regions of the World. The potential development of geo- and eco-tourism resorts in East Kazakhstan is tied up with naturally majestic locations (such as Mynshunkyr's saline mud spa, Yazovoye Lake radon gas spa, Rakhmanovskye Klyuchi, Sibinskiye Glaciers, Shul'ba Dam, Kiim-Kerish Canyon, Aygyrkum dunes, etc.) (Chlachula ,2019)

Implementing combined tours is also interesting, during which tourists can both observe natural sights and learn the city culture. While organizing ecotours, their organizers are more oriented towards the wild areas of Eastern Kazakhstan nature, rather that towards specially protected natural territories, thus creating combined tours. In the Semey region such combined week tour is organized as an ecological-historical tour to the natural landmark Zhidebai, to Abai mausoleum. The length of this tour is about 200 km.

The journey starts with the rest time in nature, observing the relic pine forest surrounding the city of Semey. In winter, tourists can be occupied with skiing at the special recreation area, while in summer an ecological hiking tour can be organized. Tourists have the

opportunity to go on a hike 1-2 km long in the direction of the village Staraya Krepost (“Old Fortress”). Staraya Krepost received its name by the Semipalatinsk military fortress that was built on this territory which then was rebuilt in 1718 at the contemporary place of city.

The next several days tourists can spend in the Semey city itself. The city is long known as a spiritual-cultural center of Kazakhstan, as a birthplace of a famous philosopher and enlightener Abay, philologist Shakarim, writer M. Auesov, as well as academic and scientist K. Satpaev. The city also has a number of historical and cultural sights and minuments. At the place of contemporary city and as a result of archeological research the ruins of an old city of 16th century was found. (Ayapbekova, Dzhangeldina, Musapir, 2020)

Further, national parks represent an important component in the area of ecotourism. National parks hold top roles in ecological tourism growth. National parks should be viewed as areas of attraction for visitors along with nature reserves while protecting wildlife biodiversity. Unfortunately, in Kazakhstan, travelers and tour operators don't grasp the distinction between ecotourism and camping. Classic ecotourism's key aim is to build visitor ecological understanding, and visitors should get educated about the region's and country's natural and cultural heritage.

Ecotourists, who are targeted to various groups of visitors, are distinguished by accommodation styles such as chambers, tourism destinations, and vacation homes. In addition to business tourism, Kazakhstan's ecological tourism has high potential for tourism sector growth. Considering the Republic of Kazakhstan's tourist wealth and prospects, specialists propose developing ecological tourism to the country. Kazakhstan gives visitors the chance to get to know the natural and cultural scenery, the national hospitality.

Yet there are also unsolved issues in the world of tourism and « white spots ». Proposals to fix those problems are below:

1. Efficient Network Creation.
2. Production of comfortable travel at competitive rates.
3. Improve route and communications standard.
4. Creating highly rated hotels and campsites.
5. Data support in this field should be mastered (maps, links, travel guides, relative websites and other elements of the tourism industry).

Public agencies operating in Kazakhstan and around the world contributed to the sustainable tourism growth and its values. Through recruiting donor organizations these mechanisms have invested money in the growth of eco-tourism. The Ecotourism Information Management Center (EARO) is one of the first such initiatives.

This organization was founded to establish environmentally sustainable tourism and local communities. The center was founded by the Tourist Association of Kazakhstan in 2005. Ecotourism Knowledge Resource Center focuses on sustainable tourism and gathers ecotourism data and resource collection. Further, the EARO is a Tourist Market Unit required. Eco-friendly advertising is a vital part of Kazakhstan's ecological tourism growth. (Kenzhina, Kulmaganbetova, Huszti, 2017)

Because of ecotourism development, the issue of preserving flora and fauna in the region is often raised, in the area where ecotourism services are implemented. Owing to the potentially very harmful impact on biodiversity, ecologists and society are worried about the national tourism initiative «Kok Zhailyau». In addition, activists believe it will totally kill the survival of biodiversity, which is crucial for threatened species such as snow leopard and Turkestani lynx. Despite economic benefits, it is recommended to focus on established mountain ski resorts such as «Shymbulak» and «Tabagan», which operate entirely. (Batyrova, Mombekova, Yilmaz, 2018)

4.2.3 Ecotourism Tours

As some examples of ecotourism offer in Kazakhstan Shabanbai Bi and Kanshengel can be mentioned.

The place of the two villages where tourists lived and conducted eco-cultural events during their visits: Shabanbai Bi for tour Kyzylarai (in central Kazakhstan) and Kanshengel (in southern Kazakhstan) for tour Tulip, respectively. These trips featured numerous types of nomadic cultural heritage objects as well as Bronze Age historical sites.

The Kyzylarai tour was founded by representatives of the project Ecological Tourism and Public Awareness in Central Kazakhstan (ETPACK), and was one of the first community-based eco-tours sponsored by national and international organizations in Central Kazakhstan. The three-day tour of Kyzylarai incorporated a visit to Begazy's granite sepulchres with rock paintings from the Bronze Age on the first day, a second day excursion to the nearby archeological and ethnographic museum, and a journey to the village of ShabanBai Bi on the third day of the trip.

The Tulip tour was arranged by a representative of Kazakhstan National Tourism Association (KTA), who is also the publisher of Kazakhstan's first detailed of regional guide book. The first day featured a visit to the Tamgaly UNESCO World Heritage site petroglyphs from the Middle and Late Bronze Age. After exploring the steppe plains on the second day of the trip, the trip went on to a camel farm where tourists were given the chance to explore camel milk goods (shubat, kurt) from the local nomadic community. The tour was planned for travelers who endeavored to explore living in a yurt uniquely arranged for them.

The Tulip and Kyzylarai tours offered various degrees of cultural heritage commodification and, especially, unique tourism items representing the different views of the organizers on the development of eco-cultural tourism. Although tour operators gave home-stay suppliers on the Kyzylarai tour more freedom and opportunity to connect with tourists in the village of Shabanbai Bi, the tourism experience in the village of Kanshengel was more regulated by the Tulip Tour Organizer, who offered a commodified version of the Nomadic culture that constrained interactions and conversations between travelers and locals.

Operators from both the Kyzylarai and Tulip journeys perceived cultural environments not just as a source of authentic tourism experience, but also as an aspect of an eco-cultural tourism interaction that remained untouched and critically credible. By reaffirming their ancestral ties to landscapes, home-stay suppliers might likewise create and deliver tourism experiences that highlight steppes and mountains as genuine tourism experiences. (Tiberghien, 2019)

4.2.4 Ulytau region

Among the numerous destinations of tourism business in Ulytau region, where the National historical-cultural and natural museum “Ulytau” (Karaganda region), the most optimal are such types of tourism as ecological and pilgrimages to sacred places. While pilgrimage is mostly attractive for inside tourists, ecological tourism can be of interest for tourists from abroad.

Ulytau regional government is planning to reconstruct the recreational base “Bolatsai” on account of investors, as well as to organize ethno-village for tourists and other important issues. The agenda includes the organization of a center for various traditional handicrafts

creators and artists. The creation of such craftsmen village would show the indigenous culture of Kazakh people to tourists from around the world.

Important fact is that the selling of handicrafts and souvenirs would bring additional profit to the region budget. Despite the great territory, the Ulytau region has a relatively low population. Therefore, there are many beautiful places and untouched natural sights in the region which would in its turn protect local flora and fauna. (Ayapbekova, Dzhangeldina, Musapir, 2020)

4.2.5 Northern Kazakhstan

In the North of Kazakhstan tourism in the places of sacral geography is part of wider ecotourism sector. It includes unique places which have historical significance and value.

Tourism in areas of sacred geography is part of ecotourism in northern Kazakhstan. We're talking about special sites of historical interest. For example, there are 10 places in the northern region of Kazakhstan. Karasai and Agyntay Batyr memorial complex, Botai settlement, Syrymbet Manor, Abylay Khan's residence, the Kyzylzhar Mosque and the Cathedral of Apostles Peter and Paul. Such historic and cultural sites can be paired with natural resources which will make it possible to establish a single organized offer of ecological tourism in northern Kazakhstan. (Dmitriyev, Fomin, Nosonov, 2018)

4.2.6 Western Kazakhstan

The Western Kazakhstan Oblast (WKO) also has a great potential for eco-tourism. The very diverse environmental and climatic conditions of the WKO territory establish the unique characteristics of each individual territory according to recreational opportunities. It should be remembered that the use of maintenance equipment in each of these services is far from ideal, which makes them less appealing to visitors.

There are 12 objects of a republican and regional nature reserve fund on the territory of the WKO. The state botanical reserve "Dubrava" has a high level of tourist attraction. A vast number of unique oak, aspen and birch forests with endemic plant species. The development of the scientific direction of ecotourism is very important in the reserve. (Ramazanov, Gabdusheva, 2019)

4.2.7 Almaty region

From the standpoint of ecotourism, Almaty region plays a significant role in it. The Almaty city is situated in the south-eastern part of the Republic of Kazakhstan. National Natural Parks such as ' Altyn-Emel," Kolsay reservoirs," Ile Alatau," Zhetysu Alatau' and ' Sharyn' as well as the Almaty and Alakol State National Nature Reserves are located in the region. In order to transform the Almaty region into an international tourist centre, it is necessary to develop services and infrastructures.

Firstly, there is a lack of development of transport infrastructure and the state of physical and moral deterioration of basic tourist accommodation facilities, such as hotels, resorts, spas and boarding houses, do not meet international standards either in terms of quality or in terms of different types and places to stay for tourists.

Secondly, low standard of service and inaccessibility of significant historic sites in the Almaty area of the Great Silk Road do not appeal to both Kazakh and international tourists. Therefore, a strong international promotion of tourist routes is necessary. Considering that the growth of tourism is closely related to the condition of the transport network, there is a major problem with the restricted local transport, the lack of flexible advantages and incentives for all types of community travel for both domestic and incoming visitors.

Furthermore, there is a need to have advanced training in specialized tourism personnel serving in the tourism facilities but also for the tourism industry as whole.

Finally, the low quality of services in tourism industry, linked to the previous problem, starts with the issuance of tourist visas for Kazakhstan, registration procedures customs and passport control for foreign tourists (Baiburiev, Yerdauletov, Plokhikh, 2016) and leads to an overall poor service experience in the tourism industry.

4.2.8 Ecotourism model

The ecotourism model, adopted in Australia, the USA, Canada and a number of other nations, has gained the label "Australian" because of its wide spread and success on the Australian continent. This paradigm is distinguished by the production of ecotourism in an unaltered and marginally disturbed environment, in specially protected areas with the main objectives of awareness in environment, outdoor leisure with emotional and esthetic objectives.

In Western Europe, on the basis of the concept of "soft tourism" (which is not harmful), a "Western European" ecotourism model has been developed with a broader content. It is

based on the development of forms of ecotourism in the cultural landscape and focuses on the principles of sustainable tourism development, the conservation of those natural resources that remain in Europe.

Attention is paid here to the properties of ecotourism as a concern for the social, cultural and economic well-being of the local population. Of the two models for the development of ecotourism, the Australian model is considered to be a priority, since the situation with natural resources in Kazakhstan is similar to that in Australia, where there is a unique and unchanged nature. (Isaldaeva, Tazhibaeva, 2013)

5 Results and Discussion

Ecological tourism in Kazakhstan can be developed not only on the basis of the regional ecotourism offer, but also on the basis of a cluster model of Kazakhstan tourism, where 5 tourist clusters operate: Nur-Sultan (Astana), Almaty, East, South and West Kazakhstan. Thanks to this approach, ecotourism can be developed from two directions-"bottom-up"-when ecological tourism programs are developed at the regional level and "top-down "-when the ecotourism offer is integrated into the general tourism offer of a particular region. The relatively low level of development of eco-tourism in Kazakhstan, with its great potential, is largely due to the need for financing for the development of eco-tourism routes and programs that meet the needs of the development of this tourism industry and a marketing approach to create a positive image of eco-tourism in Kazakhstan.

The cultural aspect of ecological tourism in the country in question should be noted. Since Kazakhstan has a unique nomadic culture that is unfamiliar to many tourists, the creation of ecological settlements, taking into account the peculiarities of nomadic culture, can contribute to the growth of interest on the part of both domestic and foreign tourists.

It can be argued that the landscape largely determines the type of ecotourism that will develop in a particular region of Kazakhstan. For example, in north-eastern and south-eastern Kazakhstan, the mountains can be called a factor that predetermines the characteristics of ecotourism. On the other hand, in western Kazakhstan, the Caspian Sea and the dryer climate allow tourists to demonstrate the characteristics of nomadic culture and recreation in the vicinity of the sea. In northern Kazakhstan, where the climate and the forest are cooler, ecotourism can take place, for example. In the form of hiking in the woods and visiting the lakes.

The most important factors in the development of ecotourism in Kazakhstan include:

- cultural features (the presence of nomad culture and religious monuments),
- climate features (a large area of Kazakhstan allows you to choose which climate a person wants to engage in ecotourism),
- natural features (we are talking about where the visitor of the country wants to engage in ecotourism).

The main factors limiting the development of eco-tourism are:

- Insufficient development of infrastructure in the regions of Kazakhstan (road, transport system, availability of hotels of a certain class, etc.)
- The relatively low level of funding for ecotourism, given the large number of potential ecotourism sites.
- Insufficient quality of ecotourism is offered when the quality of the services does not match the price. It is necessary to create an ecotourism offer that is just enough for the average consumer.
- The relatively low demand for ecotourism in Kazakhstan is due both to the lack of an integrated marketing approach (representing Kazakhstan both domestically and abroad) and to the mismatch between factors such as price and quality (average quality is provided at a high price or below average quality).

To successfully solve the problems of ecotourism, it is necessary to ensure effective cooperation between the state and business. On the one hand, the state can introduce international standards of ecotourism and finance its development (simultaneously with the development of infrastructure in the regions), taking into account how financial resources are spent, and how high-quality and affordable ecotourism services are.

Having received international work standards and the necessary funding, a business will have to create a quality offer of ecotourism at an affordable price, so that ecological tourism will gradually become more popular with both domestic and foreign tourists. The joint work of government bodies and business is necessary in order to create a positive image of Kazakhstan, as a popular area of ecological tourism.

6 Conclusion

Kazakhstan, which has great potential for the development of ecotourism, can develop ecotourism in almost all regions of the country. This fact can be considered one of the main advantages of eco-tourism in this country, since eco-tourists will be able to choose not only the different types of tourism, but also the type of eco-tourism that best suits them, and in the region of Kazakhstan that is more interesting to them because of the specific tourist attractions there.

The convenient geographical location of Kazakhstan (in the center of Eurasia) allows you to develop ecotourism taking into account the demand for tourists from neighboring countries. While Western Kazakhstan's eco-tourism opportunities may be of interest to tourists from Europe (due to geographical proximity), tourists from China and other Asian countries may be interested in ecological tourism in southern and eastern Kazakhstan. Ecotourism in northern Kazakhstan may be of particular interest to residents of the bordering regions of Russia.

Thus, the diversity of supply in Kazakhstan's ecotourism can have a positive synergistic effect if ecotourism in Kazakhstan can be developed as a single complex, but based on the regional offer of ecological tourism and the characteristics of demand, taking into account which countries people will come from for ecological tourism.

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