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## THE CURRENT STATE AND PROSPECTS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF ECOLOGIC-ETHNOCULTURAL TOURISM IN THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN

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**The current state and prospects for the development of ecologic-ethnocultural tourism in the Republic of Kazakhstan**

**Abstract.** In the article, the interpretation forms of the modern concept of "ecologic-ethnographic tourism", which combines two topical directions ethnography, ecology and tourism. Based on cultural self-identity, environmental safety, sustainable development, this type of tourism has high prospects for spreading in Kazakhstan. The authors analyzed the concept of ethnocultural tourism, the stages of its historical development, identified the leading teachings and concepts, theoretical and methodological foundations, as well as specific features that represent the basis for ecologic-ethnocultural tourism. Ethno-cultural tourism as an independent type of tourism has already formed its resource potential, systematically combining it with the principles of ecological and environmentally safe tourism, designed to diversify existing tourist offers in this direction and promote the development of domestic and inbound tourism. In the context of globalization, this type of tourism can have a significant impact on strengthening regional and local patriotism in domestic tourism and increase the recognition of the tourism brand of the Republic of Kazakhstan among foreign tourists. In the course of the study, criteria for the preparation of new tourist routes for ecologic-ethnographic tourism were formed, which allow the development of routes aimed at popularizing the tangible and intangible natural, cultural and historical heritage of Kazakhstan, without harming these resources. The authors identified the promising regions of its development on the territory of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

**Key words:** ethnographic tourism, ethnography, ecology, ecologic-ethnocultural tourism, globalization.

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**Современное состояние и перспективы развития эколого-этнокультурного туризма Республики Казахстана**

**Аннотация.** В статье приводятся интерпретационные формы современного понятия «эколого-этнографический туризм», которое сочетает в себя два актуальных направления этнографию, экологию и туризм. Основываясь на культурной само-идентичности, экологической безопасности, устойчивом развитии, данный вид туризма имеет достаточно высокие перспективы распространения в Казахстане. Авторами было проанализировано понятие этнокультурного туризма, этапы его исторического развития, выявлены ведущие учения и концепции, теоретико-методологические основы, а также специфические черты, которые представляют основу для эколого-этнокультурного туризма. Этнокультурный туризм как самостоятельный вид туризма уже сформировал свой ресурсный потенциал, планомерно сочетая его с принципами экологического и экологически-безопасного туризма, призваны разнообразить существующие туристские предложения по данному направлению и способствовать развитию внутреннего и въездного туризма. В условиях глобализации данный вид туризма может оказать существенное влияние на усиление регионального и локального патриотизма при внутреннем туризме и повысить узнаваемость туристского бренда Республики Казахстан среди иностранных туристов. В процессе исследования были сформированы критерии подготовки новых туристских маршрутов для эколого-этнографического туризма, которые позволяют осуществлять разработку маршрутов, направленных для популяризации материального и нематериального природного, культурно-исторического наследия Казахстана, без нанесения ущерба этим ресурсам. Авторами определены перспективные регионы его развития на территории Республики Казахстан.

**Ключевые слова:** этнографический туризм, этнография, экология, эколого-этнографический туризм, глобализация.

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**Қазақстан Республикасының экологиялық этномәдени туризмін дамытудың қазіргі жағдайы мен мүмкіндігі**

**Түйіндеме.** Мақалада этнографияның, экологияның және туризмнің екі өзекті бағытын біріктіретін қазіргі заманғы «экологиялық этнографиялық туризм» ұғымының түсіндірме формалары келтірілген. Мәдени өзіндік бірегейлікке, экологиялық қауіпсіздікке, тұрақты дамуға негізделі отырып, туризмнің бұл түрі Қазақстанда таралуының айтарлықтай жоғары мүмкіндігіне ие. Авторлар этномәдени туризм ұғымына, оның тарихи даму кезеңдеріне талдау жасады, жетекші ілімдер мен тұжырымдамалар, теориялық әдіснамалық негіздер, сондай-ақ экологиялық этномәдени туризмнің негізін құрайтын өзіндік ерекшеліктер анықталды.

Этномәдени туризм туризмнің дербес түрі ретінде өзінің ресурстық әлеуетін қалыптастырып, оны экологиялық және экологиялық қауіпсіз туризм қағидаттарымен жоспарлы түрде үйлестіре отырып, осы бағыт бойынша қолда бар туристік ұсыныстарды әртараптандыруға және ішкі және келу туризмін дамытуға ықпал етуге тиіс. Жаһандану жағдайында туризмнің бұл түрі ішкі туризм кезінде өңірлік және жергілікті патриотизмді күшейтуге және шетелдік туристер арасында Қазақстан Республикасының туристік брэндінің танымалдылығын арттыруға елеулі әсер етуі мүмкін. Зерттеу барысында экологиялық этнографиялық туризм үшін жаңа туристік бағыттарды дайындау талаптары қалыптастырылды, олар осы ресурстарға нұқсан келтірмей, Қазақстанның материалдық және материалдық емес табиғи, мәдени-тарихи мұрасын танымал етуге бағытталған бағыттарды әзірлеуді жүзеге асыруға мүмкіндік береді. Авторлар Қазақстан Республикасының аумағында дамыту мүмкіндігі бар өңірлерін анықтады.

**Түйін сөздер:** этнографиялық туризм, этнография, экология, экологиялық этнографиялық туризм, жаһандану.

**Introduction.** At the present time, at the international, global level, more and more importance is given to ecological balance in all elements of the life of society. Tourism, as a non-productive sphere of the economy, is not only a way to save the resources of our planet, but also a way of transmitting important socio-cultural attitudes in society. Throughout its centuries-old history, the people of Kazakhstan have developed in harmony with the environment, not changing it for themselves, but organically “adjusting” to the rhythms of nature. Today, our task as specialists in the tourism industry is to form new directions for sustainable tourism development, such as an ecologic-ethnographic species that combines maximum authenticity and minimum anthropogenic load.

In his message to the people of Kazakhstan in 2021, the President of the Republic of Kassym-Zhomart Tokayev emphasized the importance of not only ethnic self-awareness, but also the problems of the ecology of our country: “In matters of consolidating society, strengthening national identity, an important role is assigned to the effective use of the country’s historical heritage and cultural potential. ... Much attention should be paid to environmental problems in the country” [1]. Thus, the development of tourism should be of an integral nature, combining both economic benefits and care for the surrounding natural, cultural, historical and other environment, realizing the principles of sustainable development.

The practice of modern tourism is focused on authenticity and originality, as well as the cultural diversity of regions, the knowledge of which occurs through ethnographic routes, which are often combined with ecological tourism programs [2]. On the basis of two directions, a relatively new type of tourism is being formed – ecologic-ethnographic, which implies traveling to areas with traditional forms of economy to study and assist in preserving the ethnographic heritage of the territory, while observing environmental regulations, local laws and regional customs [3].

The Republic of Kazakhstan is a modern phenomenon, having a deep, centuries-old history, the preservation of which is a common priority of society and the state, the country has chosen an ambitious course, to become one of the most developed in the international arena. The country’s economy has a clear plan for the transition to a priority direction – tourism, since it is this that allows you to minimize the consumption of resources, promote the development of society, and increase the level of well-being of citizens of Kazakhstan. International organizations such as UNWTO, UNESCO, WFTGA, WTO, etc., in their articles, publications and research, speak first of all about the development of regional tourism, more of an authentic direction [4]. Particular interest has always been paid to the cultural, ethnocultural and environmental direction. These types of tourism allow the traveler to “plunge” into the environment of temporary stay, to become a kind of part of the life of the local population, to study from the inside its peculiarities and uniqueness, which, in fact, is the purpose of tourism.

In this regard, the purpose of the study was the process of researching the theoretical foundations, the current state and prospects for the development of ecologic-ethnocultural tourism in the territory of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Based on the purpose of the study, the following **tasks** were formed:

- To study the theoretic-methodological foundations of ethno-cultural tourism at the international and regional level;
- To form a clear idea of modern ecologic-ethnocultural tourism as a promising direction in the development of the tourism industry of the Republic of Kazakhstan;
- To develop the principles of the organization of modern ecologic-ethnocultural tourism.

**Methods and organization of research.** The main method in organizing the study was the analysis of the historical line of development

of ecologic-ethnocultural tourism, its specifics, theory and methodic. In the course of the research, the methods of the empirical and theoretical level were applied. Thus, the monitoring of the modern resource potential of ecological and ethno-cultural tourism of the Republic of Kazakhstan was carried out, the principles of safe development of this type of tourism in the state were developed.

**Research results and their discussion.** In the context of globalization, when there is an active process of “blurring” the borders between countries and peoples, when the same objects of tourist interest can be found in dozens of different states, international tourism faces the task of forming a sustainable approach to the entire tourism industry. This approach implies the qualitative preservation of unique objects of nature, culture, history, both material and non-material levels. A task that is both simple and quite complex. Tourism specialists from all over the world are actively working on the problem of forming authentic tourist offers, formed in order to promote the resource potential of countries, as well as to preserve their natural-climatically and cultural-historical potential. The “tool” of this approach can be called ecologic-ethnographic tourism, which implies a reasonable symbiosis of promoting objects of tourist interest and their conservation, sustainable development.

Ecologic-ethnographic tourism is, first of all, a visit to the country with the aim of involving the indigenous population in the traditional way of life, familiarizing them with their culture, everyday life, the material and non-material sphere of life of a certain ethnic group, while not violating the fragile ecological balance and following the principles of sustainable development. At the same time, there is an approach when ecologic-ethnographic tourism implies tours combining visits to cultural-historical and natural destinations. These can be objects of unique natural and cultural-historical value for

the whole world, such as the mausoleum of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi and the Aksu-Jabagly State Nature Reserve, as well as areas of residence of ethnic groups that have preserved the traditional way of life, or specially organized cultural centers. Today, there are thousands of ethnocultural objects in the Republic of Kazakhstan, these are “Ulytau – the ancient cradle of the Kazakh people”, necropolises Beket-ata, Shopan-Ata and others, mausoleums and mazars, ancient settlements, cultural and historical centers, museum and museum-memorial complexes, they are often located both within specially protected natural zones of different levels, and not in mediocre proximity to them. The creation of 5 clusters of historical and cultural tourism in our country will make it possible to actively develop this direction for both domestic and inbound tourism. For example, the key places of tourist interest of the Almaty cluster (Almaty city and Almaty region) are intended to be: the archaeological landscape of Tamgaly with petroglyphs (UNESCO site); the Altyn-Emel Park included in the UNESCO tentative list; the Charyn Canyon; the Kapchagai Reservoir; ski areas near the city of Almaty with the Ile-Alatau GNPP; the tourist center “Zhana-Ile”, petroglyphs of Eshkiolmes included in the UNESCO tentative list, as well as Issyk mounds and objects included in the serial transnational nomination “Silk Road” (Talgar settlement, Boraldai Saka mounds). It should be noted that each of the 5 clusters (Almaty, West Kazakhstan, South Kazakhstan, East Kazakhstan, Astana (Nur-Sultan), will allow to systematically explore the objects of ethno-cultural tourism and combine them with the objects of ecological tourism, which will contribute to the development of a promising direction of ecological and ethno-cultural tourism of Kazakhstan.

The peculiarity of this type of tourism is a reasonable combination of two directions of tourism: ethnographic and ecological (Figure 1).

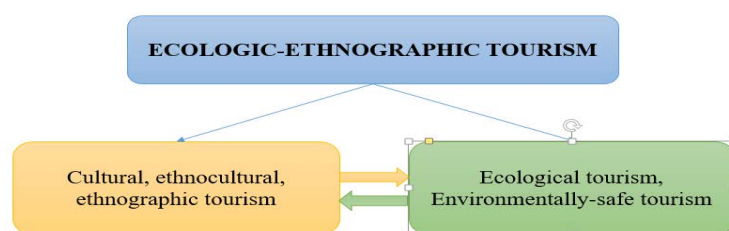


Figure 1 – The main components of ecologic-ethnographic tourism (compiled by the authors)

According to Figure 1, the concept of “ecologic-ethnographic tourism” is not a simple combination of two types of ecological and ethnographic tourism, it is a balance between the preservation and popularization of the natural and cultural-historical heritage of countries. For a full understanding of this term, and the formation of the principles of the development of ecologic-ethnographic tourism, it is necessary to investigate its theoretic-methodological components.

The history of the formation of the ecologic-ethnographic direction in tourism includes several key stages. The preconditions for the emergence of this type of tourism can be considered the interest of people in the knowledge of other cultures, peoples, ethnic groups from a cognitive and economic point of view. Until the beginning of the XIX century, this process was rather spontaneous. Although already in the 18th century, Zh.Zh. Ampere proposed the term “ethnology” to denote the science of cultures and peoples. Science received its rapid development in the second half of the 19th – early 20th centuries, when the approach to the methodology of cognition, the requirements for collecting field information, and the standards of expedition programs changed conceptually. In the twentieth century, “ethnogeography”, the science of the features of the settlement of various peoples in their historical development and current state, finds its spread [5]. It is at the junction of geography and ethnography that ethnic, ethno-cultural tourism is formed – a phenomenon of the late XX – early XXI. The term “ethnocultural tourism”, today is considered to be a part of cultural tourism, and includes such areas as ethnic, ethnographic, ecologic-ethnographic, anthropological (lifestyle tourism), ethno-cognitive and nostalgic tourism, aboriginal tourism and jailoo tourism [6] (Figure 2). Each of the listed species has its own specific features and characteristics. Thus, the definition of ethnographic tourism as one of the types of cultural and educational tourism is associated with both acquaintance and understanding of objects of traditional cultures, and with the preservation and transmission of cultural values of a particular ethnic group, the formation of national identity, as well as familiarization with the traditions of the ethnic group of the broad masses [7]. Ethnocultural tourism acts in modern conditions as a resource for regional development [8]. Cognition of the culture of a particular ethnic group occurs in several ways:

Involvement of the tourist directly in the traditional environment, when he “tries on” the image of a given ethnic group, adopts its behavior, participates in rituals, performs tasks of a domestic character and other, for a period of time. In this form,

the tourist becomes part of the traditional way of life. This method is widespread in Africa and Asia, often due to the fact that the traditional way of life has been preserved to this day and is an everyday occurrence.

Involvement of a tourist in an authentic environment through visiting “ethnic centers”, “reserves”, “villages”, etc., specially created and formed in order to preserve the traditional way of life, to transfer knowledge about cultural values, everyday relations, crafts, etc. the next generation. In such “centers”, representatives of an ethnic group can live permanently or work according to a certain schedule. This approach is quite widespread in the world, including the countries of Europe, America, Asia, etc.

The tourist is introduced to the values of ethnicity through visits to cultural centers, ethnographic museums, fairs, traditional festivals and holidays, when the information from the traditional way of life comes in a “concentrated” form, i.e. when in a short period the tourist gets the maximum amount of knowledge about the people. This approach is effective in the “superficial” study of the culture of an ethnic group and is often included in standard tourist products, has become widespread in many countries of the world.

Visiting objects of historical and cultural heritage, studying through monuments of material and immaterial culture the traditional way of life, beliefs, customs, etc. Such a way of cognizing an ethnos allows us to study the “product” of the heritage of the people, i.e. its contribution to world culture. The ethnos leaves its “trace” in one way or another usually, it can be both archaeological and architectural objects, works, games, rituals, etc.

At the heart of ethnographic tourism and all its directions is the process of studying and learning the culture of a particular people, through various ways of involving the tourist in the natural environment, life and culture of the ethnic group. An important resource for the development of this direction of tourism is the science of ethnography, science, which is a branch of anthropology and the systematic study of individual cultures, it explores cultural phenomena from the point of view of the subject of research – the people, and is also a type of social research that includes the study of the behavior of participants in a given social situations and understanding of their own interpretation of such behavior by group members [10]. The product of ethnographic researches is the information about the people, their history, traditions, customs, way of life, etc. necessary in the selection of objects of tourist interest, creating a tourist product, its promotion and implementation.

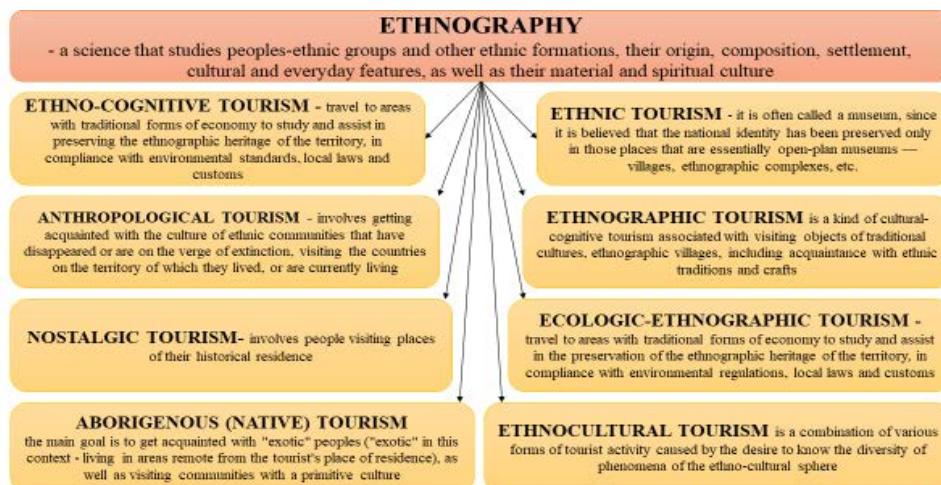


Figure 2 – Types of ethnocultural tourism, depending on the goals (compiled by the authors based on the source [9])

The transformation of ethnocultural tourism into ecologic-ethnocultural tourism has become a trend of our time, such processes as globalization, the scale of technogenic influence, active anthropogenic intervention, have had a negative impact on the state of the environment. In this regard, all spheres of the economy should move to more environmentally friendly production. For tourism, this is an opportunity to reduce the anthropogenic load on natural and cultural-historical sites. Ecologic-ethnocultural tourism is developing in several directions today. Firstly, it is an opportunity to combine objects of cultural, ethnographic and ecological direction, and secondly, to implement everywhere the principles of sustainable development, environmental safety, accounting for anthropogenic load, reasonable

consumption, etc. Ecological and ethno-cultural tourism is based on the concepts of ecological and ethno-cultural tourism, UNWTO defines these two types of tourism as follows: “Ecotourism includes all forms of natural tourism, in which the main motivation of tourists is observation and familiarization with nature”, and “Ethnic tourism is a type of tourism, the main purpose of which is to know the true life of a particular ethnic group in a historically determined place of residence” [11]. Thus, it can be concluded that ecological-ethnocultural (ecological-ethnographic) tourism is the study of ethnic groups in their natural habitat. This type of tourism is intended to preserve the cultural characteristics of ethnic groups as much as possible, without violating the fragility of ecosystems (Figure 3).

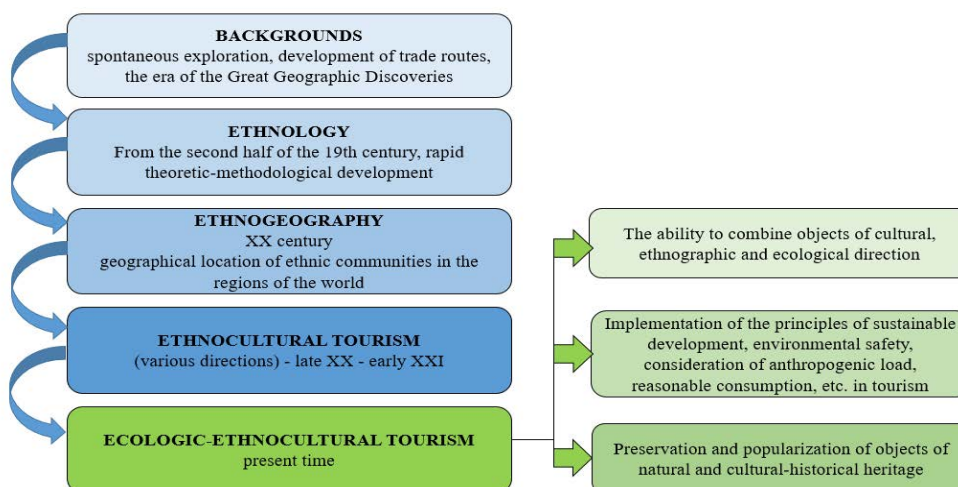


Figure 3 – Development of ecologic-ethnocultural tourism (compiled by the author)

At present, the countries of Africa and the Middle East, China, Europe, the CIS countries, including Kazakhstan, are considered the main centers of ecologic-ethnocultural tourism in the world. According to the UNWTO, there are many wonderful tourist destinations in Kazakhstan; about 26 million hectares in the country are occupied by nature resources. In order to present this huge and beautiful territory in a visual format, special maps are designed that reflect the amazing geography of Kazakhstan. They will present areas suitable for hiking and archaeological excavations dedicated to the culture of the nomadic people of Kazakhstan. In addition, many significant places in Kazakhstan of historical, cultural and ethnographic interest should be marked on the maps, which is undoubtedly the basis for the development of ecological and ethno-cultural tourism of the country [12]. The country, which has gone through a long period of formation, in the process of which many tribes and peoples took part, occupies an important place in the history of Eurasia, and the Kazakh people are one of the most ancient ethnic groups [13]. Throughout its centuries-old history, our country has become a “home” for more than 130 ethnic groups, while maintaining its traditional characteristics, culture, way of life, traditional crafts, beliefs, etc. Today Kazakhstan has great potential in the development of ecologic-ethnocultural tourism. Traditional crafts (wool felting, tannery, food, etc.) are revived everywhere in the country, ethnographic festivals and holidays are held, cultural centers and ethnic villages are formed, ethnographic museums are developed, and the development of subsistence villages is promoted. Unique objects of animate and inanimate nature, monuments of historical and cultural development, as well as products of tangible and intangible culture of the regional, national and international level are located in the republic. These are the remains of the Kurgan culture, medieval settlements, and sites of the Great Silk Road, unique objects of religion, history and culture. The natural and cultural landscape of the country is unique, so specially protected natural territories are represented by: 10 nature reserves, five of which are included in the UNESCO list (Aksu-Zhabagly, Alakol, Karatau, Korgalzhyn, Naurzum) [14]; 13 national parks of which Sayram-Ugam State National Natural Park is a UNESCO World Heritage Site; 6 states natural reservats; 50 state nature reserves; 5 protected areas; 79 natural monuments, etc. [15].

Conducting a survey among representatives of the tourism industry of the Republic of Kazakhstan, ecologic-ethnocultural tourism is named as one of the most promising for the development in our country,

primarily due to the high resource availability, the presence of unique objects of natural-climatic and historical-cultural heritage of the regions of the Republic. The question of creating tourist products for the domestic and inbound directions of ecologic-ethnographic tourism remains open; the principles of this process should be:

- Preservation of the natural and cultural diversity of the country, objects of the material and immaterial sphere, living and inanimate nature;
- Active development of the cultural landscape without causing damage to the natural environment;
- Soviet principles of environmentally friendly tourism, sustainable development goals and the positions of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism;
- Calculation of anthropogenic load for each object of ecological and ethnographic tourism;
- A reasonable combination of objects of ethnographic, cultural and ecological tourism;
- Assistance in the revival and development of the traditional way of life, crafts, traditions and customs of the Kazakh ethnic group;
- Formation of regional ethnic centers;
- Training of highly qualified specialists for the tourism industry, having professional competencies in the field of ethnography of the Kazakh people, culture, ecology, modern trends of ecologic-ethnographic tourism.

Today, ecologic-ethnocultural tourism is not only a promising direction in the development of domestic and inbound tourism of the Republic of Kazakhstan, it is a unique way of preserving objects of natural-climatic and historical-cultural heritage through the popularization of material and non-material culture, natural and anthropogenic landscape. Kazakhstan consistently applies the standards of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and the principles of the Global Code of Ethics in the national tourism sector. Thus, the following **conclusions** can be drawn:

- The modern development of ecologic-ethnocultural tourism is based on the historical stages of the development of ethnography, ethnogeography, cultural and ethnographic tourism, as well as the needs of modern society in improving the environmental situation, increasing the share of a safe economy, etc.;
- Ecologic-ethnocultural tourism is one of the most promising types of tourism for development in the Republic of Kazakhstan, as it has a high resource security;
- The creation of principles for the organization of ecologic-ethnocultural tourism should become the basis for its development and include such

concepts as “calculation of anthropogenic load”, “environmentally safe tourist product”, as well as form a reasonable approach to the combination of objects of both cultural and natural direction.

Currently, more and more importance in world tourism is given to the peculiarities of the regions, the authenticity of the tourist product, increasing the attractiveness of countries for foreign tourism lies precisely in the national, cultural

and historical features of the country, its natural-climatic and cultural-historical diversity and the degree of preservation of the objects themselves, as well as the level of their popularization among both the international tourist community and the local population, this undoubtedly contributes to attracting tourist flows to the country and increasing the number of people traveling within the country, citizens of the republic.

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