
Conceptual Model of Agrotourism Development

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Abstract: The article presents a model for the development of agro tourism in rural areas. The proposed model includes a system of indicators for assessing the socio-environmental and economic development of Uzbekistan in the priority areas of development of this sector. In addition, measures such as identifying potential areas for the development of agro tourism, the formation of agro-tourist bases in rural areas, the promotion of agro tourism are reflected.

Keywords: agro tourism, agro touristic function, mechanism, socio-economic sustainable development.

Introduction

The phenomenon of agrotourism has long been known in world practice and now occupies a strong place in the global tourism industry. At the national level, the phenomenon of agrotourism has different manifestations, in which different approaches are taken to develop an appropriate tourism product and integrate it with additional services. Research conducted by the author shows that the success of the development of agritourism depends on the efforts of state and territorial regulators, as well as local state authorities.

The period of transition to a market economy is characterized by a severe shortage of financial resources for any country. One of the ways to overcome and develop this crisis is to introduce sectors that will provide the most efficient and rapid return to the economy. One of these industries is agrotourism, which is a new direction of the tourism industry.

The article describes the diversification of tourism products, as well as the interpretation of the types of state policy on agricultural development policy, promotion of technologies and products and the development of agritourism.

Although the direction of agrotourism is new, its primitive form dates back to historical times. The unique agriculture and natural attractions of our country, which have a rich centuries-old heritage, attract tourists. It should be noted that Uzbekistan is one of the oldest centers of agriculture. About 3,000 years ago, cereals, fruits and vegetables were grown, and they are distinguished by their high nutritional quality. The heritage of the distant past, modern agrarian culture can be a full basis for the formation and development of specific agricultural types and traditions, customs, national holidays in our country.

The origin of agrotourism as a separate direction of the tourism industry began in the second half of the 20th century. Many researchers attribute this to the emergence of environmental problems at the end of the last century, the rise of man-made pressures in society, and the rise of urbanization. It is well known that the "first wave" of agrotourism development emerged in Western Europe. The organizational and legislative documents of agrotourism were first adopted in France. In particular, the Association of Agriculture and Tourism was established

in 1955, and 10 years later, in 1965, a similar association was established in Italy¹.

The study of the development of agrotourism as an object of scientific research requires a theoretical definition of its conceptual basis. In formulating the terminological basis of this type of tourism, it should be noted that there are no terms in the legal framework for tourism and agriculture that define the essence of agrotourism. In many scientific literatures, agrotourism is considered synonymous with rural tourism, and there is no single interpretation of these concepts.

Today, there are certain uncertainties in the use of this term, which leads to certain difficulties in scientific research and a full understanding of this segment of the tourism market. In some countries, agrotourism serves as a complementary type of recreational activity, in others - as a form of ecotourism, in the third - as a form of private entrepreneurship, and in the fourth - as an auxiliary form of activity in family farms with limited seasonality.

The following definition is given by the Agrotourism Association. Agrotourism is a type of activity organized in rural areas, which provides guests with accommodation, recreation, meals, excursions, leisure and sports activities, active tourism, fishing, hunting, the formation and provision of comprehensive services for knowledge and skills². According to the association, agritourism is aimed at the use of natural, cultural and historical, agricultural and other resources in rural areas, as well as their specific features in the creation of complex housing.

According to experts, a common key element of various approaches to the regulation of agritourism is the recognition of rural areas and related tourist flows as an important means of conservation and development. Stimulating the development of agrotourism and diversifying approaches to regulation is due to a number of factors:

- different targets can be used in the selection of key performance indicators for the development of agritourism, types of tourism products, geographic regions, etc.;
- the intensity of state/regional intervention in the development of the agritourism industry may vary;
- different compositions and structures of agritourism regulation tools are used, primarily in the group of methods of direct or indirect regulation;
- there are significant differences in the organization of the agritourism regulation system.

Taking into account these factors, scientists have identified the following four approaches to the regulation of agritourism(Figure 1).

¹ Slinkova O. K., Agrotourism in the system of world tourist market, Belgorodskiy gosudarstvennyy natsionalnyy issledovatel'skiy universitet (NIU «BelGU»), - 2017.

² <http://www.agriturism.ru>

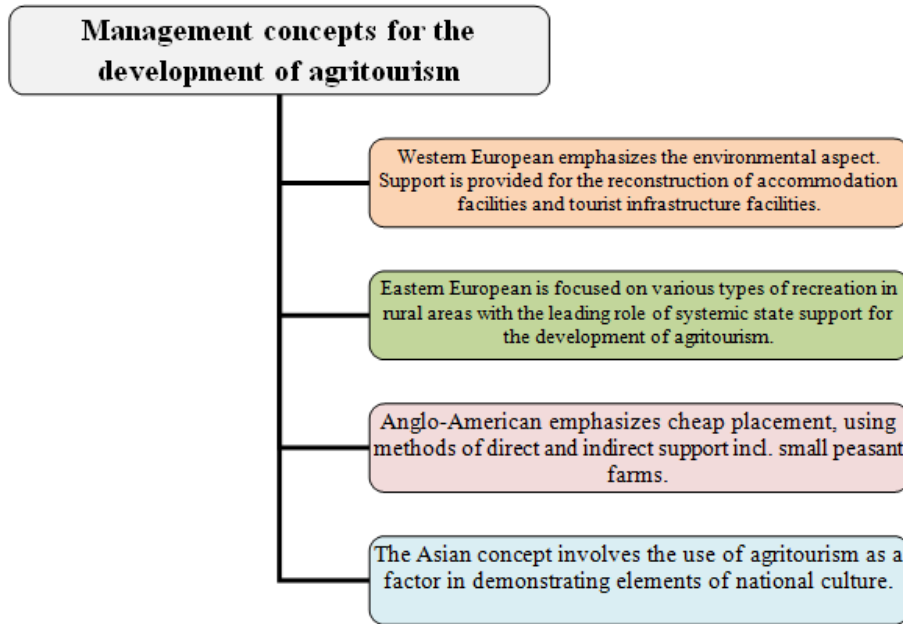


Figure 1. Management concepts for the development of rural tourism abroad[6].

The function of diversifying the national tourism product means stimulating rural tourism as a new segment of the tourism industry in order to attract additional tourist flow [4,5].

Thus, in Cyprus, the effect of the development of agro-tourism as an alternative to beach holidays was manifested in a decrease in the anthropogenic load on the environment of coastal areas. In the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, the creation of modern tourist enterprises - VIP villages makes it possible to effectively develop the elite segment of tourism [2].

Thus, we can conclude that the development of agritourism is at the intersection of three areas of activity and, accordingly, contributes to the implementation of three categories of goals (Figure 2).

The diversification of the tourism product occupies an important place in the composition of tourism policy at various levels. This direction makes it possible to achieve sustainable development of the tourism industry and reduce risks, primarily seasonal ones. An important role of diversifying the tourist product through the development of rural tourism is to increase the attractiveness and memorability of the tourist image of the region, to create a unique brand and image. In addition, rural tourism makes it possible to reduce the anthropogenic load on other territories and objects of display, and to redistribute tourist flows.

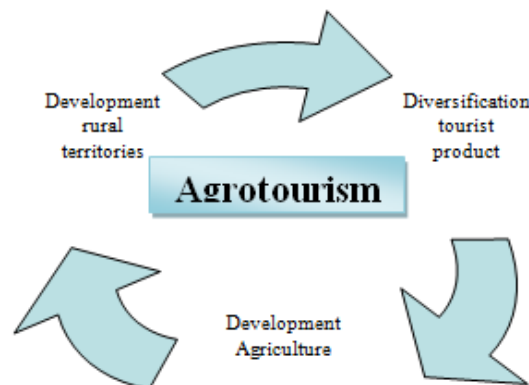


Figure 2. Agritourism in state regulation

The development of rural areas as part of regional policy also benefits from agro-tourism. The preservation of culture, traditions, crafts, etc. is one of the direct influences of agro-tourism on the socio-economic development of the village.

Let us further consider what tools are used and how they are structured within the framework of organizational and economic mechanisms for supporting agritourism abroad.

The provinces of Canada have accumulated a variety of experiences in promoting agritourism³. For example, in the province of Alberta, the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development has a coordinating function and is involved in a number of agritourism development initiatives. Information about them, as well as the opportunity to participate, are presented on the portal of the department. Moreover, this portal provides a link to farmers' markets, agricultural exhibitions and fairs, associations, museums and other places of interest. The basic document is the "Tourism Together" program, which indirectly supports agritourism. In addition, public organizations of the province are actively publishing various information materials (maps, guidebooks, reference books, etc.) to promote the tourism product.

In the province of Manitoba, the Ministry of Agriculture plays an important role in the development of agriculture. A brochure on the diversification of farming entrepreneurship with a focus on agritourism has been released.

The promotion of agritourism is integrated into India's existing tourism development scheme⁴. The goal is to showcase rural life, art, culture and heritage in the countryside and villages, which are authentic products of arts and crafts in a natural environment. The Village Level Council (VLC) has been created and is functioning - an interactive platform (forum) for local communities and other public institutions to develop and implement rural tourism development plans. At present, 153 rural tourism projects in 28 regions have been licensed by the Ministry of Tourism, incl. in 36 rural settlements.

In the United States⁵, projects have been developed at the regional level to improve the efficiency of agritourism:

- agro-tourism promotion program;
- guidelines for the organization and management of agritourism services, incl. rural hotels;
- holding conferences and similar events to improve skills for farmers providing agritourism services;
- creation of new marketing networks, identification of prospects for involving small farm owners in the tourism industry, sponsoring their participation in the annual agritourism forum;
- organization of a hotline on agritourism issues;
- management and marketing management training program for small farm owners.

We see that priority is given to the program-target method of regulating agritourism.

³ Rural tourism: an overview. 2010. URL: [http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$Department/deptdocs.nsf/all/csi13476/\\$FILE/Rural-Tourism.pdf](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$Department/deptdocs.nsf/all/csi13476/$FILE/Rural-Tourism.pdf) (Дата обращения: 03.04.2016).

⁴Rural tourism. URL: <http://tourism.gov.in/TourismDivision/AboutContent.aspx?Name=Tourism%20Infrastructure%20Development&CID=7&INO=10> (Дата обращения: 03.04.2016).

⁵ Rural tourism: an overview. 2010. URL: [http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$Department/deptdocs.nsf/all/csi13476/\\$FILE/Rural-Tourism.pdf](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$Department/deptdocs.nsf/all/csi13476/$FILE/Rural-Tourism.pdf) (Дата обращения: 03.04.2016).

Interdepartmental interaction tools are also actively used. The most developed and integral direction of regulation of agritourism is marketing, primarily the promotion of a tourist product. It should be noted the mandatory integration with other types of tourism.

Thus, on the basis of the results of the analysis of the external experience of the development of agrotourism, it is possible to approach the approach to the development of agrotourism in accordance with the criteria of intensification of state and regional management bodies.

An example of an active state policy can be considered the practice of state regulation of the development of agritourism in Germany, and this is associated with the implementation of the state program "Sustainable Development of Rural Areas". In general, the modern practice of state support for agritourism in Germany, in our opinion, is distinguished by a systematic approach:

- agro-tourism is supported at all levels – federal, state, communal;
- support combines both direct and indirect forms in the financing of entrepreneurship projects, development of rural areas and agriculture, infrastructure;
- active interdepartmental interaction and cooperation between all participants – the Federal and Land Ministries of Economy and Labor, the Ministries of Consumer Protection, Food, Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, separate programs participate in support;
- integration of agritourism development issues into territory development programs and interregional and intersectoral cooperation.

The effect of such an active state policy is manifested in a significant share of agritourism in domestic tourism: about 13% (40.54 mln.) of tourists relax in the countryside, staying on farms, rural yards and rural boarding houses⁶.

As part of the development of agritourism in the regions of Uzbekistan, we offer the design of agrotourism for potential regions. The natural and cultural potential of the regions allows the formation of a polyagrotouristic route with elements of health, education, religious tourism.

In the formation of the agrotour should pay special attention to its specificity, as the duration of this species can be extended. Basically, monoagrotour is of interest to people who are devoted to religious practice and who study the cultures and customs of peoples more deeply. To coordinate the development of agrotourism in rural areas of Samarkand region, we offer a model that reflects a set of key elements of agrotourism.

At the first stage, the main elements of agrotourism are formed, the purpose and mechanism of formation of a competitive agrotourism product in the market of tourist services using the available resources are defined.

At the next stage, the persons responsible for the implementation of the program for the development of agro-tourism in the region (district) will be identified with the involvement of the interested rural population. During this period, the level of tourism potential and the level of readiness to work with tourists are compared, and development opportunities and challenges are identified.

In the third stage, it is necessary to develop primary agrotour programs that will direct the rural population to the development of agrotourism. Such programs should reflect the main tourist destinations, covering the attractions of the region.

⁶ Platnova Yu.V. Application of the German experience in the development of agritourism in the Yaroslavl region of the Russian Federation. URL: http://tourlib.net/statti_tourism/platnova.htm (Date of access: 04/03/2016).

In the fourth stage, all elements of agrotouristic activity are reflected in interdependence. In this case, the division of tasks and responsibilities between the subjects of agro-tourism in the region will be determined, and special attention will be paid to the preparation of the population for the reception of tourists.

The fifth stage is the monitoring of the socio-ecological and economic situation of the region as a result of changes under the influence of the development of agrotourism.

And in the last sixth stage, it is recommended to analyze indicators and develop management decisions on further development of agritourism in order to preserve and develop rural settlements in the region. We offer a set of indicators to study in detail the changes in the social, environmental and economic life of the region (Figure 3).

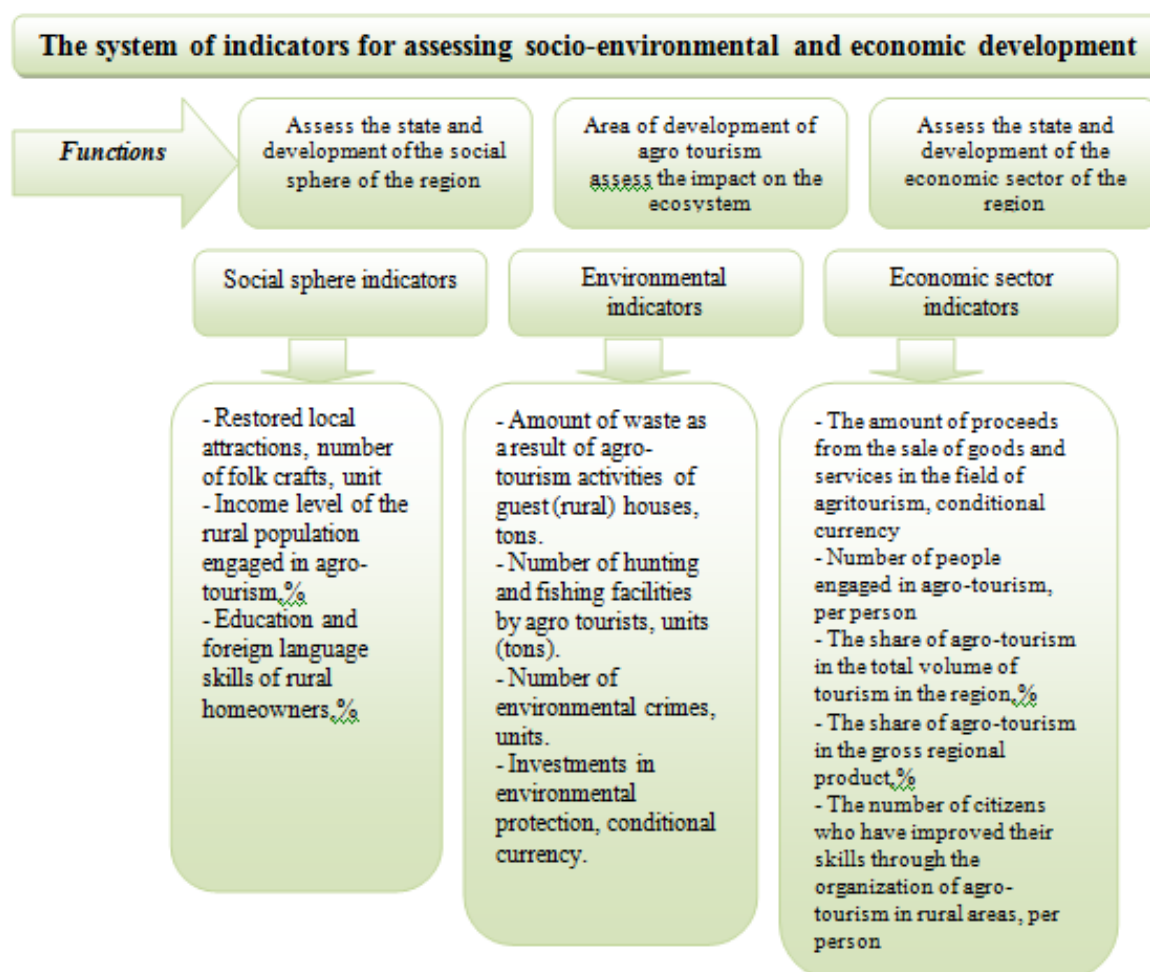


Figure 3. The system of indicators for assessing the socio-ecological and economic development of rural areas⁷

Monitoring indicators allow not only to assess the effectiveness of socio-economic activities, but also to monitor the level of environmental friendliness for the population and the effectiveness of agro-tourism activities in general. On this basis, local authorities can make amendments to the development and support of agritourism in designated areas of the region.

The mechanism for identifying promising areas for agro-tourism activities is based on the algorithm proposed above. In this regard, the model of monitoring the social, environmental and economic spheres of the region was also proposed above. The proposed model reflects,

⁷ Created by the author

on the one hand, the integration of regional administrations and business entities with the rural population, and, on the other hand, contributes to the creation of a competitive agro-tourism product. Interaction of local authorities with the regional department of tourism development allows to create a single database in the field of agritourism, participates in the development of unique agro-tourism products and measures to form a regional tourism brand (Figure 4.).

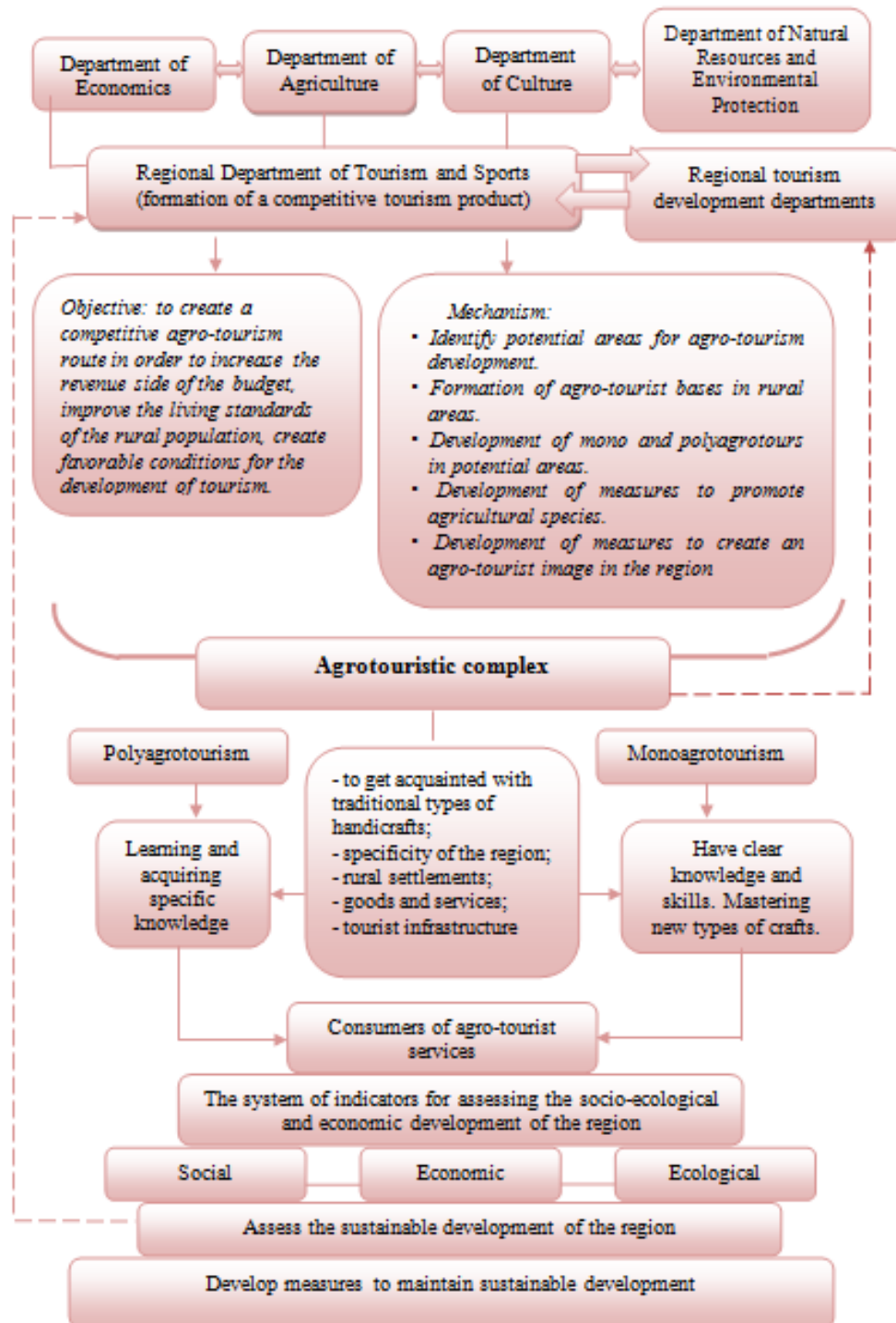


Figure 4. Model of agrotourism development in the region ⁸

⁸ Created by the author

The practical application of the proposed model of agro-tourism development will help to form and improve the tourist image of the regions of Uzbekistan. Also, the effectiveness of this model will make a positive contribution to ensuring the conditions for sustainable development of rural areas.

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