

INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT OF ECO- AND GEOTOURISM IN THE CARPATHIAN REGION WITH THE SUPPORT OF PROJECTS OF INTERNATIONAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

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Eco-tourism is one of the fastest growing sectors of the tourism industry in the world. Annual growth of ecotourism is from 10 to 30%. Immanent of tourist-attractive natural and recreational resources of the Carpathians actualized the priority of eco- and geotourism development.

Aims of the article are to highlight the role of international technical assistance for the development of tourism infrastructure in the Carpathian region, which is due axiological transformation of needs of tourism services consumers not always meets the highest European standards; emphasize the positive role of eco- and geotourism to ensure sustainability of local communities.

The engine of social consciousness of countries with high level of welfare and social development is the existence of triad – hedonism, cultural and spiritual values, the ecology, i.e. life satisfaction through travels and social communication in a clean and safe environment. Today's trend of tourism development in the world is the transition of vacation cycle model to individualized recreational demand and intelligent queries satisfaction through niche types of tourism: replacing the concept of three "S" ("sun – sea – sand"), i.e. a beach holiday, by the concept of three "L" ("lore – landscape – leisure").

Exactly this formula has opened ecotourism to the world. An urgent question for the Carpathian region is to maintain environmentally sustainable social and economic development, in which the use of ecotourism infrastructure should ensure the preservation

of unique and typical natural landscapes.

In 2013 National Institute for Strategic Studies proposed to the state run public authorities for more efficient use of tourist and recreational potential of mountainous regions of Ukraine western regions to work actively on the replacement of state budget funding of development projects of their economies and to initiate volume and practices increase of the use of mechanisms of state-private partnership.

Taking into account the limited capacity of budgetary resources, today activity and professionalism of specialized public organizations at the western regions of Ukraine starts to determine the direction of tourism policy of this regions, and, consequently, to attract investment funds to the development of tourism, including through EU projects. Through grant programs the eco- and geotourist infrastructure is being developed, measures to conserve wildlife are implemented and simultaneously the problem of balance "tourist consumption – the environment" is gradually solved.

Ecotourism raises an important means of preserving the environment by increasing environmental awareness and creating economic incentives for environmental protection, which ultimately provides the inflow of funds to support programs of protection of natural reserve fund. In order to ensure sustainable development of eco- and geotourism in the Carpathian region in recent years, governments and community organizations being implemented a number

of international technical assistance. Most of these projects perform educational and promotional functions, although there are some that are aimed at supporting and developing of eco- and geotourist infrastructure. Taking

into account the limited budget funding of environmental activities, the use of financial resources of international technical assistance is an important tool to ensure sustainability of natural areas in the Carpathians.