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Major Tasks of Ecotourism Management in Georgia

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Abstract

The Caucasus has its dignified place among 34 “Hot spots” of biological diversity identified on earth. Georgia is considered among 200 global eco-regions identified by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF). A number of animal and plant species spread in Georgia is included in the Red List of Georgia and Red List of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). Consequently, the importance of ecotourism in Georgia is always a topical issue setting important tasks to ecotourism management.

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1. Introduction

Tourism is one of the branches of priority in the economic development of Georgia. Georgia with its picturesque nature, many-century-long heritage and diversified topography is one of the world’s most attractive countries for the tourists.

Sustainable tourism development is much important for Georgia, as it means development by using the means not having any negative impact on the environment or local people.

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The number of tourists to Georgia is increasing steadfastly. Eco-tourism is a much popular and demanded branch. Therefore, identification of the strategy and tactics to develop eco-tourism is much important. Consequently, the goal of the study was to examine the potential of eco-tourism and identify the levers to manage eco-tourism efficiently.

2. Method

By using the statistical and analytical study methods during the study, in line with the set problem, the quantitative and qualitative indicators will be assessed and the reliability of the study methods will be evaluated by confronting the set aims and made decisions.

As per the world statistics of ecotourism, year after year, an increasing number of people in the developed countries better recognize the significance of the sustainable development of tourism and environmental protection. As for the Georgian market, its consumers tend to be indifferent to ecotourism and the market is characterized by generally low developmental rates of local tourism. The developed methods and analysis should be used to identify the efficient management trend and make optimal decisions.

3. Results

On the background of the increasing global pollution and ecological challenges, the society's awareness and environmental interest tend to lessen; moreover, poaching and conflicts of interests between the protected areas and local population are the case. One of the major drawbacks in the field of ecotourism is poorly developed infrastructure (transport, roads, etc.).

As per the results of the study conducted by us by interviewing the Georgian people, the most popular kind of tourism in Georgia is adventure tourism (28%), followed by religious and cultural tourisms (22%). Eco-tourism is also quite popular (14%). It also should be noted that 38% of the respondents are informed about eco-tourism, 42% have never heard about it, and 16% refrain themselves from giving the answer. The final results of the interview of Georgian respondents are given in the chart below. (refer with: Fig. 1).

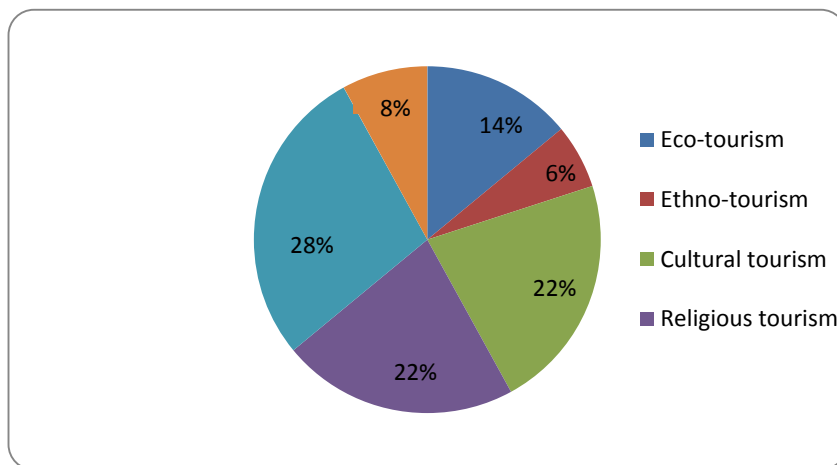


Figure 1. The most Preferred kind of tourism. www.geostat.ge

As per the results of interviewing the foreign respondents, 55% of them have arrived in Georgia to learn more about the culture of the country, while 18% of them are on their adventure tour. (refer with: Fig. 2).

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