

Psychosocial aspects of ecotourism and nature conservation in Russia

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Abstract — The article is devoted to the psychosocial aspects of tourism and nature conservation. The authors consider the problems of nature conservation in the context of ecotourism development. The leading problems in the work of modern «specially protected natural areas» are the following: 1) the organization of tourist destinations and management systems for ecological tourism: it is necessary not only to meet the needs of environmental, as well as related pilgrimage and educational tourism but also the needs of the destination itself, restoration of unique biological objects, flora, fauna, territories, and water areas; 2) the issues of increasing the ecological culture of the population and meeting the needs of the population in a way that does not hinder and helps the development of reserves and other previously closed or inaccessible areas or water areas. The article considers the integrative model of geo-branding in ecotourism. The aim of the research is to analyze modern problems of protected areas, including in the context of the development of ecological tourism. The article summarizes the views of Russian and world eco-tourism problems researchers.

Keywords— *nature conservation; agrotourism; eco-tourism, diversification; geo-branding*

I. INTRODUCTION

The relationship of man to nature and to himself as a natural being in the last decade intensively and multifaceted changes. The ecological situation in the modern world as a whole is characterized by the ever-increasing intensity of anthropogenic impact on the natural environment, the diversity of environmental problems, the range of which is expanding both qualitatively and quantitatively. First, these are problems associated with (re)creating favorable conditions for life and development of a person, his health, as well as the problems of protecting the environment and using natural resources. The development of scientific and technological progress and the creation of means of human influence on the environment, irrational use of natural resources, pollution of ecosystem elements caused the deterioration of the ecological situation. These are the

problems of ensuring environmental safety. They include the implementation of processes and programs that ensure the ecological balance of the natural environment. In addition to discussions and studies on the impact of man and man on nature, measures and programs for preserving nature in its "pristine" form are necessary.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The reserve business and creation of a system of specially protected areas (abbreviated as SPNA) is the process and result of systemic and constant efforts of a variety of practitioners and theoreticians of various sciences and fields of activity that protect nature. A reserve can be defined as a complex, or, ideally, as a system of organizational, legal, scientific, economic and educational activities/actions and programs. These programs and measures are aimed at preserving, restoring and developing unique and typical landscapes or natural objects.

The list of tasks of these programs and measures includes research, environmental and other tasks. A reserve is a territory or water area (a set of territories and water areas) allocated to preserve or restore the natural state of typical or unique natural complexes. Usually, the natural state means the harmonious state of the system, that is, the entire aggregate of its components. In addition, a reserve is a place of non-destructive and non-interfering research into the natural course of the processes and phenomena occurring in them and the development of scientific bases for nature protection. Ideas for creation of reserves, the isolation of special territories, including those "closed" for visiting and human activity, for the protection of animals and plants (fauna and flora of the Earth and its various regions) formulated A. Humboldt already in the 19th century. The term conservation, which was proposed by A. Humboldt, was returned to the use of G. Convent, who put a lot of effort into preserving nature. Already at the end of the XIX - the beginning of the 20th century in Europe there developed a movement for the protection of natural

monuments ("Naturdemkmaller"). Monuments of nature are small areas that have preserved a "pristine" appearance among the actively populated or long-settled, transformed or already transformed landscapes of Europe and the rest of the world. Thus, both the protective and restoration context of the creation of SPNA has emerged. In Russia, the theory of the reserve business and its practice - as one of the best and unique practices of protected areas in the world. Traditionally, several tendencies and sources of environmental protection, including protected activities, creation and development of the theory and practice of other specially protected territories are singled out in the creation and development of protected areas.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

At the end of the XIX century interest in nature and its protection, in the human community, especially in the field of science and education, was already great. The reason and at the same time the consequence of this interest are a number of large geographic expeditions. Within the framework of these expeditions, scientists carried out numerous botanical and zoological studies in the framework of these expeditions and the study of the flora and fauna of the Earth as a whole. An important role played in this process by the military, who along with scientists carried out numerous studies in Asia, the Caucasus, and the polar regions. At the head of the movement for the protection of nature and its "monuments" stood prominent Russian and world researchers of the time, such as I.P. Borodin, D.G.F. Morozov, G.A. Kozhevnikov, V.P. Semenov-Tian-Shanskiy, and A.P. Semenov-Tian-Shanskiy [1; 2]. The geographic and ecological foundations for the creation of a network of reserves are laid by such scientists as V.V. Dokuchaev, G.F. Morozov, F.R. Shtilmark [2]. The enumerated scientists belong to the ideal of the "ethical-aesthetic" approach to nature protection, and, in particular, to SPNA. The superiority of the Russian system of SPNA is associated with the reserves as a unique form of conservation of natural areas and water areas. Their ascent took place in a series of stages. V.V. Dokuchaev noted the need for special conservation stations, which will be different from the national recreational parks of America, etc.: they will serve primarily nature, and then man. Many other scientists and practitioners-naturalists developed this idea. The national approach to the concept of conservation of natural monuments (SPNA) was also formed by I.P. Borodin: "We have already understood the need to protect the monuments of our antiquity, it's time for us to feel the consciousness that the most important of them are the remnants of that nature, among which our state power developed, our distant ancestors lived and acted. To lose these remnants would be a crime ..." [3; 4]. G.F. Morozov proposed to identify and take under special protection the most important and valuable "standards" of natural territories and water areas, their flora and fauna, in different regions of Russia [5]. V.P. Semenov-Tian-Shanskiy also supported them: "It is our duty to preserve for the posterity, wherever possible, in complete integrity, entirely the features of the face of the mother Earth, so that it always has the opportunity to peer in and learn from it, about what it only heard from books" [6]. Russian researchers formed a specific protective and restoration approach to the territories and water areas of the earth as nature monuments, that is, as

part of the cultural heritage. The ideology of this approach to environmental protection is reflected in the terms "conservation", "restoration", etc. This approach is much more promising and ethical than the earlier, European, natural-historical approach. It leads to ethical and aesthetic arguments ("awe" before the living, etc.). These arguments are often externally quite far from the arguments of the biological and ecological type. The third, pragmatic (resource), the approach is aimed at protecting recreational resources. This approach is common in America, in the United States, where, unlike Europe, there are vast spaces that have been slightly damaged by humans, and, like human life, natural life is not a great value ("in itself"). Another variant of the pragmatic approach is the reasonable use of the biological resources of the territories or "rational nature management". G.A. Kozhevnikov sets the natural-historical approach forth. It is now the theoretical basis of the Russian reserve business: reserves are considered as "reference untouchable" plots (the leading mode of human-nature relations is "control", and not "experience" - as in relations with the transformed territories). "In order to be able to study nature, we must try to preserve it in its primitive integrity..." [7].

Answering a question about the purpose of preserving untouched areas, G.A. Kozhevnikov noted: "...we can not unravel the whole range of interesting riddles that the animal poses to us and plant life ..." [8]. He also postulated the main characteristics of the reserves as a special type of protected areas. Thus, several ideas emerged as the basis for the creation and development of the reserved business in Russia: 1) the idea of preserving natural complexes, and not just individual species of flora and fauna, not just individual "natural monuments"; 2) the idea of creating protected areas on an area sufficient to establish the processes characteristic of territories where there is no human impact on the study of natural historical processes without human influence; 3) the idea of creating different types of protection zones around reserves to prevent human influence on their nature and preventing the destruction of reserves, and also for the unconventional territories to be enriched by more or less asymmetric and regulated exchange with protected areas. This makes it possible to resettle different species of flora and fauna from reserves to adjacent areas, ensures the existence of "green corridors" for the passage of animals and plants from neighboring SPNA, etc. The complexity of working in the reserve is connected with the fact that the study of natural processes requires a great deal of time. Therefore, there are difficulties in the work of specialists in the territory of SPNA. These difficulties for their resolution require diachronic and synchronic coordination and specialization of the activities of professionals. Therefore, only research is allowed in the reserves, which, on the one hand, can not be carried out on another, including uninhabited territory, and on the other - are not dangerous in the context of the task of preserving "intactness" and developing natural complexes of protected areas. This is especially true of tourism: it was supposed to be made to minimize the impact on protected natural complexes and maximally useful for raising the image of the reserve and patching budget holes [9]. Such a requirement is still preserved. However, it remains far from everywhere: the value of human life in Russia at the end of the twentieth century has declined catastrophically.

Therefore, the commodification of relations, their crude pragmatization as a reduction to the maximization of economic and political benefits, is absolutely the opposite of the aesthetic-ethical and other models of the Soviet-era SPNA. In April 1981, the USSR approved a “standard clause on state reserves, natural monuments, sanctuaries and natural national parks” [10]. According to this provision, state reserves initiate and coordinate research on the development of scientific principles for nature protection, monitor the changes in the background state of the biosphere, and develop scientific bases for the conservation and restoration of rare and endangered species. At the end of the 20th century, in connection with the collapse of the USSR, not only the infrastructure of the reserves was transformed, etc., but the rules (simplified) of access to reserves and other SPNA previously closed to tourists and other “stakeholders” changed. The reserve today is a system, which includes: 1) the water area or the territory with ecosystems inhabiting it and communities of organisms; 2) a research institution organized to carry out scientific research work. Sometimes a third component is connected here; 3) a fragment of a tourist destination, including “protected paths” - routes of tourist trips/excursions. In order to survive part of the protected areas, especially outside Russia, in other countries of the former USSR, which are undergoing even more intense processes of destructive “reform”, they were forced to go to controlled access to the reserves of representatives of tourist organizations, etc. The opening of the reserves for visits with special clarity marked the set of problems and issues of the activities of reserves and zakazniks. There are also “Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas” (ICCA) or areas and areas protected by indigenous peoples and communities. Indigenous peoples or local communities manage them. These indigenous peoples or local communities preserve the biological and cultural diversity of the regions. The existence of the ICCA is related to the tasks of continuing, reviving or changing the traditional practice of protecting and restoring natural resources and cultural values in the face of new and old threats and in the situation of new and old opportunities and limitations. A particularly negative point is the alienation of young people from the traditions, nature and culture that these SPNA protect. Negative is the increased pressure on resources - the region, in particular, those that lead to the replacement of local, cooperating economies with globalization, market-based methods of economic and production activities. This reinforces the existing or creates a new inequality between economic and social classes and gender groups in the community, which leads to conflicts in the management of natural resources and elites, gaining benefits for themselves.

Theoretic and methodological bases of the organization of excursion and tourist activity in the territory of SPNA are indicated in the modern works of many foreign and domestic researchers, such as U. Strassdas, R. Jungk, K. Ziffer, G. Tseballos-Lascureine. K. Lindberg, D. Hawking, P. White, P. Johnson, D. Western, E.Yu. Ledovskikh, A.V. Drozdov, I.N. Panov, B. V. Spiankov, A.I. Stukalov, D. G. Kuznetsov. N.N. Voskoboynikov, B.V. Preobrazhensky, M.B. Birzhakov, Yu.S. Putrik, G.V. Yakovenko [11]. The leading problems in their work are: 1) the organization of tourist destinations and management systems for ecological tourism: it is necessary not only to meet the needs of

environmental, as well as related pilgrimage and educational tourism but also the needs of the destination itself, created for the preservation and restoration of unique biological objects, flora, fauna, territories and water areas; 2) the issues of increasing the ecological culture of the population and meeting the needs of the population in a way that does not hinder and helps the development of reserves and other previously closed or inaccessible areas or water areas. The existence of a small territory, devoid of free communication with the surrounding world, is only the appearance of nature conservation. It is important to take into account both geographical zoning and the ability of ecosystems of various natural areas to restore, in general, SPNA includes systemic activities and, as a system, it includes different levels of accessibility of territories and water areas with different operating conditions, etc. The basis of ecology and conservation of ecosystems is the principle of adaptation, i.e., a certain correlation between the organism and its environment. Therefore, it is necessary to strictly split into zones (segments) the interests of tourists and their level of ecological culture. It is necessary to allow or prohibit participation in programs of different types of people. People can be divided into groups with different interests, with different levels of preparedness and perceptions of nature, SPNA, etc. We need to manage their participation in the context of the temporary and spatial organization of the reserve's life. Management is achieved by taking decisions on admission or non-admission of a particular group or individual tourist to one or another zone of protected areas, as well as by taking decisions on the route and the form of the tourist trip. It is necessary that between the usual areas of human activity and the boundary of the protected area there is a wide band of neutral territory of land or water, preferably several kilometers long, a buffer zone. Ecological or green tourism is a form of tourism, focused on visits of relatively natural areas untouched by anthropogenic influence: more or less unique, exotic, different from others.

A narrow understanding of the essence of ecotourism presupposes conducting ecological tours within the boundaries of different categories of specially protected natural areas (water areas). Abroad, a narrow understanding of ecotourism is often correlated with its “Australian” model. In Russia, a narrow understanding presupposes that ecological tourism scientists and practitioners define as travels made for acquaintance with reference areas of pristine nature, places of growth and habitat of valuable, relict, small, rare and endangered species of plants and animals, forests and areas of the forest, especially valuable in their characteristics (breed composition, productivity, genetic quality), natural objects that play a special role in maintaining the hydrological regime, a unique landscape geological outcrops, the location of rare and especially valuable communities of plants and animals. To the broad meaning of the term ecotourism or the Western European model, considers all types of ecologically oriented tourism not only within the boundaries of specially protected natural areas (water areas) but also outside their borders. In this case, the ecological aspect will be agro-ecotours, ecological-ethnographic, speleological, mountain tours, etc. The development of ecotourism is closely connected with the system of SPNA. Ecological tourism is currently one of the most promising ways of sparing nature use. This type of tourism involves not only visiting undisturbed natural areas

but also studying their properties and characteristics and actively participating in the conservation of flora and fauna.

At the same time, the central issues in considering the correlation between these concepts are the following: 1) the organization of tourist destinations and systems for the management of ecological tourism, in such a way as to meet both the needs of environmental, as well as related pilgrimage and educational tourism, and meet the needs of the destination itself, designed to preserve or restore unique biological objects, flora, fauna, territories; 2) the issues of increasing the ecological culture of the population and meeting the needs of the population in a way that does not hinder but helps the development of reserves and other previously closed or inaccessible territories or water areas; 3) issues of zoning protected natural areas and clustering of tourism in each of the types of territories, including in terms of the possibility of creating and the type of tourist destinations.

Each such territory or water area defines indicators of the "tourist potential", including "untouched" territories, their entertainment, educational and recreational opportunities and restrictions. The tourist and recreational potential of the territory integrates a system of indicators (criteria) that provide a systematic assessment of the recreational potential of a tourist object, as well as its individual elements - natural and cultural landscapes: their origin and history, uniqueness, safety, attractiveness and various characteristics of diversity, including species richness of flora and fauna. Often, as the researchers note, the ecological or "Green tourism is an activity that is associated with agricultural work (ideally, but not necessarily), acquaintance with the life of small towns, walking tours of natural sites, studying flora and fauna, sports, organization of courses national cuisine and tasting of local dishes" [12]. For the successful development of tourism, it is necessary to develop specialized infrastructure and use of technologies, including services that provide various services to provide information and services to domestic services. Ecological tourism, therefore, requires a high ecological culture from employees of tourist destinations and their cooperation with SPNA staff [13].

Diversification of SPNA' activities includes their strategic reorientation to the development of green tourism. Green tourism is perceived as a business. On the one hand, so, survival dictates the reserves and other SPNA, the strategy of opening at least part of their territories and water areas for mass visits, on the other - optimizing environmental tourism as a business and part of the reserve and security activities: its diversification. As a result, we are talking about developing and maintaining a strategic orientation of green tourism as a business, reorienting the community and state structures to the diversity and diversified development of various components and aspects of tourism activities and associated tourist sites - destinations, including protected areas. Thus, in the process of development of ecological tourism it is important to take into account the entire arsenal all the resources of the territory, including recreational ones: conducting ecological tourism requires not only high professionalism, but also systematic interaction of all the specialists involved in it, cooperation with stakeholders and the leadership of the region [14; 15; 16]. Prospects for the development of

ecological tourism are related to the use of geo-branding technologies, tourist destinations and ecotourism in general, aimed at developing the ecological culture of tourists and the whole population, as well as helping destinations and protected and other natural areas in the protection and development of the environment. Ecological and related types of tourism in protected areas were originally intended to make a minimum impact on protected natural complexes and maximally useful for raising the image of the reserve and maintaining its economic well-being. However, the tourism business is a huge system that presupposes the creation of tourist destinations and a radical transformation of the relations of reserves with the world around them. Tourism implies and gives an opportunity to enhance the image of reserves and ecological culture, education of the ecological culture of the population. For its rational - non-destructive SPNA and developing people - the use should be limited to the system of destinations in the buffer zones and a system of programs that ensure not only the development of tourism business but that promote the spread of moral ideals of human-nature relations [17; 18; 19].

This implies, along with the transformation and intensification of marketing and the bending of protected areas, the systematic diversification of the tourism business, the growth of those spheres and programs that really contribute to the development of both nature and society. However, as noted by the creators of the idea of the reserve business, the nuclear structures of the reserves should remain intact and, if possible, expand: no matter how and what a man fears, he must understand in order to be happy that he is not alone on the planet. In the modern world, there is a need to develop buffer zones and "transport corridors" around and between nature reserves and other specially protected natural areas, increasing restoration areas and expanding the "skeleton" areas of SPNA [20; 21; 22]. The existence of some strictly reserved, enclosed zones as "framework nodes" creates only the appearance of nature protection. Without buffer and other territories that allow maintaining the harmonious life of the reserve, the latter degrades or is destroyed. It is also necessary to develop different visiting regimes in the context of their time and spatial organization. [23; 24]. Ecological tourism requires a highly professional approach, but in reality there is a huge shortage of qualified specialists who would understand the specifics of eco-tourism, the essence of tour operator activity, pricing policy in the field of agro-tourism, the importance of advertising, geomarketing and geo-branding, information, and educational support for the flow of visitors [25; 26].

IV. CONCLUSION

The relationship of man to nature and to himself as a natural being in the last decade intensively and multifaceted changes. The relationship of man to nature and to himself as a natural being in the last decade intensively and multifaceted changes. The most important changes are connected with the understanding that a person should be engaged in protecting and taking care of it constantly, including in the process of creation and development of CPNAs and ICCAs. The most important moment is the development of ecological culture of the population, including in the context and with the help of ecotourism.

The success of eco-tourism is associated with the system rebranding of tourist routes, destinations, regions, regularly and fruitfully engaged in environmental activities.

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