

Ecotourism Destinations in Romania

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Abstract

Romania has about 800 protected areas, which now covers about 5% of the country. Most ecotourism destinations are located within or adjacent to these protected areas such as Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve, northern communities National Park, Yosemite National Park, Apuseni Natural Park. In Romania there are still non-fragmented forests, and over a third of the population of bears, wolves and lynx in Europe, unique paradise of birds in the Danube Delta, more than 12 000 caves and, not least, full of authentic local traditions. Ecotourism allows recovery and conservation of the country's natural capital.

Keywords: natural capital, nature reserves, protected areas

1. Introduction

Ecotourism as a form of tourism has emerged with the need for people to retire in nature and visit the known natural areas or enjoy a national or international protection status.

Natural areas have important advantages for the development of recreational activities that can bring significant revenues both those administering them and local communities. Although it is quite difficult to measure, and the results are often quite difficult to see the short, tourism is one of the few sectors that can achieve the sustainable development of these areas, and ecotourism is the most accepted sustainable Tourism for every country and region of the world [1].

2. Materials and methods

The research methods used by the authors is reflected in the collection and interpretation of data from various sources and Reference section of territory, their processing, analysis, interpretation and drawing conclusions.

3. Results and discussion

Tourism and ecotourism are usually part of a strategy for protected area management. The degree to which tourism activities are pursued depends on the priority given to them by managers in the area, which in turn should be guided by a planning document developed for this purpose.

Ecotourism is increasingly considered as a management strategy for protected areas which, if properly implemented, is an ideal sustainable activity. It is designed to:

- ❖ have a minimal impact on the ecosystem;
- ❖ help the economically to local communities ;
- ❖ respect the local culture;
- ❖ be developed using participatory processes involving all stakeholders
- ❖ be monitored in order to detect negative and positive

The entire spectrum of opportunities and threats in ecotourism does not apply for each protected area. For example, in a protected area that attracts visitors primarily internal possibilities to generate an exchange office are limited, but there may be good opportunities to raise conservation locally. Environmental degradation will vary depending on the fragility of natural resources and the types of activities that are permitted [2].

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Tourist destination is a geographical area bounded territory, with the following characteristics [3]:

1. a uniform and consistent marketing image ;
2. a variety of tourism products falling within the destination image, tourist projects ;
3. network services and targets contributing to the tourism products in conjunction with marketing image ;
4. existence of "administrator / coordinator " destination with a definite policy and coordinating implementation leverages destination .

Ecotourism destination is the tourist who, in addition the following principles:

1. projecting an image of responsible marketing
2. the prevailing business destination sustainable management ;
3. the destination there is real support for local communities ;
4. the destination is awareness and inform tourists and locals on its natural character ;

May. the destination is implementing concrete measures for the conservation of nature

It becomes increasingly evident that the development of tourism in sensitive natural areas in the absence of appropriate management can present a threat to the integrity of ecosystems and local communities. A growing number of visitors to areas of ecologically fragile can lead to a strong degradation of the environment. Also, local communities and indigenous culture may be negatively affected by increased influx of foreign visitors with a modern lifestyle. In addition, climate change, economic instability and political and social conditions can make travel a risky business, especially in areas heavily dependent on this business [4].

Ministry of Regional Development and Tourism has developed a set of criteria for the designation of ecotourism destinations in Romania developed based on the European Standard Certification in Ecotourism

The first condition is the destination for ecotourism certification includes a protected area, with which may be included and "socio- cultural resources" of the area. Other criteria relate to the attractiveness of destination, accessibility, cultural heritage protection and respect for cultural traditions, biodiversity conservation and holding a waste management plan etc. Criteria were established on the recommendation of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), based on the European Standard Ecotourism Labelling. Micro -

regions in Romania interested in obtaining ecotourism destination status may apply to the ministry for this purpose, a cover letter requesting inclusion in the evaluation program. Thereafter, applicants self-assessment performed destination based on criteria and indicators available on the ministry's website. Finally, a team of evaluators coordinated MDRT handles field evaluation. Depending on the results of these evaluations ecotourism destination status granted for a period of three years.

Association of Ecotourism in Romania proposed an ecotourism certification. This system aims to achieve concrete results regarding nature conservation, sustainable development of local communities and enhancement of the local natural and cultural resources. Proposed certification system developed ecotourism products Retail Travel agencies and tour operators, destinations certification and accommodation structures in Romania, in order to ensure their quality ecotourism.

A credible certification system must include:

- existence and Interpretations;
- assessors qualified to define training standards and qualifications;
- the certifying body that is recognized by customers and competent in the field;
- well-established procedures;
- an easy to implement and transparent mechanism [5].

The need to develop standard practices derived from ecotourism need to harmonize existing ecotourism certification systems currently in Europe and strengthen their position in the tourism market. The harmonization effort is based on an integrated concept of ecotourism, which brings together different services: accommodation, food, transport and outdoor activities. Although each of the components of ecotourism services may fall under different certification schemes, a standard certification system would act as an "umbrella" and would ensure a minimum quality of the tourist product and harmonization of existing systems, while recognizing their specific experiences and background. Therefore, an ecotourism certification standard at European level, based on experience in Europe and globally, ensure customer service standards comparable ecotourism in Europe (and possibly worldwide), at least for a group of criteria basic [3].

Were launched network evaluation criteria for ecotourism destinations in Romania. Several places that Romania could receive prides ecotourism destination status, which recommend that place as the geographic area where you can practice a form of tourism that respects nature and local traditions. The advantage of these approaches may be to increase the number of visitors, both Romanian and foreign destinations by promoting more efficient [5]:

Great Tîrnava the former administrative unit of time the Kingdom of Romania, is found in southern Transylvania and territory area covers the counties of Sibiu, Mures and Brasov. Tîrnava Mare boasts river with the same name, which has a length of 221 km and joins Little Tîrnava forming Tîrnava.

Repede Gorge was formed on the upper Repede and covers a distance of about 40 kilometers. Repede springs in Northern Apuseni Mountains (Mountains Gilaului) crosses depression Huedin western plain, crosses the counties of Cluj and Bihor and flows into the Tisza in Hungary. Repede Gorge is a favorite tourist area many tourists due to the landscape of this area, given the steep Staci, forests and caves. The best known are Vad Cave, Cave Floorings, Zmaului House, Water Cave, Cave fugitive Deventului Cave Cave Goat.

TuSnad represents one of the most beautiful resorts in Romania settlements. Situated at 656 m, the resort lies in the extreme south of Harghita mountain chain. The two massive alpine which run parallel to the Olt Valley, Mountains and those of Bodoc Baraoltului, bordering Tusnad West and South. The resort attracts tourists mostly because base that exists here, and where treatment can be treated cardiovascular diseases, diseases of the nervous system, digestive and endocrine.

Macin Mountains Park ground, from the oldest mountains of Romania, is accessible to a wide range of tourists interested in hiking, nature, landscapes, flora, fauna characteristic of the park, Studies and Documentation. One of the major attractions of the park Beech Valley Nature Reserve, one of the most interesting old and known reserves in the country. It is distinguished by the unique presence of phage Tauric that shows characters intermediate between native beech and beech coppice Oriental and flora unique in Dobrogea and similar beech forests of the Crimea. Delta entered into UNESCO in 1991 is the largest and the best preserved of European deltas.

This area boasts over 300 species of birds and about 50 species of freshwater fish. Also, Delta Dunatii is recognized and impressive flora that thrives here.

Romania is the first country in Europe to develop a recognition system of ecotourism destinations based on criteria developed by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) and the European Standards of Ecotourism (0EETLS) after launch Friday ecotourism destinations and criteria for their recognition. It is a unique opportunity to position ourselves in the European market ecotourism both technically, through ecotourism criteria and in terms of the positive image that ecotourism can provide real market tourism image related to the nature and rural culture in Romania. Some micro-regions in Romania that their territory a protected area, a national park, a nature park with communities around their network services are able to make a partnership and represent this area [6].

4. Conclusions

Ecotourism can provide funding for nature conservation but also new opportunities for developing local communities or near protected areas.

Given the situation on the European tourism market and the strengths that Romania has in competition with other possible destinations in Central and Eastern Europe region, ecotourism could be a solution for Romanian tourism revival. Sustainable development of ecotourism should be maintained through training, skills improvement, civic training, sociological and ecological proper

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