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**NATURAL BASES FOR THE DEVELOPEMENT OF TOURISM  
IN KYRGYZ REPUBLIC  
AND IT'S POTENTIAL IN THE WORLD TOURIST MARKET**

**INTRODUCTION**

Modern placing of world tourism shows that natural resources and conditions directly act as leading factors in tourist use of territory. Recreational activity of the person can exist without artificial resources, and without natural resources it loses the meaning as many physiological processes (functional systems) in a human body are functionally connected with surrounding environment, its elements.

Natural resources as a product of satisfaction of demand of tourists, serve as an initial material of tourist branch functioning. Hence, the natural blessings have appeared determinatives at occurrence and development of many resort and tourism centers of Europe, Asia and America. Last years the new potential tourist zones are intensively formed, they are characterized by uniqueness of natural resources and conditions, – states and regions with territories of the most different scales: Brazil, Kenya, Mexico, New Zealand, Singapore, Thailand, Turkey, Canary Islands, Azores Islands and Hawaii Islands.

The character of a surface of territory has paramount importance in this plan, in particular, mountainous surface. Considerable elation of territory above sea level and strong breaking of a relief predetermine an exclusive variety of properties and environment subjects, and accordingly a variety of tourist resources. By our calculations, more than 60% of the areas, suitable for a recreation, and as much objects of tourism are in mountain areas though mountains on a planet, according to experts, occupy only 5 % of a land (Suprunenko, 1989, p 4). As we see, at such area their role in recreational activity is exclusive. Mountain tourist zones compete with seaside, and in separate characteristic properties even surpass them.

At the present stage almost all mountain territories of globe are developed and used in the tourist purposes: the Alps, Carpathians, Crimea and Caucasus in Europe, the Himalayas in Asia, Atlas sky mountains in Africa and Australian Alps. In this direction the Altai mountains in

Russia, Pamir – in Tajikistan and, certainly, Tjan-Shan – in Kyrgyz Republic become new perspective segments of world mountaineering.

## **MOUNTAIN CHARACTER OF AN ENVIRONMENT OF KYRGYZ REPUBLIC**

Nature features of Kyrgyz Republic are defined by its geographical position in the centre of the Eurasian continent, among the largest deserts, far from oceans, and also by considerable elevation of its territory above sea level – a mountain relief. More than 3\4 of the republic territory is occupied by the powerful, strongly broken ridges of Tjan-Shan and partly Pamir. Accordingly the orographical plan and relief of the republic are very difficult, they are characterized by sharp contrasts where the general decrease of absolute heights changes from 7439 m (Pobeda peak) in the east to 401 m (the Kulundu hollow) in the west. In this connection, natural features, including a climate, landscapes, water resources, plants and animal life, and also socio-economic and ecological conditions of the country are defined by high mountainous ness.

In whole Tjan-Shan represents a powerful mountain construction with a complex combination of ridges and intermountain valleys. Mountain ridges occupy the most part (60-65 %) of republic territory, comprising 88 large ridges. Among them ridges of Sary-Dzhaz, Tengri-Tag, Enilchek-Too, Kakshaal-Too creates a basis of knot of Central Tjan-Shan with world famous peaks of Pobeda (7439 m), Khantengri (6995 m), Voennye Topography (6873 m), Dryjba (6800 m), and Chon-Alaj with peaks of Lenin (7134 m), Dzerzhinsky (6713 m), Krasin (5996 m), etc.

The tourist importance of mountain ridges is that under continuous influence of geologic-hydrological impacts in them there were exclusively various forms of a relief – the noteworthy objects of the mountain environment representing big informative, sports, health-improving, religious, scientific interest for a wide range of tourists. They include highest tops and peaks, passes, freakish rocks, falls, caves, grottoes, canyons, etc. It is known that peaks of Pobeda and Lenin were recognized as regions of the international mountaineering. For example, international "Pamir" alp camp created in 1973, during its existence has accepted more than three thousand of foreign climbers ascending on large tops of Pamir, and number of other tops of the Chon-Alaj ridge.

## **MOUNTAIN-NATURAL RESOURCES OF TOURISM**

Exclusively various hydro-geological conditions of Kyrgyz Republic connected with a mountain relief, promoted here formation practically all types of thermo mineral waters and

medical dirt different on both physical and chemical composition and maintenance of balneologically active micro elements. By this time more than 100 sources of thermal and mineral waters are revealed, among which there are available carbonic (Kara-Shoro, Ak-Suu, Karakeche, Chatyr-Kul), sulphide (Kara-Tube, Kyzyl-Jar, Rishtan, Changyrtash), radon, hydrosulphuric, iod-bromic, salty and brines. The part of these deposits is developed and on their base resorts of "Dzhalal-Abad", "Issyk-Ata", "Dzheti-Oguz", "Dzhergalan" and "Ak-Suu" function known in the republic and abroad. On 8 deposits (Ak-Suu, Kara-Shoro, Zhalal-Abad, Chatyr-Kul, Bar-Bulak, Issyk-Ata, Furmanov and Alamedin) pouring of mineral waters is organized.

13 deposits of medical dirt are open with the general stock about 5225 thousand m<sup>3</sup>. From them only 5 deposits have the asserted stock about 573.1 thousand m<sup>3</sup> that makes 11 % from the general stock of medical dirt (Atyshov, 1992, p 12).

Climate is an important factor influencing formation of tourism. In Kyrgyz Republic considerable complexity of a relief – deep breaking, the various exposition of hillsides in relation to the sun and air streams create an exclusive variety of environmental conditions. Hence, the republic climate is various: here it is possible to observe transition from a climate of dry subtropics – in Fergana valley, semi-deserts and dry steppes – in Chuj and Talas valleys and to a climate of an eternal cold highly in mountains. At such contrasts steady weather with a considerable quantity of sunny days usually prevails in the country: average annual duration of solar light fluctuates within 2500-2700 hours (that is by quantity of hours of solar light plains of our republic rank with Tashkent and Bajram-Ali).

Not without reason our republic is named as sunny. In the warm period cloudiness of the sky is insignificant and makes 15 hours that increases comfort of rest, creates possibility for heliotherapy. Also absence of an exhausting heat, long downpours, high humidity, and strong frosts on most parts of territory of the country creates the best conditions for long rest in the open air.

In winter steady frosts are rare that allows developing winter rest. Besides, in a cold season it is warmer on the slopes of mountains than in valleys. The most favorable conditions for winter kinds of tourism are available in middle belt of mountains. In this view the northern slopes of the Kirghiz ridge are the most developed, there are operating ski lines for citizens of Bishkek and other cities of the republic (zones of Chon-Tash, Noorus, Toguz-Bulak, Shamsi).

In the conditions of mountainous Kyrgyz Republic a climate as the medical factor, can be used not only in warm seasons, but also in cold (with the organization of winter kinds of tourism on the open air). For the expansion of climate-medical factors it is necessary to build climate-medical establishments and covered water pools that will give the chance to increase application

terms of climate-treatment from 3 months as it takes place now, till 6-7 months (Turusbekov et al, 1970, p 10).

There are over 40 thousand rivers in the country, all are characterized by big biases, strong stream of water and they do not freeze in winter because of a rapid current, there are 1923 lakes. Lake net of the territory is made by 3.4 %. Overwhelming number of lakes (94.8 %) is small. It is natural that as the phenomenon of the nature and a pearl of tourism of Kyrgyzstan high-mountainous Issyk-Kul Lake is considered with a comfortable microclimate in a coastal zone and sandy beaches where duration of solar light considerably exceeds similar indicators in Crimea. All this has caused here occurrence of the basic part of the enterprises of tourism of the country (more than 60 %).

The mountain relief and a variety of a climate define richness and originality of the flora. 3786 kinds of the higher floral plants grow in the republic. The richness of flora is concluded not only in a specific variety, it also contains more than 1600 kinds of useful plants (food, vitamin, melliferous, medicinal, etc.). Presence of fruit and herbs predetermines development of so-called "collective" tourism where, for example, gathering of berries and mushrooms, food and medicinal grasses belong, also medical tourism (for phyto- and juice-therapy).

In flora tourism woods are valuable. The total area of the state wood fund makes 2861.3 thousand hectares, including covered with wood – 843 thousand hectares, bushes – 342.6 thousand hectares. Forest net of republic territory is made by 4.25 % [4]. However to such small area more than 50 % of juniper and 53.9 % of nut woods, 56 % of apple and about 34 % of the pistachio wood areas of the former USSR are concentrated here. Walnut-fruit woods represent unique natural formation by a total area of 630.9 thousand hectares, they are considered as a unique and largest stock of relic walnut-fruit woods in the world. Mountain woods are remarkable as their many (a juniper, a fir, a nut, a moss, etc.) breeds are phyto plants which are capable to allocate the special substances perniciously operating on a bacterium and microbes. Therefore mountain forests of Kyrgyz Republic are considered as the purest and useful to health of the person.

The republic fauna is rich and various on specific structure. In rather small territory it is possible to meet more than 500 kinds of vertebrates, including 83 kinds of mammals, 368 kinds of birds, 28 kinds of reptiles, 3 kinds of amphibians, 75 kinds of fishes, 3000 kinds of insects. Rather small territory of republic is presented by a considerable variety of biosensors. There are 0.4 kinds of mammals, 1.8 kinds of birds, 0.14 kinds of reptiles, 0.23 kinds of fishes per 1 thousand sq. km, whereas in neighboring countries these indicators are much lower. Concerning tourism such kinds of animals as djeiran, red wolf, snow leopard, marmot of Menzbira, grey

lizard are interesting, they are brought in Red book, making their photos can become rare good luck for tourists.

For biodiversity maintenance in republic there is a network of especially protected territories with a total area of 777.3 thousand hectares, or 3.9 % of all its territory. Here all types of protected natural territories are presented. Among them there are 6 natural reserves, 8 natural parks and 69 artificial reserves (forest, botanical, zoological (hunting) and complex) and nature sanctuaries. Almost all basic types of woods are captured by especially protected natural territories.

Especially protected territories of Kyrgyz Republic have a certain orientation and differ under the basic characteristics. So, Sary-Chelek and Issyk-Kul reserves are included in the international network of biosphere reserves.

The considerable quantity of contrast natural complexes is concentrated on the territory of the country – unique landscapes, nature sanctuaries and other noteworthy objects representing huge value for ecological tourism. Attractiveness of the mountain environment to tourism is explained also by presence of natural factors of obstacles, remoteness and not population of area, a snow cover, water and other barriers. Development of a new direction in tourism – adventure tourism - during the last years is connected with it. The given form of tourism possesses big possibilities of development as demand for its services from citizens of the developed countries of the world constantly grows.

Thus, Kyrgyz Republic has exclusively rich natural resources for tourism development. Almost all its territory, except large developed in economic relation valleys, because of small population of territory and absence of harmful manufactures, is considered a non-polluting zone. Therefore virginity and diversity of an environment of Kyrgyz Republic create a formation basis for the world centre of ecological tourism.

## **POSSIBILITIES OF KYRGYZ REPUBLIC FOR GAINING ITS NICHE IN THE WORLD TOURIST MARKET**

The choice of the target market in tourism sphere is impossible without the thought over analysis which allows supporting viability of subjects of tourism in quickly varying conditions of the market, thus having reached the maximum profit and having satisfied versatile requirements of tourists.

Apparently, Kyrgyz Republic possesses the considerable tourist potential caused by favorable natural-geographical conditions, rich cultural-historical heritage which assume production of a competitive product in the international market of tourism. The analysis of

recreational potential of the country predetermines formation and development of following perspective kinds of tourism: sports, informative, ecological, hunting, resort, and religious tourism. There are objective preconditions for development of business tourism. The major feature of many of these kinds of tourist activity is that they form directly Kyrgyz niche in the tourism world market, both in Central Asia, and in universal scale and can become a special product of export of tourist services, will involve tourists from abroad.

Tour operators of Kyrgyz Republic while cannot compete with the leading tourist centers of the world. In this connection the principle «offer what is not present at home» is comprehensible in tourism business strategy. In respect of creation for tourists-consumers of contrast change of environment mountainous Kyrgyz Republic is an ideal place of visiting. Its market segment is a non-polluting both untouched mountain nature and its originality: the highest tops, glaciers, the mountain rivers and lakes, woods, thermo mineral waters and the medical dirt, different geological sights, and also the people with original culture.

Marketing advantage of the domestic market in a world conjuncture consists in the offer to foreign consumers of a tourist product of a natural origin in a primordial form, at reasonable restriction of every possible technical means of service.

In this direction Kyrgyz Republic can occupy its niches of the market of world tourism by such kinds and forms of tourist activity: ecological tours to natural zones (in particular, to walnut-fruit and juniper woods, sub alpine and Alpine meadows); zhajloo-tourism with display of a nomadic way of life of Kyrgyz; speleotours with training and informative purposes; exotic tours to high-mountainous zones with use of horses, camels, yaks; hunting with hunting birds and hounds; hunting on wild ram of Marco Polo and other animals (mountain goats, wild boar, pheasants, etc.); rest on Issyk-Kul Lake with offer of talas- climate- balneal- and peloidotherapy; travel along the Great Silk way within the country; ethnographic tourism with inclusion of folklore, archaeological, craft and regional studies routes.

## CONCLUSION

Hence, use of available resources for high-grade satisfaction of requirements of local and foreign tourists on strictly scientific and nature protection basis is considered as an urgent task of present.

In summary it is necessary to notice that at the present stage in business of an economic-geographical estimation of tourist resources and tourism development there are following urgent tasks:

- inventory of tourist resources in republic;
- development of new system of payment for use of tourist resources according to market and ecology requirements;
- an establishment of admissible recreational loading on used zones strictly on a scientific basis with the account of complex of factors, first of all, natural-geographical;
- revealing of possibilities of display of the dangerous natural phenomena in tourist zones and working out of measures under their prevention and averting, working out of scientific bases of an estimation of natural risk and danger of development of the adverse phenomena of environment;
- working out of a comprehensive plan of rationalization and protection of natural-tourist resources for the purpose of increase of their efficiency at the expense of natural reproduction and biotechnical actions;
- gaining by Kyrgyz Republic its niche in the world tourist market (tours of ecological, adventure and ethnographic tourism).

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