



Article

## Utilization of Uzbekistan's Natural Resources in Recreation

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**Abstract:** Uzbekistan's natural resources are full of possibilities for the ecotourism and recreational tourism development, the GDP growth and environmental sustainability. But despite the efforts of the government in the direction of the ecotourism, a problem of infrastructure, lack of access and risks of the environment bar optimal use. Previous research highlights the significance of ecotourism, yet there is a need to identify how. Uzbekistan's ecotourism-recreational resources are classified and strategically managed. The research in this study is pursuant to a qualitative research approach and the study was carried out by reviewing the government policies, strategic tourism frameworks and international best practices which enable evaluation of the sustainability and accessibility of natural tourism resources. Results show that Uzbekistan has many ecotourism opportunities yet the country is lacking clear policies and awareness to develop it. The findings point to the critical need to improve infrastructure, refine community outreach and refining policies in ecotourism development. Results of the study have implication for policymakers, investors, local stakeholders which we think will offer the strategic advice for balancing tourism growth with environmental conservation in the long run for sustainability.

**Keywords:** recreation, region, concept, ethnography, gastronomy, program, distinctive, terrain, excursion, petroglyph

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### 1. Introduction

Tourism is a very important element in the harvesting of economic and cultural development for the Nations all over the World, while Ecotourism and Recreational tourism has become a newer sustainable development sector. Uzbekistan, boasting its diverse natural zones, historical and cultural heritage and richness of biodiversity has considerable opportunities for implementing recreation tourism. Use of natural resources for leisure, wellness, and ecotourism are the priorities of the country's tourism development policy. But deploying these resources successfully and for the long haul is a whole different story: it needs good planning, money, and policy harmonization with the world's best practices [1].

The connection between tourism and resource utilization is essential for striking an environment conservation and economic advantages balance. Ecotourism, recreational tourism both require preserving ecosystems, good practices of tourism and good use of protected areas like parks, reserves and attractions. Recent government decisions and strategic initiatives in Uzbekistan also point to the need for creation of tourist-recreational eco zones providing with developed infrastructure [2]. Yet, challenges like limited accessibility, environment degradation threats and lack of awareness at all levels also significantly hinder optimal utilization of Uzbekistan's natural tourism resources [3].

Although academic research into ecotourism and natural resource management has grown, knowledge deficiency exists in the particular classification and rational exploitation of Uzbekistan ecotourism resources. However, previous studies have stressed the need for eko turizma modeli, but there is no long evaluation of Uzbekistan

eco-tourism potential and recreational tourism socio-economic effect. This research aims at filling this gap by projecting the Uzbekistan's ecotourism-recreational resources classification and examination of the policies which regulate their sustainable use [4]. Also, cases from around the world will be examined to determine the best practices that can be replicated in Uzbekistan.

This research study uses qualitative research, using policy analysis, literature review, and comparative case study. Government declarations, strategic tourism framework, and environmental policy are reviewed with regard to their taken into consideration within ecotourism advancement [5]. Thematic analysis is also performed in order to reason key trends in the accessibility and management of natural resources for recreation. The RSC also examines social economic and ecological factors that determine sustainability of tourism projects in Uzbekistan [6].

The research is supposed to show the current state of ecotourism-recreational resource of Uzbekistan, CBMeld gaps in the organization of tourism industry, to prepare the proposals on strategic ways and approaches for sustainable development. Results will benefit policy improvement, infrastructure development and investment on ecotourism [7]. Moreover, the study will also emphasize the significance of ecologic awareness and conservationism to grow the long lasting sustainability of natural tourism amenity. The findings of this research have the government, reality check, investors and service residents, to influence tourism, providing information so that Uzbekistan's natural resources can be effectively utilized for tourism development by enabling environmental sustainability [8].

#### Literature Review

The Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan's Resolution "On Measures to Develop Ecotourism and Improve the Procedure for Allocating Land Plots within the Water Protection Zones of Reservoirs" delineates the aim of fostering ecotourism in the water protection zones of the nation's reservoirs. It seeks to encourage the active utilisation of water resources for recreational purposes, benefiting both the local populace and international visitors [9].

The Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On Additional Measures for the Accelerated Development of Tourism in Uzbekistan," along with its annexe "Tourism Development Concept for 2019-2025," emphasises the necessity of formulating a master plan for the allocation of tourism infrastructure in each region to address the increasing demand for tourism services from residents and visitors. This further emphasises the significance of the topic [10].

The Tourism Development Concept for 2019-2025 asserts that Uzbekistan provides a variety of appealing and competitive tourism products throughout the year. The concept underscores the establishment of thematic tourism zones and clusters in various places, alongside the formulation of innovative tourism programs that take into account viable tourism types [11].

## 2. Materials and Methods

A qualitative research design allows examination of Uzbekistan's natural resources usage for recreational and ecotourism activities. For data collection researchers assess government resolutions and decrees as well as strategic frameworks about tourism development particularly focusing on documents from the Cabinet of Ministers and presidential commands. These documents offer essential information about policy objectives and the arrangements of ecotourism areas together with plans for developing infrastructure. The research examines how ecotourism-recreational resources receive their classification based upon their environmental, hydrological and geomorphological factors. Research data from academic publications together with professional reports and official statistics measure the existing status of ecotourism activities in Uzbekistan. Evaluation of international best practice models occurs in this methodology by investigating ecotourism success cases in developed nations before identifying relevant solutions for Uzbekistan.

The research uses thematic analysis to discover major patterns regarding public recreation as well as ecotourism resource accessibility and regulatory frameworks which

affect the sector's expansion. As a part of this assessment process government-issued strategies serve to upgrade tourism services and protect the environment to develop policy recommendations. The study examines two socio-economic elements which impact ecotourism; it investigates both environmental cost and local knowledge about ecological preservation. The research design uses different methodologies including policy review analysis and literature research and comparative case assessment to offer an all-encompassing exploration of natural resource use optimization approaches for recreational tourism in Uzbekistan. The research employs this methodology to establish specific solutions which promote sustainable ecotourism development by managing economic and social and environmental requirements.

### 3. Result

#### **Investigating the Application of Ecotourism and Recreational Tourism Assets for Public Leisure in Uzbekistan**

In examining the potential for leveraging Uzbekistan's ecotourism and recreational tourism assets for public leisure, the first objective is to catalogue and document the nation's national parks, state nature reserves, and designated protected areas (state nature sanctuaries). Furthermore, it is important to create a catalogue of species documented in the International Red Book and Uzbekistan's Red Book, as well as uncommon animal and plant species, distinctive natural landscapes, and endemic flora and fauna (species that exclusively thrive in their indigenous environments).

#### **The Function of National Parks in Public Recreation**

In numerous countries globally, national parks function as essential recreational hubs for public enjoyment. The creation of national parks in Uzbekistan to improve public recreation commenced in the 1970s. The Ugam-Chatkal and Zomin National Parks were formed during this period. Recently, Zarafshan and Sarmishsay National Parks have been established. These parks are acknowledged globally as important natural and recreational sites [12].

The government is augmenting the number of national parks to enhance public recreational possibilities and improve accessibility to natural and ecotourism assets for both residents and international tourists.

The Cabinet of Ministers' resolution on "Additional measures for the establishment of protected natural areas in forest fund lands" has resulted in the establishment of five new national parks. In compliance with the law "On Protected Natural Areas," the national parks "Orolqum," "Pop," "Omonqoton," "Yuqori Topalang," and "Bobotog" have been established within the forest fund lands of the Republic of Karakalpakstan, Namangan, Samarkand, and Surkhandarya districts. The State Committee on Forestry is identified as the originator of these national nature parks. The operations of these national nature parks will be funded through the state budget, extrabudgetary resources, and other legally permissible means [13].

The agreement additionally ratifies the land areas assigned for "Orolqum," "Pop," "Omonqoton," "Yuqori Topalang," and "Bobotog" national parks, encompassing zones allocated for reserves, recreation, and economic utilisation (Table 1). Upon the full operationalisation of these national parks, the influx of recreational visitors in Uzbekistan will markedly rise. Furthermore, 733,000 hectares of natural landscapes and biological resources would be designated for state preservation [14].

**Table 1.** New national parks have been established in Uzbekistan (land areas)

T/p	Name of the National Park	Total Land Area	Of which:		
			Reserve Zone	Recreation Zone	Economic Use Zone
1.	<b>Orolqum National Park</b>	1 000 000	700 000	200 000	100 000
2.	<b>Pop National Park</b>	10 000	6 000	3 000	1 000
3.	<b>Omonqoton National Park</b>	1 500	1 000	400	100
4.	<b>Yuqori Topalang National Park</b>	27 851	18 000	6 851	3 000
5.	<b>Bobotog' National Park</b>	12 064	8 000	3 000	1 064
<b>Total:</b>		<b>1 051 415</b>	<b>733 000</b>	<b>213 251</b>	<b>105 164</b>

When enumerating the ecological-recreational resources that facilitate leisure activities in our country, the following categories of resources that garner public interest can be identified [12] [11]:

1. Natural geographic regions of Uzbekistan include deserts, foothills, mountains, and highlands. Recreational natural environments, therapeutic springs, cascades;'
2. Hydrological entities (rivers, lakes, reservoirs);
3. Climatic conditions characterised by four distinct seasons;
4. Ancient trees and natural landmarks, protected areas;
5. State reserves and national parks of the Republic of Uzbekistan.
6. Endangered species of fauna and flora catalogued in the international "Red Book" and Uzbekistan's "Red Book";
7. Endemic species of fauna and flora in Uzbekistan;
8. Remnants of the Aral Sea, the Lower Amu Darya coastline, tugai woods, along with their flora and wildlife;
9. Ancient petroglyphs and rock art in our highlands;
10. Accessibility of hunting territories;
11. Characteristics of settlements situated in various natural geographic regions;
12. Protected regions of Uzbekistan.

International tourism experts have highlighted that the aforementioned ecological-recreational resources position Uzbekistan in the top 10 countries globally for tourism resource diversity, abundance, and appeal. Furthermore, it is advised to incorporate geomorphological, hydrological, and biological resources into the classification of ecotourism-recreational resources [15].

From an ecological standpoint, Uzbekistan's area can be categorised into five distinct vertical zones, each characterised by variations in climate, flora, and fauna. The ecotourism and recreational resources can be enhanced by 11 significant rivers and 55 reservoir basins nationwide [12].

At present, the organisation and development of recreation for the populace has emerged as a primary socio-economic focus in worldwide tourism. This is due to the fact that, in the age of globalisation, both mental and physical relaxation are regarded as essential components of tourism. By comprehending the fundamental nature of recreation, we can discern the primary avenues, origins, and subjects of public leisure,

examine the population's historical engagement in mental and physical relaxation, and evaluate their preferred recreational objects [16].

Coordinating ecotourism and leisure activities is a multifaceted endeavour, requiring the harmonious integration of several components. These components encompass clusters of tourists, natural ecosystems, technical infrastructure, service industries, labour resources, and organizational-economic and distribution networks that must function cohesively [17].

To structure and enhance leisure activities utilising Uzbekistan's ecotourism and recreational tourist assets, the subsequent tasks must be executed:

1. Articulate the importance, goals, and responsibilities associated with delivering ecotourism and recreational services to enhance public recreation.
2. Elucidate the national significance of structuring and enhancing ecotourism and recreational services for public leisure.
3. Classify and delineate the ecotourism and recreational resources designated for public use
4. Formulate conceptual strategies for delivering ecotourism and recreational services for public leisure.
5. Formulate strategic initiatives to guarantee access to ecotourism and recreational services for all socio-economic strata of the population;
6. Develop recommendations for strategic approaches to use contemporary ecotourism and recreational service experiences from international contexts.
7. Formulate proposals for the strategic marketing, route expansion, and excursion initiatives of ecotourism-recreational services to improve public recreation.

#### 4. Discussion

A significant challenge in the organisation and advancement of public recreation is the elevated expense of services in ecotourism-recreational regions within the contemporary market economy. Individuals from diverse socio-economic backgrounds may find it challenging to finance expensive recreational activities in these regions. Consequently, public monies ought to finance the socio-economic and regulatory expenses necessary to guarantee accessible recreational alternatives for the populace in ecotourism-recreational areas.

**Secondly**, following the ecotourism principles established by the International Ecotourism Society in organising public recreation can provide anticipated outcomes. These principles have been disseminated to the leaders of all nations globally, and each country is mandated to adhere to them when developing ecotourism. The principles encompass:

1. Ecotourism and recreation must be nature-centric and founded on the sustainable utilisation of natural resources.
2. Ecotourism and recreation ought to promote environmentally sustainable growth while mitigating adverse impacts on the natural environment.
3. Ecotourism and recreation should emphasise environmental education and awareness, fostering harmonious coexistence with nature.
4. Ecotourism and recreation ought to uphold and conserve local socio-cultural traditions.
5. Ecotourism and recreation must provide sustainable development and economic viability in the regions of operation.

**Furthermore,**

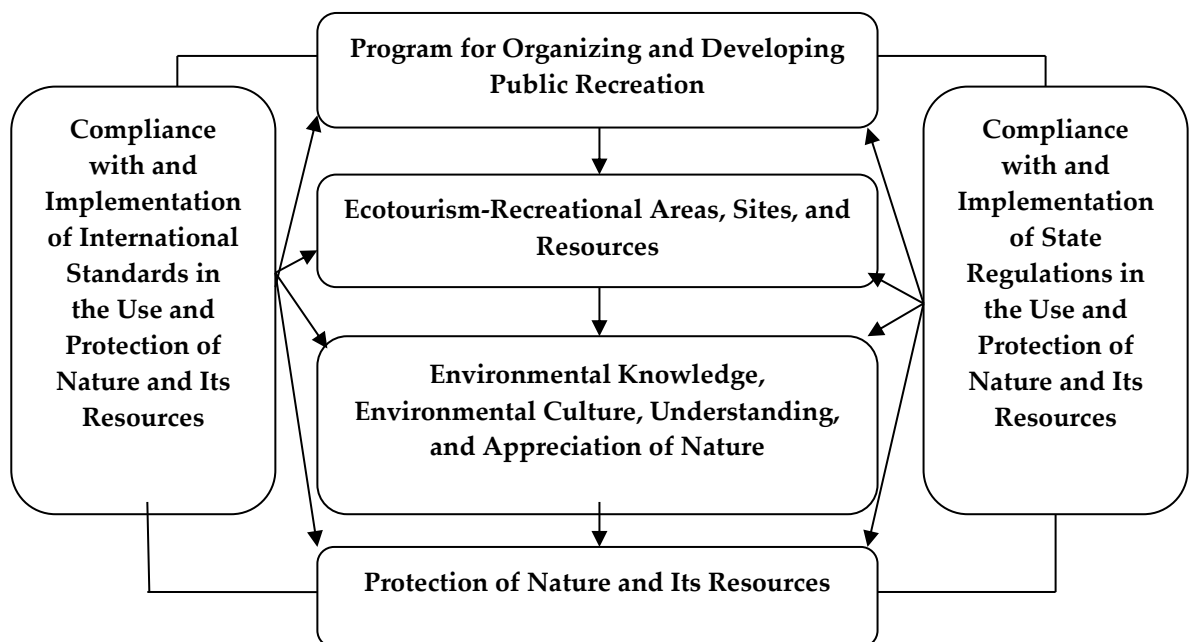
The government should offer incentives, including as tax reductions, preferential loans, and subsidies, to service providers in the ecotourism-recreational resources sector to facilitate the organisation and development of public recreation. These incentives will allow individuals from various socio-economic levels to experience recreation in natural environments.



**Fourthly**, in the organisation of public leisure inside ecotourism-recreational regions, it is imperative to enhance ecological consciousness and knowledge among the populace. Individuals ought to be informed on nature conservation legislation, demonstrate reverence for the environment and its resources, and be motivated to engage in voluntary ecological protection initiatives. It is vital to impart the regulations and tenets of ecotourism-recreation to guarantee appropriate participation.

**Fifthly**, countries that have effectively cultivated ecotourism and recreation, like European nations, the USA, Canada, Australia, and Japan, have established organisational and economic regulations and advantages for various social and economic demographics. These initiatives enable anyone to access recreational activities in national parks, distinctive natural landscapes, and waterfalls at a reasonable cost. Consequently, during vacations, there is a marked increase in participation in ecotourism and recreational activities, resulting in a rise in domestic tourism.

The primary factor contributing to this accomplishment is the elevated degree of ecological literacy and environmental culture within the populations of these countries (Figure 1). Implementing these international best practices in Uzbekistan's ecotourism and recreational regions can facilitate the attainment of the sector's developmental objectives.



**Figure 1.** Organization of Public Recreation in Ecotourism-Recreational Areas in European Countries [6].

## 5. Conclusion

An individual's ecotourism and recreational pursuits, together with leisure requirements, are interconnected with productive forces and moulded by socio-economic dynamics affected by external environmental elements. In assessing the significance of leisure within a nation's socio-economic framework, it is crucial to broaden the characterisation and characterisation of mental and physical recreational venues and to acknowledge the intricate dynamics involved in organising recreational activities.

To ascertain the function and importance of public recreation development under ecotourism in our country's socio-economic landscape, it is crucial to first construct ecotourism-recreational infrastructure and organise services in designated ecotourism-recreational zones. This not only augments recreational opportunities but also generates new employment for the local populace and greatly contributes to economic expansion.

When defining ecotourism and recreational zones, it is essential to consider the leisure requirements and demands of the population. This is due to the evolution of populations'

leisure demands during historical and sociological periods, influenced by the distinct qualities of their locales.

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