GEOGRAPHICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF ALTITUDINAL ZONATION IN KASHKADARYA REGION

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Abstract: *This article highlights the role and geographical features of altitudinal zonation in the development of tourism in the Kashkadarya region. The changes in natural conditions and resources along the plains, adyrs, foothills, and mountainous parts of the region's territory were analyzed. The importance of recreational opportunities, landscape diversity, climatic conditions, water resources, and natural and historical-cultural sites in the development of tourism in various high-altitude regions was also assessed. The study examines opportunities for the territorial organization of promising tourism directions based on altitudinal zonation, the effective use of mountain and foothill areas, and the enhancement of tourism and recreational potential.*

Keywords: *Kashkadarya region, altitudinal zonation, tourism, recreation, tourism potential, foothill regions, mountainous regions, natural resources, landscape, geographical features, territorial organization of tourism.*

ГЕОГРАФИЧЕСКИЕ ОСОБЕННОСТИ РАЗВИТИЯ ТУРИЗМА В КАШКАДАРЬИНСКОЙ ОБЛАСТИ В УСЛОВИЯХ ВЫСОТНОГО ЗОНИРОВАНИЯ

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Аннотация: *В данной статье рассматриваются роль и географические особенности высотного зонирования в развитии туризма в Кашкадарьинской области. Были проанализированы изменения природных условий и ресурсов вдоль равнин, адыров, предгорий и горных районов региона. Также была оценена важность рекреационных возможностей, ландшафтного разнообразия, климатических условий, водных ресурсов, природных и историко-культурных объектов в развитии туризма в различных высокогорных регионах. В исследовании рассматриваются возможности территориальной организации перспективных туристических направлений на основе*

высотного зонирования, эффективного использования горных и предгорных территорий, а также повышения туристско-рекреационного потенциала.

Ключевые слова: *Кашкадарьинская область, высотная зональность, туризм, рекреация, туристический потенциал, предгорные регионы, горные регионы, природные ресурсы, ландшафт, географические особенности, территориальная организация туризма.*

Today, the development of tourism based on the natural and geographical potential of regions is one of the most important scientific and practical issues. In particular, the territorial diversity of natural conditions and landscapes serves as an important factor in the formation of various tourism directions and their territorial organization. From this perspective, the study of altitudinal zonation—which represents changes in the terrain, climate, water resources, flora, and fauna, as well as landscape features—in connection with the development of tourism is of particular importance.

The Kashkadarya region is characterized by a diversity of natural and geographical conditions. The Zeravshan, Hissar, and Baysun mountain ranges are located in the eastern, northeastern, and southeastern parts of the region, while the central and western parts of the territory are primarily composed of plains. Therefore, it is natural for the elevation of the region to increase from west to east and northeast.

Climatic conditions, moisture levels, vegetation cover, soil, and landscape characteristics also change with altitude. This natural-geographical differentiation creates various opportunities for tourism. In particular, there are opportunities to develop historical, cultural, pilgrimage, agricultural, and recreational tourism in lowland and foothill areas, and ecotourism, nature recreation, hiking, and other recreational areas in mountainous areas. Scientific research has also been conducted to study the tourist and recreational areas of the Kashkadarya region by dividing them into plain, foothill, and mountain areas.

At the current stage, special attention is paid to the development of tourism in the mountainous and foothill areas of the Kashkadarya region. In particular, based

on the Presidential Decree of November 28, 2023, measures have been defined aimed at developing modern service and tourism facilities in the mountainous and recreational areas of the region. This further increases the practical significance of taking into account natural-geographical conditions, especially the characteristics of altitudinal zonation, in the development of tourism.

In this regard, the study of tourism development in the Kashkadarya region in connection with altitudinal zoning serves to identify the existing natural and recreational potential of the regions, determine promising tourism directions, and evaluate the possibilities for the effective use of tourist areas. The main objective of this study is to determine the impact of altitudinal zoning on the development of tourism in the Kashkadarya region and to geographically assess the tourism and recreational potential of various altitudinal zones.

Bakhrom Murtazayev's scientific article "Systematic Analysis of Altitude Zones (Using the High-Altitude Landscapes of the Kashkadarya Region of the Republic of Uzbekistan as an Example)," published in 2023, analyzes the patterns of landscape formation and altitudinal stratification in the region. In the study of high-altitude landscapes, the author focused on lithogenic factors, hypsometric levels, and the characteristics of vertical zoning. This study serves as a natural-geographical basis for assessing the mountainous areas of the Kashkadarya region from a tourism and recreational perspective [1].

The natural-geographical structure of the Kashkadarya region is characterized by a combination of plains, foothills, and mountainous areas. Altitudinal zonation manifests in changes in climate, humidity, soil, vegetation, and landscape characteristics as the absolute elevation of the territory increases. Therefore, when assessing the region's tourism potential, it is important to study the territory not only by administrative units but also by natural conditions and elevation characteristics [1].

Altitude regionalization allows for the consideration of several important factors in the territorial organization of tourism. In particular, the complexity of the terrain, climatic conditions, the availability of water sources, the diversity of

natural landscapes, and proximity to transport routes determine the possibilities for developing tourism activities. However, the height itself does not fully reflect the tourism potential. In addition to natural resources, infrastructure, safety, environmental sustainability, and service capabilities must be taken into account when evaluating it. This approach indicates the need for a comprehensive assessment of elevation zones from a tourism perspective.

In Bakhrom Murtazaev's study of the high-altitude landscapes of the Kashkadarya region, the territorial stratification of landscapes was studied in connection with natural-geographical factors [1]. Based on this scientific approach, the tourist and recreational potential of the region can be analyzed across plains, foothills, mid-mountain, and high-mountain regions. Such grouping contributes to the placement of tourism types in accordance with natural conditions. At the same time, the precise elevation boundaries of the zones must be determined based on relevant topographic maps and natural-geographical sources.

Plain territories. The relative convenience of the terrain on the plains can facilitate the organization of traffic and access to tourist sites. In these regions, there are opportunities to combine tourist routes related to historical and cultural heritage sites, pilgrimage sites, local traditions, and agricultural activities. However, to determine the actual level of these opportunities, separate information is required regarding the location of tourist sites, road networks, and service infrastructure.

Foothill areas. As a transition zone between plains and mountain landscapes, foothill regions can be characterized by a combination of natural and cultural resources. In these regions, there are prospects for the development of rural tourism, ecological travel, familiarization with the local way of life, and short-term recreational recreation. In the announcement of the Higher Attestation Commission for Sunnat Normatov's PhD dissertation on the geographical features of rural tourism in the Kashkadarya region, issues regarding the use of natural, cultural, historical, pilgrimage, and recreational resources of tourist villages, as well as the

formation of new routes, are highlighted [2]. This scientific work serves as an important source for studying the tourism potential of foothill and rural areas.

Mid-mountain regions. In mid-mountain regions, the diversity of natural landscapes, relief forms, and changes in vegetation cover can create opportunities for nature-oriented travel. In such areas, it is advisable to organize routes based on ecological tourism, hiking, and nature observation. At the same time, when determining routes, the condition of roads, the steepness of slopes, the availability of water sources, and environmental protection requirements must be taken into account. To accurately assess these opportunities, the results of territorial mapping and field research are necessary.

High mountain areas. The complexity of the terrain and the specific nature of natural conditions in high-altitude regions require a special approach to organizing tourism. There are opportunities for nature observation, the development of designated hiking routes that do not require special training, and controlled types of recreational activities. In some locations, there may be routes that require specialized training, qualified instructors, and safety measures. Therefore, protecting the natural environment and ensuring the safety of visitors should be a priority in the development of tourism in high-altitude regions.

One of the legal foundations for the development of tourism infrastructure in the mountainous and recreational areas of the Kashkadarya region is Resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PP-376 dated November 28, 2023 [3]. The resolution defines issues regarding the effective use of the region's tourism potential and the construction of service complexes and tourism facilities. The document provides for the development of a tourist center in the "Miraki" area of the Shakhrisabz district and the "Maydanak Baland Tog" tourist center in the Kamashi district.

This resolution outlines a draft master plan for the placement of tourism infrastructure facilities on 240 hectares of land in the "Miraki," "Amir Temur," "Uloch," and "Polmon" mahalla citizens' assemblies of the Shakhrisabz district, as well as projects for the organization of tourism facilities on an area of 58.6 hectares

in the "Katta Ura" area of the Kamashi district [3]. These data indicate that the development of tourism in the mountainous and foothill regions of the region is one of the practical tasks at the state level.

The study of the tourist centers provided for in the resolution from the perspective of altitudinal zoning is important for this study. In particular, it is possible to compare the geographical location, absolute altitude, natural landscapes, transportation, and existing infrastructure of the "Miraki" and "Maydanak Baland Tog" centers. In this case, the exact elevation indicators of these centers must be determined based on a topographic or digital elevation model. Thus, it becomes possible to assess the relationship between the placement of tourist sites and the natural and geographical features of the territory.

The projects outlined in the state decree create an organizational and legal basis for utilizing the region's tourism potential. However, the creation of infrastructure facilities alone does not guarantee the sustainable development of tourism. To achieve this, it is necessary to comprehensively address issues regarding the quality of services, the participation of the local population, transport accessibility, the interconnection of tourist routes, and environmental protection.

The publication of the Higher Attestation Commission on the dissertation of Sunnat Normatov, dedicated to the geographical study of rural tourism in the Kashkadarya region, presents scientific results on the zoning of tourist villages, the mapping of tourist sites, the development of promising routes, and the rational use of various tourism resources [2]. Linking these approaches with altitudinal zonation expands the scientific and practical possibilities for the territorial organization of regional tourism.

First, it is necessary to conduct an inventory of tourist and recreational resources by altitudinal zones. At the same time, it is advisable to collect natural landscapes, water sources, forests, historical and cultural sites, pilgrimage sites, tourism services, and transport routes in a single database.

Secondly, the tourism potential of each region should be evaluated based on the same criteria. At the same time, indicators such as natural attractiveness,

climatic comfort, transport accessibility, infrastructure, environmental condition, and seasonality can be used. These criteria are the evaluation directions proposed within the framework of this article, and their final composition must be clarified based on available statistical data and field observations.

Thirdly, it is important to strengthen tourism ties between high-altitude regions. For example, the integration of historical and cultural sites, rural tourism sites, and mountain recreational areas into a single route system can enrich travel programs. Such routes must be developed in accordance with local conditions, road availability, travel duration, and safety requirements.

Fourth, in the development of tourism, it is necessary to adhere to the principles of environmental sustainability. In mountainous areas with sensitive natural landscapes, it is particularly important to regulate visitor flow, manage waste, conserve water resources, and reduce the negative impact on vegetation cover. These measures serve to harmonize the economic interests of tourism with the tasks of environmental protection.

In general, the development of tourism in the Kashkadarya region under conditions of altitudinal zonation should be based on identifying natural and geographical opportunities, regional assessment of tourism resources, targeted infrastructure placement, and consideration of environmental requirements. At the same time, the combined application of scientific research results, official documents, cartographic data, and field observations allows for the development of sound recommendations for tourism development.

As a result of studying the geographical features of tourism development in the Kashkadarya region under conditions of altitudinal zonation, it was established that the orographic structure, natural conditions, and altitudinal stratification of the region's landscapes are important factors determining the territorial differentiation of tourism and recreational opportunities. The plains, foothills, and mountainous regions of the region differ from one another in their natural resources, landscape features, and conditions for organizing tourism activities. In this regard, accounting

for altitudinal zoning in tourism development is an important geographical basis for determining territorial specialization.

Analysis shows that there are opportunities to develop historical, cultural, pilgrimage, and rural tourism in lowland and foothill areas, and ecotourism and recreational tourism in mountainous areas in accordance with the attractiveness of natural landscapes and topographical features. However, the prospects for these routes are determined not only by natural conditions but also by transport infrastructure, tourism services, the ecological state of the territory, and seasonal convenience.

The practical significance of the study lies in assessing the tourism and recreational potential of the Kashkadarya region across elevation zones and defining the following priority areas for the territorial organization of tourism: geographical inventory of tourism resources, assessment of elevation zone capabilities based on unified criteria, development of routes connecting natural and historical-cultural sites, and development of tourism infrastructure considering environmental constraints.

Thus, when forming a geographical model for tourism development in the Kashkadarya region, it is advisable to use elevation zoning as one of the primary natural-geographical criteria. This approach expands opportunities for determining the tourism specialization of regions, the rational use of recreational resources, and the ecologically sustainable organization of tourism. At the same time, it is necessary to combine topographic and thematic maps, geographic information system data, and field observations to obtain accurate regional assessment results.

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