

Chapter 13

The Role of Agritourism and Eco–Agritourism in Social Welfare Development

Rusudani Kvaratskhelia

Alte University, Georgia

ABSTRACT

The positive impact of tourism on the country's economy and the well-being of the population is recognized, however, world experience has also shown the negative aspects of the sector, such as the undesirable influence of the state on the development of the tourism industry in various aspects. The development of tourism only for high commercialization harms the country's culture, natural resources, and values. The development of tourism only for high commercialization harms the country's culture, natural resources, and values. In places of mass tourism, serious problems have arisen in the direction of ecology, culture, and social development. In addition to damage and pollution of the environment, depletion of natural resources, disturbance of biodiversity, and land degradation also pose a threat.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the fastest-growing industries, and in developing countries it is considered a driver of socio-economic progress, contributing to job creation and rapid income generation. However, the industry's rapid growth rates often harm biodiversity, ecological conditions, and the indigenous environment. Considering these circumstances, it is necessary to implement the principles of sustainable tourism. The concept of sustainable tourism development is widely recognized as a desirable and politically correct approach to tourism development. The success of sustainable tourism lies in visioning, planning, management, monitoring, learning processes, and the full involvement of the community (Choi & Sirakaya, 2005).

Ecological threats, seasonality, low-quality food - these are the problems due to which the modern world decided to review the classical development plan and take care of the well-being of future generations, which is the foundation of sustainable development. The sustainable development of tourism

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includes ecological, social, and economic aspects. The basis of success lies in establishing a balance between them. It is in this context that the development of bioagro-tourism is discussed worldwide.

The development of agrotourism is an important factor in attracting tourists and raising the well-being of the population in rural areas. Any country needs to evaluate the main characteristics and components of agrotourism as a synthesis of tourism and agriculture, against the background of modern international agritourism trends, identifying the main challenges and opportunities of the agritourism market in a specific country. Agrotourism is considered a tourist activity in rural areas, the main condition of which is agricultural activity, and presentation of the traditional landscape of the village, and the main player is the owner of the agrotourism enterprise, which means the host. As for the main components of agrotourism they are sight, activity, and local food products. In agrotourism, local natural-climatic, social-cultural, ethnographic, and agricultural resources are used, from which complex agrotourism products are created.

The role of organic farms in the development of agrotourism is extremely large. The main goal of the “biovillage agro-tourism paradigm” is sustainable management of resources and the introduction of biotechnologies to protect nature, eliminate poverty, strengthen the economy of regions, develop tourism, and ensure food security. A diversified, community-based tourism activity is seen as a mechanism for protecting natural resources and communicating with the local community (Roy, 2010).

For an agritourism enterprise to be sustainable, it must take into account social, natural, and internal farm factors. Sustainability requires cooperation with the environment, not conflict. It is established that the strategies and models of sustainable agriculture are determined by the ecological pillar. Nowadays such international organizations as the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movement IF-OAM; (International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements) FIBL, FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization), UNEP (United Nations Environment Program), WWOOF - (WORLD Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms), etc. are actively working in the bio direction.

Research Methods

During the development of the chapter, there was applied a customer satisfaction survey report, which reflects the results of customer surveys and focus groups. The document includes research tools, a list of agro-tourism objects evaluated by patients participating in the survey, a list of respondents participating in focus groups, and agro-tourism objects analyzed by them. A survey of representatives of 3 agro-tourism facilities was conducted. In particular, 5-5 respondents of each agro-tourism facility were interviewed. The results of their survey were analyzed and recorded in the report in the form of charts.

Focus groups were held with real users. In the mentioned process, the attitude of the respondents towards the services of the agro-tourism object, their level of satisfaction, their psychological moods, and their emotional evaluations, which are often not even realized by them, were revealed. Focus group participants are selected based on special criteria. These criteria meant that people were selected who had not used the services of any agro-tourism facility at least 2 times in the last 1 year. Following the objectives of the research, the first requirement for the selection of participants is that the respondents should be well-versed in the issue to which the focus group is devoted and, in particular, have the necessary information in terms of the administration of the agro-tourism facility.

The number of focus group participants is 8 people. The number of respondents is strictly limited so that during the focus group, all its participants have the opportunity to freely and fully express their opinions.

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