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ANALYSIS OF THE MODERN AGRITOURISM TYPES DEVELOPMENT IN THE MANGISTAU REGION OF KAZAKHSTAN



*Análisis de los tipos de desarrollo de agroturismo
moderno en la región de Mangistau, en Kazajistán*

*Análise dos tipos de desenvolvimento de agroturismo
moderno na região de Mangistau, em Cazaquistão*

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ABSTRACT

Despite the unique combination of natural and landscape systems, favorable geographical location, and the presence of many historical and cultural objects in the territory of the Mangistau region the development of tourism industry is not fully settled. In particular, this applies to agrarian tourism, which must be developed in a balanced relationship with ethnic, cultural, environmental, and religious tourism. The research aims to analyze the modern principles of agrarian tourism functioning in the Mangistau region. The authors used the following methods: theoretical and methodological generalization, induction, and deduction to analyze the conceptual apparatus in the sphere of agritourism in the region; abstract-logical approach in writing proposals and conclusions; method of algorithmizing in determining the conceptual provisions of strategic development of agritourism. The significance of tourism within rural settlements as an important component of the social and economic systems of development of the State was substantiated. The structural division of resource provision of the region from the point of view of the realization of modern and future business ideas is, finally, generalized.

KEYWORDS

Rural villages, tourism potential, socio-economic development, eco-garden optimization, ethnic group.

RESUMEN

A pesar de la combinación única de sistemas naturales y paisajísticos, una ubicación geográfica favorable y la presencia de muchos objetos históricos y culturales en el territorio de la región de Mangistau, el desarrollo de la industria turística no está aún completamente establecido. En particular, esto se aplica al turismo agrario, que debe desarrollarse en una relación equilibrada con el turismo étnico, cultural, ambiental y religioso. La investigación tiene como objetivo analizar los principios modernos del funcionamiento del turismo agrario en la región de Mangistau. Para ello fueron utilizados los métodos de generalización teórica y metodológica, inducción y deducción, para analizar el aparato conceptual en la esfera del agroturismo en la región; enfoque abstracto-lógico en la redacción de propuestas y conclusiones, y método de algoritmización para determinar las disposiciones conceptuales del desarrollo estratégico del agroturismo. Corroboramos la importancia del turismo dentro de los asentamientos rurales como un componente importante de los sistemas sociales y económicos de desarrollo del Estado. La división estructural de la provisión de recursos de la región desde el punto de vista de la realización de ideas comerciales modernas y futuras es, finalmente, generalizada.

PALABRAS CLAVE

Aldeas rurales, turismo potencial, desarrollo socioeconómico, optimización de huertos ecológicos, grupo étnico.

RESUMO

Apesar da combinação única de sistemas naturais e paisagísticos, de uma localização geográfica favorável e da presença de muitos objetos históricos e culturais no território da região de Mangistau, o desenvolvimento da indústria do turismo ainda não está totalmente estabelecido. Isto se aplica em particular ao turismo agrário, que deve ser desenvolvido numa relação equilibrada com o turismo étnico, cultural, ambiental e religioso. A pesquisa tem como objetivo analisar os princípios modernos de funcionamento do turismo agrário na região de Mangistau. Para isso, foram utilizados os métodos de generalização teórica e metodológica, indução e dedução para analisar o aparato conceitual na esfera do agroturismo na região; abordagem lógico-abstrata na redação de propostas e conclusões, e método de algoritmização para determinar as disposições conceituais do desenvolvimento estratégico do agroturismo. Corroboramos a importância do turismo nos assentamentos rurais como um importante componente dos sistemas de desenvolvimento social e econômico do Estado. A divisão estrutural da provisão de recursos da região do ponto de vista da concretização de ideias de negócios modernas e futuras é, finalmente, generalizada.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Aldeias rurais, turismo potencial, desenvolvimento socioeconômico, otimização de hortas orgânicas, etnia.

Introduction

Mangistau region is included in the list of the ten most promising tourist and resort areas of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Over the past few years, significant investment financing in the amount of about 1 billion United States dollars has been attracted to the development of the sector. Important geographical characteristics of the region are the access to the Caspian Sea and the presence of the Ustyurt Plateau. The territory also features various landscapes, deserts, mountain ranges and crests, plains, trenches, and plateaus. Spatial planning of the coast fully meets the requirements of the resort area, as the architectural and planning system includes parks, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and comfortable accessibility for tourists and locals from the city to the waterfront. Thus, the territorial organization creates all the conditions for the development of beach tourism. Experts analyze that by 2030 the tourist flow will be about 740 thousand visits a year, which will have the best effect on the increase of socio-economic development of the region (Mangystau Resort Complex, 2020). In particular, with such attendance, other tourist directions will be developed, in particular ethnic, historical and cultural, and religious tourism. After all, Mangistau is known for its unique natural sites such as Shergala Mountain and Zhigilgan geological formations.

The above-mentioned sites are characterized by the lowest possible level of anthropogenic load. The region is also known for its historical and cultural heritage, having mausoleums, mosques, and ancient necropolises. However, these tourism areas do not provide a continuous flow of tourists. After all, this situation is affected by climatic factors, and the holiday season covers only 5 months. Therefore, it is necessary to develop different tourist areas in combination with improving transport accessibility, adhering to special measures of environmental protection, as well as expanding the range of services while attracting potential consumers. Stimulate the development of domestic tourism, the main consumers of which will be domestic tourists – residents of large cities, families, youth, and children (Kurmanov et al., 2022). Currently, one of the promising tourist destinations in the Mangistau region is agritourism, which is at the stage of formation as a new market segment of the economic system of the country. In this case, it is important to comply with the principles of natural resource potential allocation efficiency, employment of rural residents, and improvement of infrastructure facilities. Ethnic characteristics of residents in combination with unique natural landscapes, and historical heritage create a unified agricultural tourism formation system through the preservation of the natural environment, and national culture, as well as the achievement of the goals of transitioning green economy (Misiak-Kwit and Zhang, 2022).

Agritourism holds a significant place in Kazakhstan's economy as a growing sector that bridges agricultural, cultural, and tourism industries. In Kazakhstan, a country with rich agricultural heritage and diverse rural landscapes, agritourism serves as a conduit for economic diversification and rural development. It leverages the country's vast natural and cultural resources to attract tourists, providing an alternative income source for rural communities and contributing to the preservation of traditional Kazakh lifestyles and practices. By integrating agriculture with tourism, agritourism in Kazakhstan not only boosts local economies but also fosters sustainable practices, cultural exchange, and a deeper appreciation of the nation's rural heritage. This synergy between agriculture and tourism presents a unique opportunity for Kazakhstan to showcase its rural charm and cultural richness while stimulating economic growth and social development in rural areas.

The key aspects of agritourism development center around creating of educational, and sustainable experiences that connect visitors with agricultural life. This involves providing hands-on activities such as farming, animal husbandry, and harvesting, allowing tourists to actively participate and learn about the agricultural processes. Emphasizing local culture and traditions is crucial, often through culinary experiences, workshops, and cultural events that showcase the region's heritage. Ensuring sustainability is another vital aspect, as agritourism should promote environmentally friendly practices and contribute to the conservation of natural resources. Additionally, developing strong marketing strategies and leveraging online platforms are essential for reaching potential tourists. Effective collaboration between local communities, governments, and tourism agencies is crucial to ensure that agritourism initiatives support local economies and generate employment while preserving the rural and agricultural character of the regions. The overall experience should be authentic, educative, and enjoyable, offering a genuine taste of rural life that appeals to a diverse range of tourists.

It is necessary to note the importance of cooperation between local authorities and tour operators to determine the most appropriate tourist destinations in rural areas (Ismailova et al., 2021). In particular, it is to help the network development of eco houses in rural settlements and, for example, to support the production of souvenirs of traditional crafts. In Mangistau, the development of farming prevails, particularly in the field of horse and camel breeding, which are traditional for the region. Recently, however, there has been a decline in the development of this economic activity. That is why, since 2018, the local authorities have projected a new farmer training center in Aktau, which also includes a program for the development of agricultural tourism. Kenzhebekov et al. (2021) consider the basic principles of cooperation and development of the tourism sector and regional development in Kazakhstan. The results of the study emphasize the need to improve transformational mechanisms to stabilize the performance of the service market and the popularization of tourism.

The study of Plokhikh et al. (2019) justify the mandatory provision of needs and valuable, specific to tourists to increase consumer loyalty. The authors note that the study of needs in the context of segmentation of consumer power is the most important issue for the organization of necessary products, in particular the creation of optimal indicators in the trajectory of hospitality and tourism development. Despite the relevance of the problem, the issues of comprehensive analysis and justification of the role and place of agrarian tourism in the economic sector of the Mangistau region, namely in rural areas, remain unresolved. In particular, the level of the current state, as well as recommendations for the priority principles of operation are not sufficiently assessed in the scientific literature.

The objective of the article is to analyze the formation and development of agrarian tourism in the Mangistau region, as well as to assess the effectiveness of this type of tourist activity and justification of future directions of strategic marketing, considering the unique natural, climatic, historical and ethnocultural resources.

Materials and methods

The basis for theoretical and methodological research was the fundamental economic and macroeconomic laws, the theory of tourism, the basics of national and international economic relations, as well as the works of Polish, Turkish, Italian, Norwegian, American, Portuguese-

se, Slovak, Chinese, Kazakh scientists in the field of agrarian tourism in the context of social and economic development of rural settlements and preservation of national and cultural patrimony. Scientific methods of knowledge, which are based on a systematic approach to the solution of the problem were also applied.

During the scientific research a complex system was used, which includes general scientific and special research methods, in particular: theoretically grounded on fundamental economic and macroeconomic laws, the theory of tourism, and basics of national and international economic relations. This included reviewing the works of scientists from various countries who specialize in agrarian tourism, focusing on the social and economic development of rural settlements and the preservation of national and cultural heritage. System analysis and synthesis was used to identify the principles of potential development of agritourism. It involved examining how agritourism can improve socio-economic development and the functioning of farm activities. Bibliographic method involved studying a variety of literature sources to understand the historical formation of the territory, its natural and climatic conditions, and its ethnic and cultural heritage. Abstract-logical for generalization of the main provisions, definitions in the sphere of modern agritourism, as well as in the formation of proposals and conclusions; algorithmizing method for the formation of conceptual provisions of perspective directions of agritourism development in the region in the context of specialization of farming and agriculture, as well as ethnocultural patrimony.

After defining the basic concept, goals, and methods of research, the main stages of the scientific search will be considered. As such, the initial stage involved the systematization of the main scientific provisions, establishment of the features of functioning, and substantiation of the theoretical aspects of tourism in the system of economic and social development of settlements of the Mangistau region. The current state of the region in the development of transport infrastructure and the use of other resources of the region, determining the level of life support, as well as the role of the territory of Mangistau in the national and global economic market, was substantiated.

The next stage involved determining the indicators of the tourist interest level in comparison with other purposes of visiting the Mangistau region. A comprehensive analysis of the natural resource management level of the region, in particular rural areas, was carried out. The essence of the concept of business potential in agrarian tourism was defined, taking into account economic, sociocultural, financial, natural, and landscape resources.

At the next stage, modern mechanisms for the formation of a competitive tourist product in rural areas were identified through the development of a unified program of spatial development through a comparative analysis of national and local trends. In particular, strategic objectives were analyzed, which determine the areas of optimization, modernization, and technological approach to the development of agroindustry complex on the example of individual farms.

The last but one stage was the substantiation of the problematic issues of economic, environmental, social, historical, and cultural, ethnic aspects, which are incoming and initial elements of the system of functioning of agritourism. The factors inhibiting the development of existing agritourism complexes were also identified, in particular the formation of the principles and motivation of economic activity.

The last stage considered the underlying factors that ensure the interests of the public represented by urban, and rural residents, as well as rural communities in the implementation of the main directions of agritourism. An assessment of the quality of tourism services in Mangistau was analyzed. Relevant proposals for the algorithmizing of the priority areas of agritourism through the characterization of performance indicators of existing business ideas have been substantiated.

Results

Mangistau region occupies a strategic location on the physical map of the country. However, the region's resource reserves, particularly tourism, remain incompletely explored. After all, the region has the necessary infrastructure to improve transport and logistics centers for Eurasia along the New Silk Road (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Mangistau region on the map of the Republic of Kazakhstan
Figura 1. Región de Mangistau en el mapa de la República de Kazajastán



Source: own elaboration. Fuente: elaboración propia.

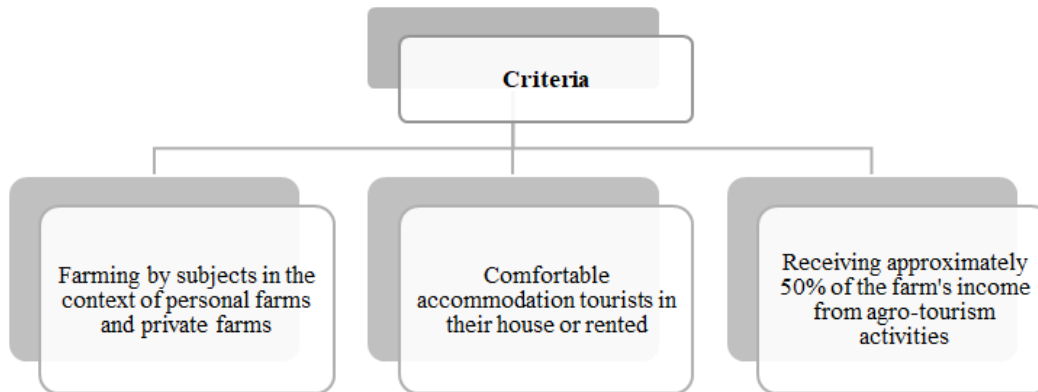
However, this region has its own advantages and disadvantages. For example, the main advantage is: unique natural landscapes like the Ustyurt plateau provide distinctive tourism appeal. Rich history and ethnic culture around nomadic herding traditions attractive to visitors. Existing tourism influx during summer at Caspian Sea resorts provides ready customers. Special agritourism attractions like camel farms and fishing villages can be expanded. Global interest in eco-tourism, gastronomy, rural lifestyles favorable contextual factors. Scope for public-private investments to fund new tourism infrastructure development. Disadvantages include: Remote location makes accessibility difficult for many rural villages currently. Underdeveloped road connectivity and public transport hampers site access. Limited hospitality infrastructure - hotels, restaurants, shops in rural areas. Weather extremes of very hot summers and harsh winters restrict tourism season. Regarding transport infrastructure,

while national highways and rail network provide a good backbone, the internal rural road linkages need substantial upgrades to smooth access for tourists. Besides roads, availability of public transport options like buses, shared vans that support tourism mobility to villages, eco-lodges require build up as well through policy incentives. Multimodal connectivity combining road, rail and air to maximize convenience for both international and domestic tourists may be the optimal integrated infrastructure solution.

Experts note that the extensive transport system of Mangistau is currently gaining significant popularity as an alternative logistics hub [5]. It should be noted that the region has formed the necessary facilities for investors, considering the area of the Aktau seaport. In particular, oil and grain products are the main export commodities. The possibility of increasing the number of multimodal (rail, sea, road) transportation, which are an important driving mechanism in the system of national economic development, is also traced (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Fundamental criteria for launching agritourism farms

Figura 2. Criterios fundamentales para la puesta en marcha de granjas de agriturismo



Source: own elaboration. Fuente: elaboración propia.

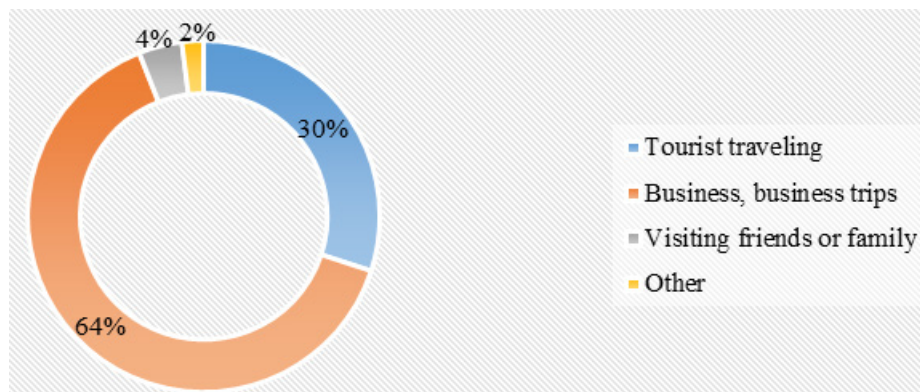
Advantageous geographical location on the Caspian Sea coast creates actual conditions for the development of the tourist and resort sphere in combination with effective territorial organization, and unique natural-landscape features of the region, including the location on the island of Ustyurt plateau. However, it should be noted that the region has much more potential in the field of tourism. In particular, there is a significant development and interest in such areas of tourism as ethnicity, ecology, culture, sports, and agrarian complex. It is agrarian tourism that is in a stage of formation and formation by working out strategic programs of development (Boustani et al., 2021). For example, Tourism development concept for 2023-2029: Kazakhstan adopted this concept aiming to prioritize tourism in its economic development. This includes enhancing infrastructure, improving services, and promoting tourist destinations. The concept aims to increase domestic and inbound tourists significantly by 2030 and enhance the gross value added in the tourism sector. The government plans to invest in accommodation and food services, facilitating the growth of various tourism types, including agritourism. Or 2021-2030 agricultural development policy document: The Ministry of Agriculture finalized this policy document, outlining the sector's market development plans, government support programs, and strategies for various aspects, including state subsidies and combatting climate change. These policies can indirectly support agritourism by enhancing the overall agricultural sector's attractiveness and sustainability.

It is worth noting that the Mangistau region presents tourist interest through the infrastructure, which, compared to other regions, is developed and ramified. Rural and urban settlements are located at a short distance. Analyzing Figure 3, it can be noted that tourism demand is the second most visited region, which indicates the great potential for the development of this sphere.

Agritourism presents a highly attractive opportunity for investors due to its unique blend of sustainable profitability and growing consumer interest in authentic, environmentally friendly travel experiences. As travelers increasingly seek out immersive experiences that connect them with nature, culture, and rural lifestyles, agritourism taps into this market by offering a distinctive mix of agricultural activities, cultural immersion, and ecotourism. For investors, this sector promises not only financial returns but also aligns with global trends towards sustainable and responsible tourism. The growing support from governments, evident in initiatives for infrastructure development and promotion of rural tourism, further enhances the sector's appeal. Additionally, agritourism's potential to positively impact local communities by creating jobs and preserving cultural heritage adds a layer of social responsibility to the investment, making it an alluring proposition for those looking to contribute to sustainable development while seeking profitable ventures.

The region's tourism industry specialists have also visited several international tourism exhibitions in recent years, particularly in Berlin, where several agreements were concluded. Among these agreements are programs for the development of rural tourism through the development of access roads, which will allow potential investors to implement a variety of business ideas. In particular, it is the construction of camping towns, ethnic auls, and the formation of places for rest and overnight stays.

Figure 3. Percentage categorization of Mangistau region visiting aims
Figura 3. Porcentaje de categorización de los objetivos de visitas en la región de Mangistau



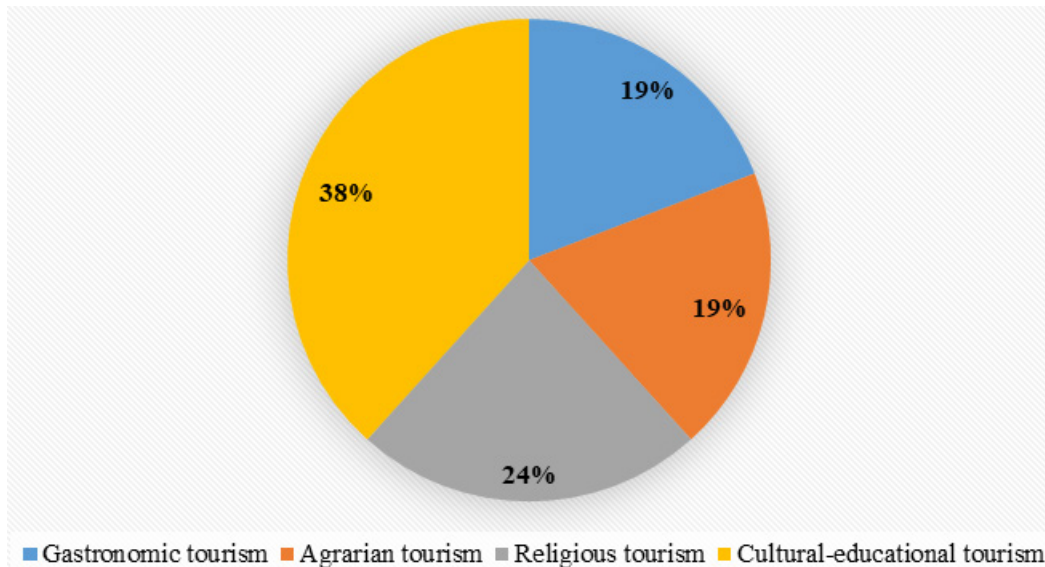
Source: own elaboration based on the Mangystau Resort Complex (2020). Fuente: elaboración propia en base a Mangystau Resort Complex (2020).

Currently, the region strategically identifies tasks for the modernization of the agroindustrial sector as an important component of economic growth in the region. A large number of project plans are also being developed in the region in various spheres of agroindustrial complex, in particular the construction of camel farms for milk production and horse farms, complexes for sturgeon fish breeding. Currently, about 40% of the country's camel popula-

tion is concentrated in the Mangistau region, which creates promising directions for the development of the agricultural products processing sector. The sturgeon farm in the village of Akshukur in the Mangistau region is the only fishery in the country that uses a closed water supply system, and accordingly, the fish are grown in fresh artesian water. In particular, the farm is equipped with modern innovative technologies thanks to the State Program of Accelerated Industrial-Innovative Development and Business Road Map. More than 3 million United States dollars were invested to implement the outlined plan to launch a fully functioning fish farm. Experts note that the farm will begin to be profitable closer to 2024. However, so far, the farm has significant potential for the development of agritourism areas. In particular, it is the creation of conditions for excursion visits to the fish farm, the development of sport fishing, as well as the creation of a restaurant complex, which would satisfy the gastronomic interest of tourists. Such directions of development of the farm allowed to increase in the indicators of efficiency of the use of resources and production potential earlier than in 2024 (Plokhikh et al., 2019).

Visits to camel farms are also of great tourist interest, combined with excursion programs that include visits to the desert and steppes, as well as camping campsites and hot-air balloon flights. Currently, for the implementation of directions of development of agritourism in rural areas of the Mangistau region the farms specializing in growing crops are most involved, which are the basis for the implementation of ecological farmstead projects, which are aimed at meeting the needs of consumers of tourist services in the context of quality recreation, as well as developing a comprehensive program of gastronomic and cultural and recreational offers (Figure 4).

Figure 4. The percentage ratio of consumer demand for different types of tourism in the Mangistau region
Figura 4. Relación porcentual de la demanda de diferentes tipos de turismo en la región de Mangistau

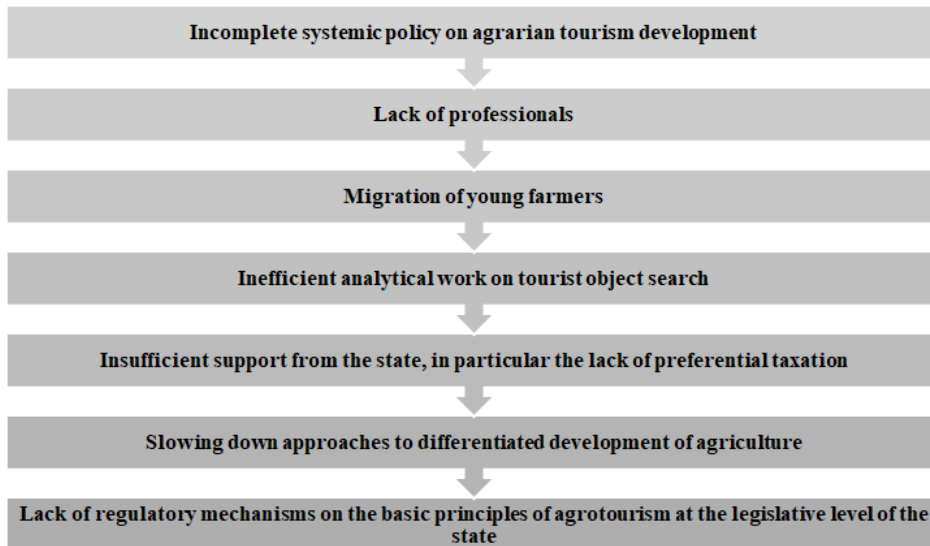


Source: own elaboration based on the Mangystau Resort Complex (2020). Fuente: elaboración propia en base a Mangystau Resort Complex (2020).

Despite the significant potential of the Mangistau region in the sphere of agritourism, some problems require immediate solutions to improve the indicators of the socio-economic development of the state (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Elements of the agritourism system in the Mangistau region that require detailed processing and improvement

Figura 5. Elementos del sistema de agroturismo en la región de Mangistau que requieren procedimientos y mejoras detallados



Source: own elaboration. Fuente: elaboración propia.

The problematic issues will be considered in more detail. Considering the analysis, the region lacks a general list of real offers in rural tourism, which would combine all the potential competitive markets in combination with beach, cultural, ethnic, religious, and historical tourism. An important aspect of the development of agrarian tourism is the preservation and increase of the population in rural areas. All age groups of the population are involved, in particular, the youth as innovators, and the older generation as distributors of national traditions and culture. A harmonious combination of these aspects will increase the number of jobs today and in the future. The deterrent to the effective functioning of this tourist destination in the Mangistau region is the lack of a working analytical system to consider the quality and quantity of real and potential agritourist sites. Accordingly, there is a lack of sufficient information on the socio-economic features of the region, in particular, the scheme of infrastructure development, the presence of historical and cultural heritage, natural landscape, and agricultural sites, as well as the popularization of long-forgotten types of crafts (Nuruly and Aktymbayeva, 2017).

Currently, domestic tourism companies receive insufficient assistance from the state, which indicates low rates of tax benefits. The problem with domestic agritourism is that domestic associations do not receive significant assistance and support from the state on preferential taxation. However, the government has noted the priority of the state to transition to the basics of a green economy. And agritourism would significantly improve the indicators of environmental management and spatial organization, in particular the restoration of local infrastructure, improving the comfort of the population, and preserving the integrity of na-

tural ecosystems. The territory of the region is also characterized by a decline in the development of social infrastructure. Therefore, the optimized development of agritourism should be evaluated as the key to the effective functioning of engineering and infrastructure provision of the region in the context of the following main aspects:

- Economic – as a source of profit for the rural settlements, in particular, the rational, efficient use of natural resources, the preservation of historical and cultural heritage, as well as increasing the indicators of socio-economic development of the region.
- Sociocultural as an effective lever for cultural and psychological enrichment during visits to households, farms, and eco houses. Optimization of the farm development as the basis for the revival of rural settlements through the diversification of the structure of agrarian production and economic development, expanding the range of sales of agricultural products and products of personal peasant farming, creating new jobs, in particular stimulating the development of infrastructure of rural settlements, development of eco-production and eco-housing, and the active inclusion of conservation areas in the tourist product of the area.
- Ethnocultural in the context of the dissemination and preservation of national, historical and cultural, religious heritage.
- Personal in the field of high-quality training of highly qualified personnel in the sphere of agritourism services.
- Mentality of local residents because traditional mindsets may not fully appreciate tourists initially. Some rural communities view outsiders with suspicion. There can be resistance to change from accustomed village lifestyles to catering to visitors. Lack of exposure makes some locals unaware of tourism benefits. Awareness building is important.
- Language barriers because English skills of rural residents are often limited. This causes issues for international tourists. Language training programs should be incorporated in hospitality capacity building.
- Seasonality of tourism because tourism demand is very seasonal, concentrated only in Summer months. This affects year-round job creation. Locals need supplemental income sources in off-season like handicrafts, food processing, etcetera.

Optimized development of rural tourism requires a tremendous combination of own interests with the interests of local government and other communities. Primarily, it is an advantage given to investors, given the future development of the region. Agritourism presents a highly attractive opportunity for investors due to its unique blend of sustainable profitability and growing consumer interest in authentic, environmentally friendly travel experiences. As travelers increasingly seek out immersive experiences that connect them with nature, culture, and rural lifestyles, agritourism taps into this market by offering a distinctive mix of agricultural activities, cultural immersion, and ecotourism. For investors, this sector promises not only financial returns but also aligns with global trends towards sustainable and responsible tourism. The growing support from governments, evident in initiatives for infrastructure development and promotion of rural tourism, further enhances the sector's appeal. Additionally, agritourism's potential to positively impact local communities by creating jobs and preserving cultural heritage adds a layer of social responsibility to the investment, making it an alluring proposition for those looking to contribute to sustainable development while seeking profitable ventures.

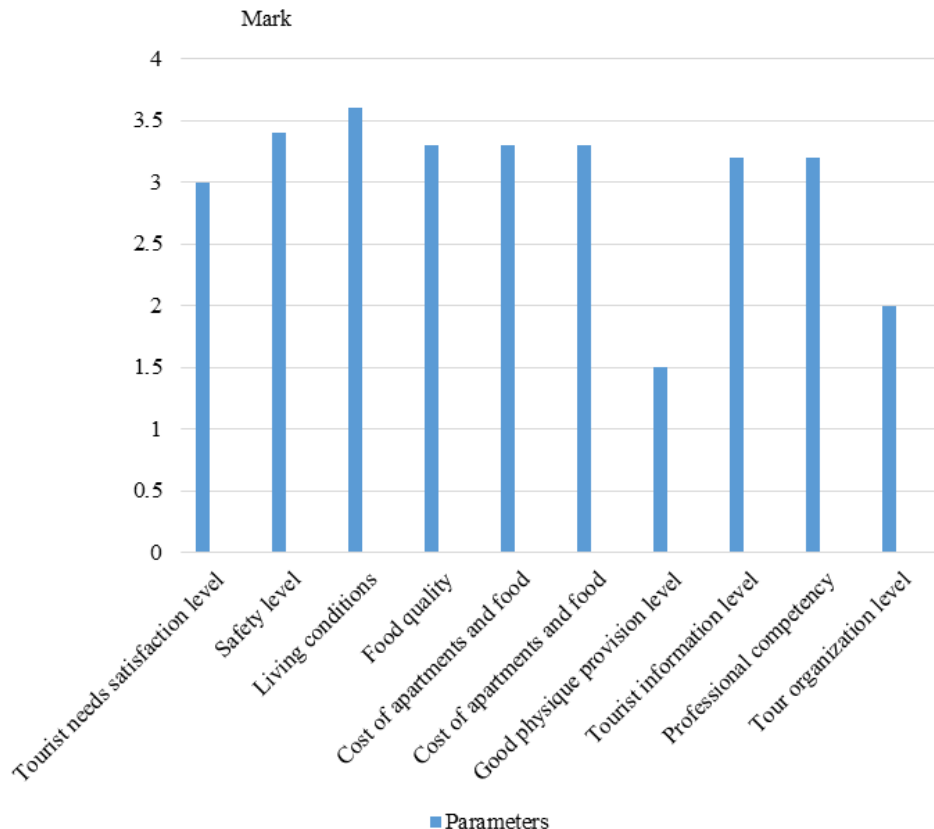
However, agritourism cannot be considered a profitable industry for rural residents. In particular, this direction of tourism combines the interests of three groups of people: urban dwellers – the need for budget and active recreation; knowledge of the stages of agricultural production; gastronomic interests; support of civic interests of rural dwellers; acquisition of new skills in various types of crafts; ethnic and cultural development. Rural residents—additional sources of income, as well as financial support for households; preservation of cultural as well as historical sites; personal development; use of untapped resources; development of the infra-red system. Rural society—an increase in comfort and quality of life, the creation of new jobs, and the replenishment of local budgets.

The analysis of the data presented in Figure 6 demonstrates how important the principles of agritourism development are to improve the educational functions of the rural residents who are involved in this sphere (Iskaliyev, 2020):

- Developing new skills in providing a variety of services, from tour organization to accommodations.
- Increasing the level of rural residents’ self-education through acquiring new knowledge of history, culture, ethnicity, and awareness of unique natural and landscape sites.
- Following clear rules of good tone, and mutual understanding, while avoiding conflict situations.
- Preservation and spread of national traditions among the young generation of villagers.

Figure 6. Evaluation of tourist services in the Mangistau region on the 4-mark scale

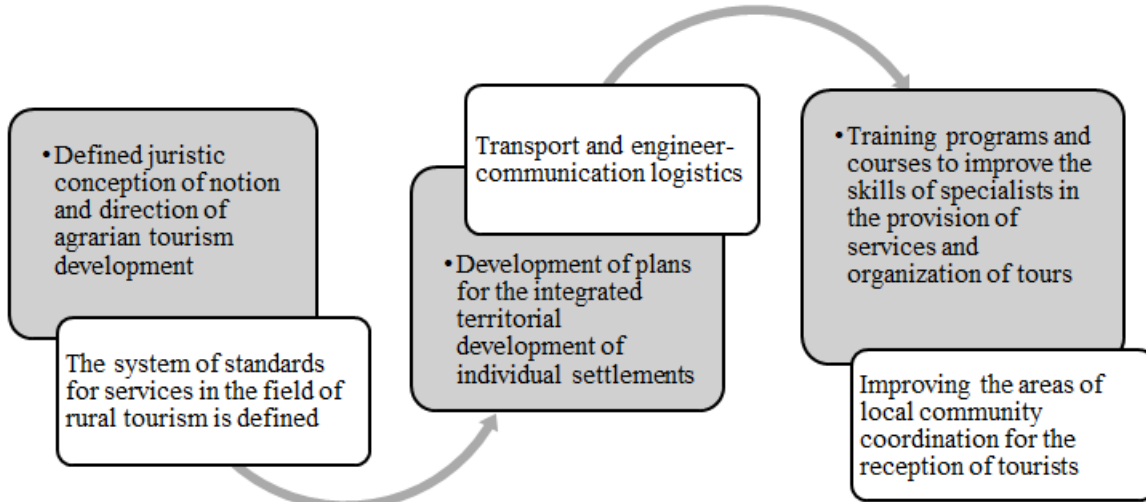
Figura 6. Evaluación de los servicios turpísticos en la regipon de Mangistau según la escala 4-marcas



Source: own elaboration based on Iskaliyev (2020). Fuente: elaboración propia en base a Iskaliyev (2020).

The conceptual provisions in the formation of promising areas of rural tourism development in the Mangistau region will be analyzed in detail (Figure 7).

Figure 7. Conceptual notions during the creation of perspective agritourism direction in the region
Figure 7. Nociones conceptuales durante la creación de perspectivas agroturísticas en la región



Source: own elaboration. Fuente: elaboración propia.

As such, the very first and most important step should be the legislative consolidation of the “agritourism” concept and its consolidation at the regional level, as well as at the local level. After all, the functioning of any sphere and economic activity has many restrictions, legal norms, and established responsibility for deviations, and violations. The system of certification in the country and regions is regulated and functioning, whereas the system of standards is not quite adapted to the modern conditions of the region’s development, particularly in the Mangistau region. This issue is extremely important since the guest eco-housing established based on farms must comply with international sanitary and hygienic standards and be equipped with special infrastructure in compliance with relevant safety measures. Experts-analysts note that if all the strategic directions of development are followed, by 2025 the annual income in the sphere of agritourism will reach almost 22 million dollars, of which more than 2 million dollars—investments from the foreign tourist potential. At the same time, about 4 million United States dollars will be needed for the development of the industry in 2022-2024. However, if the construction costs of the transport and engineering-communication infrastructure are considered, more than 1 million United States dollars will be needed. At the same time, the investment volumes will directly depend on the production capacity of the local rural population (Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2021).

The next important step will be the formation of effective training programs and the allocation of funds to create comfortable conditions for tourists. By 2025 it is also planned to carry out several expeditions and inventory work to form tourist routes and registration of agritourist sites. Accordingly, the final stage will be the formation of a national tourist brand, recognizable in the national and global market of tourist services.

In Republic of Kazakhstan, the differentiation between agritourism and rural tourism, similar to many other countries, hinges on specific aspects of the tourist experience and the nature of the accommodations. Agritourism is generally more narrowly focused, centering specifically on experiences directly related to agriculture and farming. This includes activities like participating in farm work, learning about agricultural processes, and enjoying produce directly from the source. In contrast, rural tourism in Kazakhstan encompasses a broader range of experiences, including but not limited to agricultural activities. It focuses more on the overall experience of rural life and may include various other elements like nature hikes, cultural immersion, and experiencing the rural lifestyle, with accommodations often in rural households or agro-houses. While agritourism forms a part of the broader rural tourism concept, its emphasis is more on agricultural activities and education, whereas rural tourism offers a wider scope of experiences in a rural setting.

Discussion

Agrarian tourism is a form of personal farming with a tourist direction in the context of eco-house formation with quality conditions of visitors' stay, carrying out excursions, gastronomic tours, master classes, and organization of programs through which potential consumers could become a part of the local color. Also, agritourism will increase the optimized attraction of natural and historical, cultural resources in rural areas with the maximum observance of conditions of ecologically safe use of resources (Shang and Zhu, 2022). Rural tourism is focused on natural, cultural-historical, and other resources of rural areas, features of its formation, and balanced and quality tourist products. Researchers of the Republic of Kazakhstan M. Seidahmetov et al., (2014) note that the tourism sector is developing dynamically and is one of the most important economic sectors. The authors demonstrate that tourist direction is extremely important in determining the gross domestic product parameter. At the same time, there is an active growth of foreign trade relations, an increase in the level of production potential, and an increase in the number of jobs, in particular, the alignment of the migration balance index. Training of personnel for tourism within specific states has its specifics, taking into account historical, political, ecological, and socio-economic aspects. Scientists emphasize the necessity of implementation of the state policy on the balanced development of tourist business in the context of socio-economic direction. In particular, this policy should be aimed at supporting and protecting the national producer from foreign competition in foreign and domestic markets (Poltorak et al., 2023). Considerable attention should be paid to the professional training of specialists in the tourism industry.

Comparing this research results and the research concept of the aforementioned authors, indeed the primary task in the effective development of the tourism industry is the development of effective training programs, systematic professional development of specialists, as well as the acquisition of knowledge and skills adapted to the modern realities of rural areas. In particular, it is to ensure quality conditions of accommodations, food for tourists in the territory of agritourist sites, compliance with safety and all sanitary and hygienic norms, standards, and rules, as well as the professional organization of appropriate tours (Amanova et al., 2017). It should be noted that the failure to comply with standards and norms in the provision of tourist services is followed by an administrative fine and revocation of the license (certificate) to conduct relevant activities. Polish scientist Wendt (2020) demonstrates the importance of studying the relationship between ecological, ethnic, religious, and rural

tourism in the territory of South Kazakhstan. The author notes the importance of compliance with measures to preserve historical and cultural values, as well as natural and landscape potential, which are strategic marketing positions in the formation of the main objectives, and goals in the formation and development of agrarian tourism.

The authors of the study, as well as the researcher from Poland repeatedly emphasized the importance of the influence of ethnocultural principles of the regions as a strategic direction of agritourism development based on rural settlements. After all, through this potential, there is an activation of tourist resources, as well as the preservation and dissemination of unique national traditions. Accordingly, eco-tourism is a modern international trend, which will be an integral part of rural through the development of eco-settlements and the preservation of the integrity of the natural environment (Babayev, 2022). Kazakh researchers A. Kuralbayev *et al.* (2017) consider the creation of a demand model for inbound tourism in Kazakhstan and regions. Modeling was carried out step by step for each of the 5 resort districts of the South Kazakhstan region. Several concepts and indicators had to be considered, in particular, gross national product, exchange rate, and expenditures on transport, food, and lodging. The dynamics of demand models have been evaluated following the expected results of statistical reporting and can be useful in practice when planning tourism development in various municipalities and regions of Kazakhstan. The analysis of environmental aspects and potential impacts of increasing tourism on the natural environment in Mangistau region: Mangistau has arid desert climate and fragile ecosystems sensitive to disturbances. Tourism must respect carrying capacity. Region has unique biodiversity like saiga antelopes, steppe eagles which require conservation. Ustyurt nature reserve aims to protect plateau wildlife and plants. Visitor restrictions may apply. Caspian seal habitat along shoreline must be safeguarded when expanding beach resorts. Unregulated tourism activities like off-road drives can damage delicate desert soil ecosystems. Increased vehicular traffic can lead to higher air pollution and disturbance to wildlife movements.

In comparison with the above-mentioned results of the economic system indexes complex analysis of the country in their research results, the authors note the importance of studying the issue of the rational spatial organization of agricultural tourism objects through the prism of growth of indicators of social infrastructure and economic sector, which is the guarantee of quality tourist services under the generally accepted international certificates (Tkachenko, 2022). Central European Doctor of Philosophy Gburzyńska (2019) studies the principles of modern tourist market functioning in the Republic of Kazakhstan. The authors focus on the characteristics of the tourist industry in the country, as well as promising areas and potential problems that may arise in this area of the economy. The main objective was to draw attention to an unusual tourist cell, as well as to change the public concerning stereotypical perceptions of Kazakhstan. In their research, the authors did not cover the general characteristics of the tourist services market of the country, but confidently note that this approach is important in detailing all the positive and negative principles of the tourism industry. In particular, this approach allows the development of a comprehensive strategic development plan and highlights the objectives, goals, and prospects for development.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, Kazakhstan has seen a shift in its tourism industry, with a focus on developing local and domestic tourism, including agritourism. The pandemic has prompted the country to view this as an opportunity to enhance state services, prepare destinations, and expand the range of tourism products. The Kazakh Tourism Chair, Erzhan

Yerkinbayev, mentioned that the pandemic could be an opportunity to develop local destinations, including agritourism. The state and business have started to address issues such as the quality of services, beach tourism, eco-tourism, ethno-tourism, caravan tourism, and craft tourism. Additionally, a field study of agritourism potential in the country was planned, focusing on regions abundant in resources such as large gardens, farms, and bee-farms, where a tourist product can be developed. The pandemic has also led to the development of domestic tourism in the country, as the population began to choose and give preference to tourist sites and routes within the country.

The Covid-19 pandemic, with its ensuing quarantine measures and closed borders, has indeed likely contributed to the rise in popularity of agritourism in Kazakhstan. As international travel restrictions compelled people to explore domestic tourism options, agritourism emerged as an attractive alternative, offering unique and safe experiences closer to home. This shift towards local travel experiences, driven by health concerns and travel limitations, provided a boost to agritourism, highlighting the charm of rural and nature-based tourism. It allowed Kazakhstani residents to rediscover and appreciate their country's rich agricultural heritage and natural landscapes, leading to a renewed interest and growth in this sector. Agritourism's appeal during this period can be attributed to its ability to offer socially distanced, outdoor activities that align well with the public's heightened awareness of health and safety amidst the pandemic.

Scientists of the Republic of Kazakhstan A. Saparbayev et al., (2020) characterize problematic issues and perspective directions of ethnic-, eco-, agro- and spiritual tourism development. Mangistau region is characterized as a region with the absence of significant degradation processes in connection with the permissible norm of anthropogenic loading that guarantees the preservation of natural identity and ecological safety. Ethnic tourism requires approaches to increase excursion attractiveness. The authors emphasize that it is necessary to use modern innovative technologies to maintain such an environment and make proposals for the development of state programs for the development of ethnic, agrarian, and spiritual areas of tourism. Analyzing their research results, the authors repeatedly stress the importance of involving residents as potential experts in developing tourism programs, who are well aware of the unique natural and cultural sites. This will be the key to increasing the indicators of socioeconomic development and increasing the level of income. In particular, it is the preservation and dissemination of local traditions, rituals, customs, national cuisine, and culture of a particular region.

Conclusions

This study analyzed the formation and development of agritourism in Kazakhstan's Mangistau region, assessing its effectiveness and future strategic directions. Mangistau possesses rich potential for agriculture-based tourism due to its distinctive natural landscapes, nomadic herding traditions, villages and fishing communities. However, challenges exist around limited infrastructure, underdeveloped road connectivity, lack of hospitality facilities in rural areas, and other economic, environmental and sociocultural issues.

The analysis found that agritourism and rural tourism cater to urban residents, rural communities and tourists, enabling recreation, cultural immersion, skill development and supplemental incomes. Linkages with ethnic, eco and other types of tourism can be forged for

a holistic destination appeal. Investments through public-private partnerships are crucial for infrastructure upgrades like transport, internet and tourism facilities. Community-based strategies require mobilizing residents' expertise on historical sites, facilitating hospitality training and tackling seasonality constraints. Environmental considerations around fragile ecosystems, climate and biodiversity conservation are equally important. Policies and collaborative networks need to focus on mobility, accessibility, responsible tourism practices and positioning authentic cultural experiences.

This assessment enables conclusions that agritourism offers Mangistau prospects for economic diversification, sustainable growth and showcasing its heritage. However, an integrated approach is essential—combining government planning and promotion, private sector engagement, community participation, visitor education and impact management. With coordinated strategies benefitting stakeholders, the immense natural and cultural resources can drive rural development in Mangistau. The research provides insights on leveraging the region's agritourism assets through balanced tourism models that aid regional socioeconomic progress.

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