

Research on the Development Situation and Countermeasures of Ecotourism in Jilin Province

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Abstract—With the rapid development of China's economy and improvement of living standards, people began to pay attention to the requirements for living quality, and tourism has become the preferred form for people to rest and relax, so ecotourism gradually begins to develop under this condition. Traditional tourism model only focus on economic benefits instead of the protection of ecological environment, so phenomenon of overloading often occurs in scenic area, which causes irreparable damage to the local ecological environment. On this basis, ecotourism that conforms to the natural ecological environment compared with the traditional tourism and reduces the negative impact on the environment gradually develops. The development of tourism in Jilin Province is not comprehensive and meticulous, leading to poor tourists experience and unpopular implementation of ecotourism, which causes low economic returns and destruction of the ecological environment. This paper mainly studies the concept of ecotourism and the current situation, existing problems and advantages and disadvantages of ecotourism development in Jilin Province, and puts forward corresponding strategies.

Keywords—Jilin Province; ecotourism; development countermeasure

I. INTRODUCTION

Ecotourism is a kind of tourism activities with the dual responsibilities of protecting the ecological environment and maintaining the living of local residents. Compared with the traditional tourism, ecotourism is a sustainable economic tourism behavior, which means protecting natural resources and ecological environment in the process of tourism behavior. Ecotourism refers to a responsible behavior that focus on not destroying the ecological environment when visiting the natural landscape and historical heritage, reducing the negative impact of tourism, and bringing positive economic and social benefits for local residents

while not disturbing the natural area.

For ecotourism, there are two key factors. First, we must make it clear that the product of ecotourism is the natural landscape. Second, we should protect the integrity of tourism products. Ecotourism spreads rapidly together with the concept of green consumption in the context of global economic crisis, which is widely respected by the people and recognized by the world with the concept of green consumption and green sports. At the same time, its connotation is constantly updated, and the people of each region develop distinctive ecotourism of different forms according to their own cultures. Since the development of ecotourism uncovers a lot of environmental problems, the overall tourism industry defines ecotourism as protective sustainable tourism, and adds a new definition of green tourism of returning to the nature according to its nature.

II. AN OVERVIEW OF ECOTOURISM

A. The Concept of Ecotourism

The development of ecotourism originated in the western developed countries with vast territory and abundant natural resources. Because they have plenty of natural scenery, good natural environment, most of scenic spots are planned for the national parks with good natural ecological system, which can maintain the original natural landscape, with the natural forest landscape as the main positioning. Many developing countries also follow this model, such as the wildlife park in African and coastal Caribbean scenery tourism, etc., which fully combines the tourism products and local natural scenery and human environment, forming a unique ecotourism model.

Western countries attaches great importance to the protection of original ecological environment in the development of ecotourism, and protects the integrity of the environment as far as possible, to reduce the damage of large-scale construction for the ecological environment. They always choose walking as the way of travel,

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abandoning the ways that will cause pollution to the environment such as convenient and comfortable cars or trains. In the tourism rest area, small sleeping bags are used to replace the houses that need large-scale construction, which are mostly close to local natural environment. They try every means to reduce the damage for the environment. In the process of managing ecotourism, they put forward the civilized tourism slogans such as "civilized tourism, quality service". In order to make the ecotourism area become a natural classroom for tourists to improve the civilization quality, Western countries set up some activities that can get close to nature and explain the mysteries of natural environment to attract people to participate.

In the last century, the preferred tourism destination of Western developed countries was tropical beach. Those who live in heavily polluted and competitive environments prefer warm sunshine, golden beaches and vast sea. The bathing beach has become the most popular resort destination Western tourists since they can enjoy the relaxed and comfortable environment. From the end of 20th century and the beginning of 21st century, the preferred tourism destination of Western tourists changed from the sunny beach to the original environment with natural ecology. That is to say, they have changed from hedonism to naturalism, entered the natural ecological environment personally, and strengthened the concept of harmony between man and nature, to feel relaxed and happy in the process of their tourism. This phenomenon is mainly due to the development of ecotourism and strengthening of environmental awareness of tourists, so that people pay more attention to the protection of natural landscape when developing tourism products and develop sustainable development tourism.

According to the analysis of big data statistics, up to 2014, ecotourism revenue accounted for about 4.33% of tourism revenue in developing countries. Tourism has become an important pillar of the economic source in developing countries, of which the development of ecotourism gradually expands its influence, becoming the mainstream of tourism. Most tourists of Western developed country tend to the green tourism form of ecological protection, because in the process of the tour they not only experience the original ecological environment of the tourism destination, but also improve their own cultural quality and increase the enjoyment of tour. With the improvement and change of the trend of the times people's ideas gradually respect the travel modes of green ecology and environmental protection, so ecotourism has a great development prospects.

B. The Connotation and Characteristics of Ecotourism

1) *The connotation of ecotourism:* For the development of ecotourism, the most critical factor is the sustainable development, which takes natural scenery as a starting point, adds the educational and learning factors to the tour process, and requires the sustainability of development. Ecotourism generally includes two connotations. The first is to enter the natural ecological environment personally, namely visiting, sightseeing, enjoying and exploring in the original natural

environment, of which the main purpose is to create a relaxing, comfortable environment with the harmony between nature and human, so that visitors can explore in nature firsthand, deepen the understanding of nature, strengthen the physical quality, cultivate sentiment, increase their cultural literacy, accept the education of natural environment and better appreciate and understand the natural and human historical and cultural heritage. The second is to maintain and develop the good operation of the natural ecosystem. From the perspective of ecotourists and eco-operators, for the long-term sustainable development of ecology, we should personally protect the environment from damage, and experience the true meaning of ecotourism.

2) *The characteristics of ecotourism:* Ecotourism has the protective nature that traditional tourism does not have. The biggest difference between ecotourism and traditional tourism is that ecotourism focus more on protecting the complete natural and cultural ecosystem. The essential requirement of ecotourism lies in that tourists and managers of the tourism industry development must restrict themselves, and pay attention to the protection of the local ecological environment in the exploitation of natural resources. Participants can get more primitive and unique experiences during the tour. Ecotourism is a small-scale tourism behavior, which means allowing tourists to travel within the admissible standards, so that the tourists will not cause damage to the ecological environment. From the perspective of tourism development planners, it is necessary to unify the natural ecosystems and relationship between human and nature. They should use sufficient and valuable tourism products to strive for the coordinated development of three major benefits of sustainable economy, society and environment, and reduce the short-term consumption of natural resources. In the process of ecotourism, visitors can get full and close contact with the natural ecological environment and personally experience the benefits of ecotourism, so that people can better understand and love nature to enhance the level of understanding and protective capability of natural culture and resources and historical and cultural heritage.

Eco-tourists have a more professional scientific and cultural quality compared with traditional tourists. In the ecotourism, all the tourism products have a high degree of professional management, and more innovative services. It is convenient for visitors to feel the spiritual satisfaction and enjoyment of returning to nature in a short period of time, which promote visitors to improve the protection and love of nature, so they will attach importance to and protect the tourism resources and environment from the heart. In order to achieve the coordinated development of economy, society and environment and the protection and sustainable use of tourism environment and resources development, we mainly rely on the professionalism of tourism management. Eco-tourists express their purposiveness in the process of ecotourism since they have their own clear tourism purpose, travel time and way of travel, etc. They hold the attitude of appreciation, exploration and understanding of the mentality

the nature and local culture. These high-quality eco-tourists focus on the protection of tourism resources in the tour process, avoid damaging the local ecological environment and bring some economic benefits for the local people, which can promote the flourish of ecotourism on the other hand.

Ecotourism has universality. China is rich in ecological tourists and tourism resources. Ecotourism is a new form of tourism that is based on traditional tourism and extends upwardly for sustainable development. In China, ecotourism is the right of the whole people, so any person who aims for understanding the local cultural environment and natural and historical sites, and spontaneously protect the tourism resources and environment in the process of tour without damaging the local environment belongs to the category of eco-tourists. Distinguishing from the tourism resources, the Western developed countries position the tourism behavior with the main purpose of visiting the natural resources and landscape as ecotourism. Compared with Western countries, China has vast land, which not only is rich natural resources, but also has the Cultural heritage with a long history of five thousand years. Chinese Ecotourism integrates human history and natural environment, making visitors better participate in the landscape of harmony between nature and culture.

C. The Difference between Ecotourism and Traditional Tourism

Ecotourism is an alternative to traditional tourism, of which the biggest difference from traditional tourism is that its impact on the environment is minimum. It expands on the basis of traditional tourism the expansion to make up for the shortcomings of public tourism. Traditional tourism is the origin of ecotourism, and ecotourism is gradually carried out based on traditional tourism. In terms of the target, traditional tourism attaches more attention to obtaining more economic profits and gaining the greatest economic income by exploiting and utilizing natural resources, guides visitors to enjoy and consume in the process of playing and visiting the ecological environment, and pays little attention to the sustainable protection of the ecological environment. On the contrary, ecotourism concerns more about the sustainable development of natural environment resources, guides tourists to establish the correct value orientation, and obtains appropriate profits from it. It helps visitors learn natural culture in the process of tour and visit and completely display and protect the environmental resources and humanistic culture.

In terms of the management, the first goal of traditional tourism is tourism, which is usually unplanned space conversion, namely unplanned tour behavior, so there is no clear and centralized planning target group, the means of transportation is not restricted, and travel behavior is casual. However, ecotourism pays more attention to the ecological management of tourism behavior, with selective and planned spatial layout, and it plans tourism target groups intensively to avoid the conversion difficulties brought by scattered target groups. It has functional ecological regulation of

landscape, and there are many ways of travel to choose, trying to minimize the pollution of nature.

In traditional tourism, the developers and managers of tourism products and the tourists are the biggest beneficiaries of tourism activities while the local residents can gain very few from this tourism behavior, and even the income is not enough for spending, which will lead to the decline of local tourism, the decrease in the living quality of residents, and even social unrest. In the ecotourism, the three parties including developers, tourists and residents all can get corresponding income, which will not lead to the imbalance of income and expenditure and it can promote the development of local tourism and social stability and accelerate economic development.

Traditional tourism stimulates development of local economy to some extent. As the development of tourism industry demands for labor force, it brings a lot of employment opportunities for local people, but the traditional tourism only focus on the economic benefits within a short time, rather than paying attention to long-term development, which will lead to the abuse and destruction of environmental resources, and go against sustainable development. At the same time, because people lack the environmental awareness and concept, overloaded carrying capacity of scenic area will cause for pollution and destruction of the natural environment in scenic area. The purpose of ecotourism is to carry out protective development of the environment during the tourism process in order to achieve ecological sustainable development, which means that it brings about the continuous demand for labor forces and long-term healthy economic development, and it will not only consume a few local resources, but also carry out rational development protection for it.

III. THE DEVELOPMENT SITUATION AND EXISTING PROBLEMS OF ECOTOURISM IN JILIN PROVINCE

A. The Current Situation of Ecotourism in Jilin Province

Jilin Province, located in the northeast of China, is known as the three northeastern provinces or Northeast for short with Heilongjiang Province and Liaoning Province with a total area of 787,300 square kilometers, and area of Jilin Province is 18.74 square kilometers, referred to as "Ji". The main climate is monsoon climate of medium latitudes with obvious continentality, which is embodies in hot and rainy summer and cold and dry winter. Jilin Province, rich in tourism resources, diverse topography and landscape, forest resources, and wetland ecosystems, has unique volcanic landscape, special rime spectacle and tourism resources of multi-ethnic folk culture. So far, there is a total area of 229.83 hectares of nature reserves in Jilin Province, including 36 nature reserves, 132 attractions and 28 scenic areas, and 11 state-level forest parks and three AAAA-level scenic spots, namely Changchun Manchukuo Puppet Palace Museum, Changchun Jingyuetan Scenic Area and Changbai Mountain Scenic Area. There are also a variety of historical and cultural sites and cultural relic protection units in Jilin Province, such as Qijiazi Xishan site, west group mountain tombs, Langtou mountain sites and snake

mountain sites, showing abundant ancient historical sites. On the basis of these diversified ecotourism resources, the development of ecotourism in Jilin Province has great prospect.

B. Problems of Ecotourism in Jilin Province

1) *The lack of reasonable development mode:* The division of labor of regional planning in Jilin Province is not clear, government and relevant administrative departments lack reasonable planning and design in the development process of ecotourism resources, and there is no immediate investigation of the location of tourism resources, which lead to misjudgment of tourism resources, and cause damage to the local ecological environment and the waste of resources, making people's living quality decrease.

2) *The lack of professional talent:* The phenomenon of brain drain is serious in Jilin Province, since most of the young people with high professional quality prefer to work in Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou or southern China due to the underdeveloped economy of the province and the labor forces who stay in the province are short of professional skills, and need to take pre-job training, which will cause more consumption of manpower and funds. The limited government investment also causes difficulties for the promotion of ecotourism on the other hand.

3) *Serious environmental pollution:* Jilin Province mainly develops industry, with serious air pollution and water pollution. The scenic area lacks reasonable planning and development, and the quality of tourists is not high, so the phenomenon of casually littering is serious, and quarrying by blasting the mountains due to economic needs causes irreparable damage to ecological environment.

IV. ANALYSIS OF THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF ECOTOURISM IN JILIN PROVINCE

A. Advantages of Ecotourism in Jilin Province

1) *Diverse natural landscape:* Due to the large span of latitude of Jilin Province, it covers a variety of special terrain and natural resources, including volcanic landscape, wetlands, lakes, forests and other natural landscape. One of the most famous ones is the Changbai Mountain Natural Scenic Reserve. Located in the southeastern part of Jilin Province, it serves as the border of China and North Korea, with the altitude of 2189 meters, which is also the holy mountain of North Korea and South Korea. Tourists are mostly Chinese and Korean, and the peak season of tourism is from June to September each year, with the average number of visitors up to 10,000 people per day in peak season. What makes Changbai Mountain special is that it is a dormant volcano, and the Tianchi on the mountain has a lot of mysterious legend. It also covers a variety of terrains, such as underground forests, endless grassland, and turbulence waterfall. Integration of multiple landscapes makes it a great place for visitors to experience ecotourism. In addition, there is also wetland ecosystem in Jilin

Province. The Xianghai reservoir located in the northwest of Tongyu County in Baicheng area is the famous Xianghai Wetland Reserve, an area of 106,700 hectares, belonging to typical grassland wetland landscape. There are over 200 kinds of herbs, more than 20 kinds of trees and a variety of rare birds and beasts in the region. There are also museums for people to visit, to better understand the physical appearance characteristics of natural plant and biology. The most famous natural landscape in Jilin Province is rime. Every year from December to February, on the rime island in Jilin of Jilin Province, vapor on the water surface congeals on the trees on the island, making the whole island enveloped by fog, with mist floating, and thus people feel like being in the wonderland.

2) *Diverse folk culture:* Jilin Province is a multi-ethnic province, containing the Korean nationality, Hui, Manchu and other minorities, with rich and colorful national culture, as well as a number of historical and cultural sites, such as Museum of the Imperial Palace of the Manchu State, Langtou mountain ruins, and the general's grave. Yanji in Jilin Province, the capital of the famous Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture, is located at the junction of the three countries including Russia, China and North Korea, owning developed railway system and numerous tourists. With the population of Korean nationality accounting for one-third of the population of the city, Yanji is a tourism city with extreme folk characteristic. The folk forms are diversified, including various forms of dance such as Pungmul dance, wizard dance, flat drum dance, and the dressing is mainly Korean clothing with bright colors. Jilin Province is the birthplace of the Manchu who mostly live in Manchu town in Wula Street of small Han Tuen of Yongji County, which is a small town full of ethnic characteristics. Many buildings are classic buildings with Manchu style, and the folk meals are also the foods with Manchu characteristics, such as goo, copper hotpot, and water dumplings and so on. Folk tourism activities include Ceremony for Xibo Samanish and Manchu marriage, etc., which can make people feel the enjoyment of Manchu folk culture while playing, and deepen their understanding of Manchu culture. There is a well-known 5A-class scenic area, Museum of the Imperial Palace of the Manchu State in Jilin Province, located in Changchun, which is a museum rebuilt based on the imperial palace of the last emperor in Chinese history, Aixinjueluo Fuyi. It is preserved relatively complete, and known as the three major court sites in China with Forbidden City in Beijing and Shenyang Imperial Palace.

3) *Abundant wildlife resources:* Jilin Province covers a variety of terrains, and its unique climate and environment serves as the wildlife habitat at the same time, many of which are rare animal and plant resources. There are 5284 species of known wild plants in Jilin Province, of which 1452 kinds are medicinal plants, with a variety of valuable medicinal herbs such as ginseng, *Boschniakia rossica* and *ganoderma*; there are 437 species of wild animals, and

animals belonging to the national protected animals are Siberian tiger, red-crowned crane, and Sika deer and so on. The most famous local specialties in Jilin Province are the "Three Treasures of Northeast China", including ginseng, pilose antler and *Boschniakia rossica*, which have great medicinal value for people's body. Other native products such as agaric, *Hericium*, and *Arimillaria mellea*, etc. are famous specialty in Jilin, which are inexpensive and in good condition, with high nutritional value, so they becomes the souvenirs that tourists from other provinces like to take away best. In the territory of Jilin Province, there is Xianghai wetland nature reserve, where there are a large number of beasts and birds, including red-crowned crane, white crane, golden eagle and other rare birds. The total of six cranes in the park accounts for two fifths of the world's fifteen kinds of cranes. Nature reserves in Jilin Province focus on the protection of wildlife by minimizing the destruction of their life in their habitat caused by human.

B. Disadvantages of Ecotourism in Jilin Province

1) *Weak economic base*: Jilin Province is located in the three northeastern provinces of China, and its economy is not as developed as the Pearl River Delta region or the Yangtze River Delta region, with the geographical location of inland area instead of coastal areas, so the per capita GDP is relatively lower than other cities of China. Low investment in tourism funds and incomplete infrastructure leads to low tourism income and difficulties in development of tourism industry, resulting in a vicious cycle of the economy and decline of people's living standards.

2) *Poor traffic*: The transportation in Jilin Province mainly relies on railways and highways, but the tourism resources are not concentrated with most of them located in remote areas with poor traffic. Tourists need to spend a long time on the road when traveling, and the process is hard and tiring due to the poor traffic of the city. Visitors prefer to the target scenic areas that have concentrated tourism target groups, and don't waste time and energy. Inconvenience of traffic to some extent hindered the smooth development of ecotourism.

V. COUNTERMEASURES FOR DEVELOPMENT OF ECOTOURISM IN JILIN PROVINCE

A. Reasonably Develop Tourism Resources

Jilin Province is rich in ecotourism resources, so the government and the management committee should make field study before the development of the scenic area or ecotourism resources to calculate the carrying capacity of scenic areas and rational plan and utilize the ecotourism resources without damaging the environment. They should control the number of tourists in the scenic area to avoid the permanent damage to environment due to the temporary economic benefits. They can increase the investment in the construction of ecotourism scenic area by attracting external capital investment and increasing taxes and so on to build a good infrastructure, focus on reducing the negative impact

on the environment, avoid disturbing the ecological culture of local residents, and set up the natural science museum or graphic introduction related to the wildlife in the scenic area, so that visitors can have a better understanding of the local natural ecosystems in the process of visiting, and their science and culture quality can be strengthened, so they will protect the nature from damage spontaneously from the bottom of heart.

B. Create Special Tourism Industry

Jilin Province is a multi-ethnic province, and it also has a variety of ecotourism resources at the same time. There are nearly 40 kinds of ethnic minorities in Jilin Province including Manchu, Mongolian, Korean, Hui and so on, with strong ethnic characteristics. Folklore Cultural tourism is a landmark tourism project in Jilin Province, such as the cultural village of Manchu features, where there are many activities like Manchu food and Shaman religious sacrifice and so on for visitors to visit, have a better understanding of the minority culture, and further respect the lifestyle of minority people. Jilin Province is also a large agricultural province, with intense agricultural atmosphere, so it can develop the farmyard tourism with traditional characteristics, which is a good place for the urban residents who are busy and living in serious air pollution to relax on holidays. Thus they can enjoy the unique leisure time and fresh air in rural area, experience the physical labor activities different from the mental activity in the city and feel the life of getting back to nature. They should increase the types of ecotourism activities, introduce special activities, and learn from the successful experience of well-known ecotourism at home and abroad, to customize the ecotourism characteristics exclusively belonging to Jilin Province to attract domestic and foreign tourists and create well-known brand effect.

C. Cultivate Professional Talents

The government should unite with education department to carry out the training of tourism professionals, increase publicity, and attract more labors to come to join the tourism industry. They can improve the requirements for the level of qualifications of tourism employees and increase the welfare of tourism employees to retain the real talent to build their hometown. They should instruct the talent to combine the professional knowledge with modern business idea and utilize the advanced management methods to manage scenic areas and tourism resources, rationally manage and plan the scenic area, make full use of tourism resources, and focus on reducing the negative influences on ecological environment and the local residents in the development process. In addition, they can implement vocational training for staffs of the scenic area in the management process and improve the cultural quality of staffs to provide visitors with service of high quality and high standard.

D. Determine the Market Positioning

The key point of ecotourism development in Jilin Province lies in the positioning of target groups. They should classify the tourist groups to set different tourism activities according to different types of tourists, aiming to attract the

tourists with corresponding demand. In the exploitation of tourism activities, they should pay attention to innovation, try to avoid adopting repeated theme of tourism activities with surrounding provinces, and keep fresh and innovative to guide visitors to make green consumption. They can intensively arrange the tourism resources groups to reduce the time tourists spend on the road and reasonably plan the tourism infrastructure to facilitate visitors to visit the ecological environment and characteristics of folklore resources of the province concentratedly.

VI. CONCLUSION

In summary, ecotourism in Jilin Province has great development prospects as well as many problems. Tourism industry is a new industry, and ecotourism is especially the new star of economic industry. Jilin Province should rationally plan the natural resources in the province, increase investment in the tourism industry, and make full use of tourism products and good ecological environment to develop green and sustainable development economy based on this, revitalize the old industrial base in northeast China, and use of their own characteristics and advantages to create the image of a green tourist city—"River Town". They should also make innovative definition for the cultural connotation of the province, without repeating others to set their own unique slogan. Besides, they can strengthen the training of qualified personnel in the province, determine the customer market of target groups, divide the tourist groups, and provide corresponding tourism activities for them to lay a good foundation for the future development of the tourism industry.

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