

ISSUES CONCERNING THE CLASSIFICATION OF ECOTOURISM DESTINATIONS

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***Abstract:** Lately, more strongly expressed tendency to develop the tourism industry, through his return to nature and authentic cultural values. Harnessing the natural environment is one of the fundamental requirements of ecotourism. This statement leaves the door wide open actually a variety of activities, provided that they meet the conditions mentioned above. Ecotourism allows people to visit natural reserves and national parks protected by law. They can observe wildlife can rest in nature or your preference, can experience adventure and extreme experiences: bike rides, rafting, skiing and hiking.*

Keywords: *ecotourism, ecotourism destinations, tourism development, protected areas*

INTRODUCTION

Harnessing the natural environment is one of the fundamental requirements of ecotourism [5]. This statement leaves the door wide open actually a variety of activities, provided that they comply with certain conditions [1]:

- a) contribute to the conservation and protection of nature;
- b) use of local human resources;
- c) have an educational character, respect for nature - awareness of tourists and local communities;
- d) have insignificant negative impact on the natural environment and socio - cultural.

From this perspective ecotourism interfere with other forms of nature-based travel.

Within ecotourism activities may include:

- Types of adventure activities (eg rafting, canoeing, equestrian tourism routes preset, skiing, bike paths arranged trips etc.);
- Excursions/Guided hikes organized;
- Tours to the observation of nature (flora and fauna);
- Experimentation trips to the conservation of nature;
- Excursions to local communities (visit cultural attractions, visiting traditional farms, traditional cultural manifestations watching, eating traditional food, non food purchase traditional products etc).

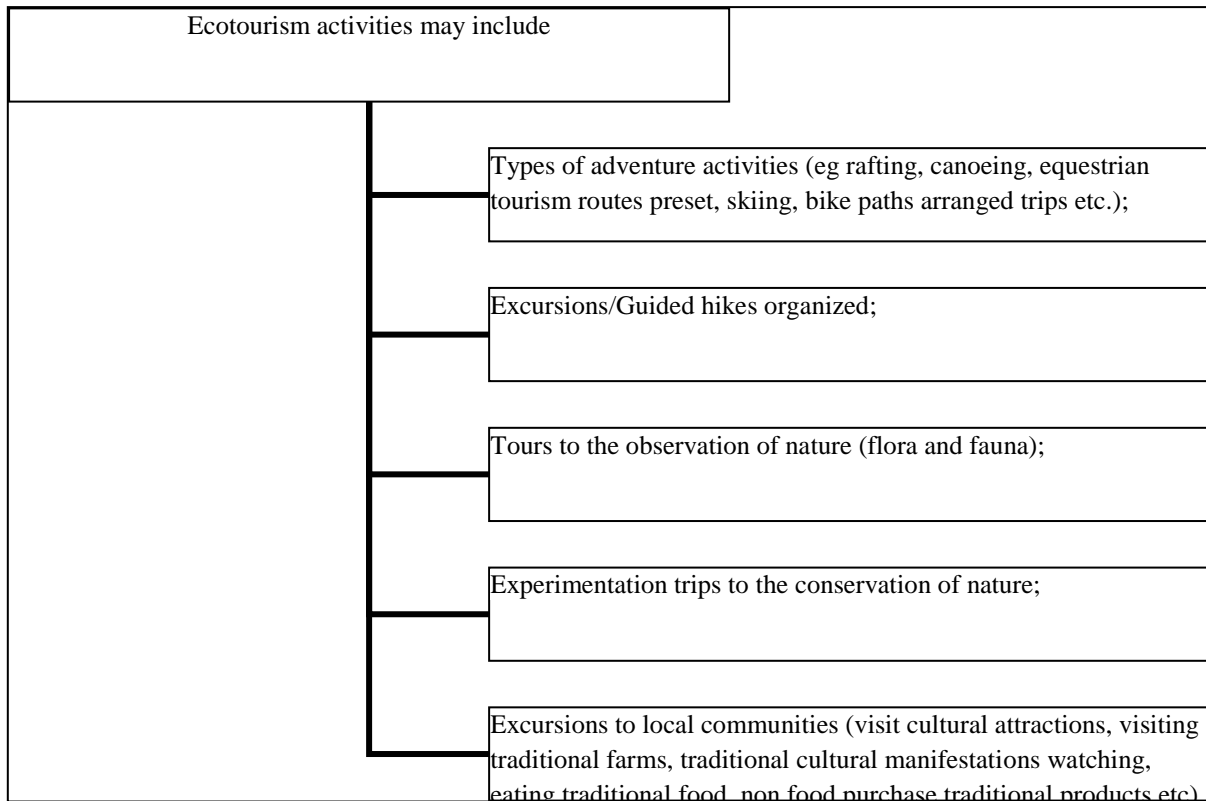


Figure 1. Ecotourism activities

MATERIAL AND METHOD

Romania has a rich potential ecotourism in protected areas and tourism development initiatives of these areas are environmentally suitable. The success of tourism development in protected areas is dependent upon the support of local and central government and a balanced approach that takes into spotlight cultural and natural values of these areas [4]. Given the risks involved in the development of tourism in protected areas, ecotourism appears as one of the best forms of tourism for these areas, as the main point of attraction is the natural potential and encourage nature conservation and development of local communities [1].

RESEARCH RESULTS

Natural Monuments Commission of the Romanian Academy established the categories of protected areas existing in our country, taking into account the classification of International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) [3]:

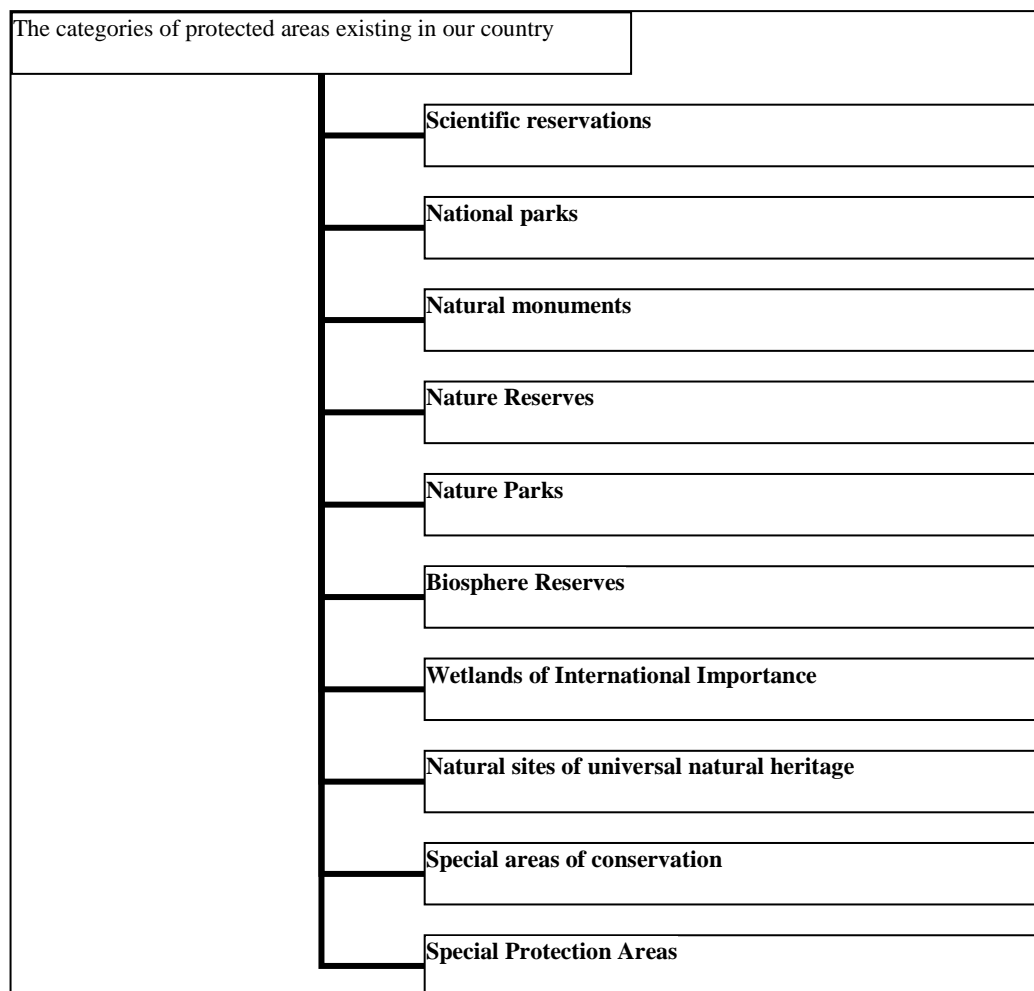


Figure 2. The categories of protected areas existing in our country

a) Scientific reservations

Scientific reserves are those protected areas whose purpose is the protection and preservation of natural habitat land and / or water, including representative elements of scientific interest in flora, fauna, geology, caving, paleontological, pedological or otherwise. Size is determined by the area of scientific reservations required for ensuring the integrity of the protected area. Scientific reserves management ensures strict protection regime which habitats are kept in - a state as undisturbed as possible. In their perimeter scientific activities may be conducted only with the consent of the competent scientific forum. Scientific reserves correspond to category I IUCN-"Strict Nature Reserve: protected area managed mainly for scientific purposes." Romania has two scientific reserves: Cave Clasani and experimental perimeter.

b) National parks

National parks are the natural protected areas whose purpose is the protection and preservation of samples representative for the biogeographical national, comprising natural elements great physical aspect - geography, flora, fauna, hydrological, geological, palaeontological, spelunking, pedologic or other nature, offering the possibility of visiting for scientific, educational, recreational and tourism. National parks management framework will ensure that the physical - geographical occur naturally, protection of ecosystems, conservation of genetic resources and biological diversity in terms of ecological stability, exclusion of any form of exploitation of natural resources and land use incompatible purpose assigned. In the area of national parks are admitted only traditional activities practiced only communities in the national park, traditional activities to be

covered by the management plan. IUCN category II national parks correspond - "National Park: protected area managed mainly for ecosystem protection and recreation." Currently, in Romania there is a National Park - Retezat (54,000 ha). They are intended to build 11 national parks: Delta with 220,000 ha, Ceahlau with 22704 ha, Pietrosul Rodnei with 63 696 ha, Caliman with 20120 ha, Piatra Craiului with 20183 ha, tails with 21400 ha, Domogleg - Cerna Valley 63 580 ha Cheile Nerei - Beusnita with 45 561 ha, Semenic – Cheile Carasului with 37035 ha Cheile Bicazului - Red Lake with 17335 ha, Apuseni Mountains with 53 880 ha.

c) Natural monuments

Nature monuments are those protected areas whose purpose is the protection and preservation of natural elements and ecological significance, scientific, landscape special consist of species of plants and wildlife, rare, endemic or endangered trees, floristic associations and fauna, geological phenomena - caves, by erosion, gorges, rivers, waterfalls and other events and geological formations, fossils deposits and other natural elements natural heritage through their uniqueness or rarity. Management of natural monuments is done after a strict protection regime that ensures the preservation of specific natural features. Depending on their degree of vulnerability, public access may be limited or prohibited. Natural monuments correspond to IUCN category III - "Natural Monument: protected area managed mainly for conservation of natural elements, specific".

d) Nature Reserves

Nature reserves are those protected areas whose purpose is the protection and preservation of important natural habitats and species in flora, fauna, forestry, hydrology, geology, caving, paleontological pedologic. Their size is determined by the need to ensure the integrity of elements protected area. The management of nature reserves is differentiated according to their characteristics through active management measures to ensure the maintenance of habitats and / or to protect certain species, groups of species or biotic communities. In addition to scientific activities, as the case may be admitted tourism, educational organizations. Some activities are admitted sustainable exploitation of natural resources. Permitted uses of land or resource exploitation which harm the objectives set. According to the purpose for which they were designated natural reserves may have predominant: botany, zoology, forestry, geological, paleontological, landscape, spelunking, wetland, marine genetic resources and others. These reserves correspond to IUCN category IV, namely habitat management area/species: protected area managed mainly for conservation through management intervention

e) Nature Parks

Natural parks are the natural protected areas whose purpose is the protection and preservation of landscape piles in which the interaction of human activities with nature - over time created a distinct area with significant value landscape and / or cultural, often with high biological diversity. Management of natural parks aims to maintain interaction harmonious human nature by protecting habitat diversity and landscape, promoting preservation utilities traditional lands, encourage and strengthen the activities, practices and traditional culture of the local population. Natural parks correspond category V IUCN - "Landscape protected: protected area managed mainly for landscape conservation and recreation". It also provides the public with opportunities for recreation and tourism and encourage scientific activities and educational. In Romania envisages the creation of two parks: Bucegi - Leoata and Gradistea Muncelului - Cioclovina, which currently works with regime natural reserve.

f) Biosphere Reserves

Biosphere reserves are those protected areas whose purpose is the protection and preservation of natural habitat areas and biological diversity specific. Biosphere reserves are spread over large areas and include a complex of terrestrial and / or aquatic, lakes and water courses, wetlands with communities biocenotic flora and fauna unique to the natural harmonious landscapes or resulted from arranging traditional territory, modified ecosystems under human influence, which can be restored to natural human communities whose existence is based on the natural resources on the principle of sustainable and harmonious development. Biosphere Reserves management is done according to the regulations and plans to protect and preserve himself in accordance with the guidelines set man - the Biosphere of UNESCO. If the perimeter of Biosphere Reserves are summarized heritage and natural sites of universal reserve management is compatible with the provisions of the Convention on the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage, under the aegis of UNESCO. Biosphere reserves are thus managed by human settlements development models that constitute human communities in harmony with the natural environment. Romania has obtained the approval of three biosphere reserves: Retezat National Park, Nature Reserve Rosca - Letea the Danube Delta and Pietrosul Rodnei nature reserve, which includes existing reservations: Woods secular Saltioara and Tinovul Poiana Stampa.

g) Wetlands of International Importance

Wetlands of international importance are those protected areas whose purpose is to ensure the protection and conservation of natural sites with wetland biodiversity. The management of these areas it was used to conservation and sustainable use of biological resources that are generated in accordance with the Convention on the Conservation of Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat.

h) Natural sites of universal natural heritage

Natural sites of universal natural heritage protected areas are those whose purpose is the protection and preservation of natural habitat areas in which there are natural elements of content whose value is recognized as being of international importance. Their habitat size is determined by requirements to ensure the integrity and preservation of items subject to this system of protection. In those areas there may be human communities whose activities are targeted for development compatible with the requirements of the protection and conservation of natural site. Management of natural sites of universal natural heritage is performed in accordance with regulations and their protection and conservation plans, in compliance with the Convention on Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage, under the aegis of UNESCO.

i) Special areas of conservation

SACs are those protected areas whose purpose is to preserve, maintain and, where appropriate, to bring back in - a favorable conservation status of natural habitats and / or populations of species for which the site is designated. Management of special conservation areas requires management plans appropriate specific designated sites or integrated into other management plans and legal, administrative or contractual in order to avoid deterioration of natural habitats and the habitats of species and disturbance of species for which areas have been designated.

j) Special Protection Areas

Specially Protected Areas Bird are those protected areas whose purpose is to preserve, maintain and, where appropriate, to bring back in - a favorable conservation status of specific habitats, designated for the protection of migratory species of wild. Special protection areas management is achieved as for special areas of conservation. This system of classification is based on a series of management objectives: scientific research,

protection of wilderness, protection of species diversity and genetic diversity, maintenance services, protection of natural features and specific cultural, tourism and recreation, education, sustainable use of resources ecosystem natural, cultural and traditional characteristics are maintained. Through ecotourism try minimize negative impacts on the local environment and natural and human population. Practice areas that are considered of interest, thus avoiding imposing great hardship, with beneficial effects on the traditional way of life of the local population. This type of tourism can foster interaction between the local population and tourists, as real interest to protect natural areas, not only in the receiving areas, but also in the emitters.

CONCLUSIONS

Romania has a rich potential ecotourism in protected areas and tourism development initiatives of these areas are environmentally suitable. The success of tourism development in protected areas is dependent upon the support of local and central government and a balanced approach that takes into spotlight cultural and natural values of these areas. Management of natural sites of universal natural heritage is performed in accordance with regulations and their protection and conservation plans, in compliance with the Convention on Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage, under the aegis of UNESCO. Harnessing the natural environment is one of the fundamental requirements of ecotourism. This statement leaves the door wide open actually a variety of activities, provided that they meet certain conditions: to contribute to the conservation and protection of nature; use of local human resources; have educational, respect for nature - awareness of tourists and local communities; have insignificant negative impact on the natural environment and socio - cultural.

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