

ASERS

Journal of Environmental Management and Tourism

Biannually

Volume VIII

Issue 4(20)

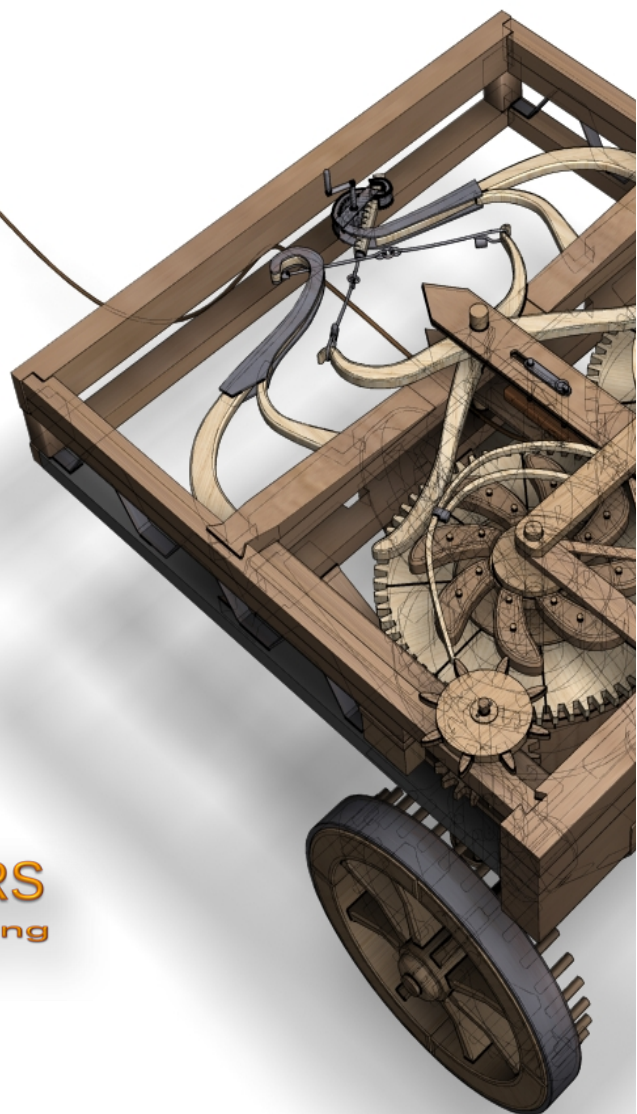
SUMMER 2017

ISSN 2068 – 7729

Journal DOI

<http://dx.doi.org/10.14505/jemt>

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DOI : [http://dx.doi.org/10.14505/jemt.v8.4\(20\).01](http://dx.doi.org/10.14505/jemt.v8.4(20).01)

Integral Factor Assessment of Formation and Development of Finno-Ugric Tourist Cluster

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Suggested Citation:

Maykova, S.E., Okunev, D.V., Gvozdetskaya, I.V. (2017). Integral factor assessment of formation and development of Finno-Ugric tourist cluster. *Journal of Environmental Management and Tourism*, Volume VIII, Summer, 4(20): 703-712. DOI: 10.14505/jemt.v8.4(20).01

Article's History:

Received March, 2017; Revised April, 2017; Accepted July, 2017.
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Abstract:

In the article, we discuss the possibility of creating of Finno-Ugric tourist cluster in Russia on the territory of the Mari El Republic. This cluster allows us to use all resources of enterprises and organizations more efficiently that are involved in the production process of tourist and recreational services and enhance their quality and, therefore, competitiveness in external and internal markets in services. The factor analysis allowed us to identify factors that affect the formation of tourist cluster. The research, using the methods of SNW-analysis and integral assessment of the degree of factor influence on tourism sector and hospitality, allowed us to determine the opportunities and prospects of different types and directions of tourism in Finno-Ugric tourist cluster. We created the map of strategic development of tourist clusters in the region, which is based on analysis of tendencies and dynamics of development of tourist market in the Mari El Republic and the extent and nature of influence of external and internal factors on the formation of the hospitality industry. The map represents the ranking of developing prospects of separate kinds of tourism in Finno-Ugric tourist cluster due to the available natural resources, geographical location, environmental well-being, well-preserved nature and traditional culture of the local population.

Keywords: tourism; ethno tourism; cultural tourism; rural tourism; tourist cluster; tourist product; tourist infrastructure

JEL Classification: L 83

Introduction

The industry of hospitality and tourism is one of the most profitable and dynamically developing branches of the economy, providing a multiplicative effect on the total activity of the various sectors of the economy. It provides an integrated use of natural, economic, social and cultural potential of the territory. The development of the industry

of hospitality and tourism has an impact on the related industries such as transport, construction, catering, advertising, communications, insurance, agriculture, production and sale of Souvenirs and other consumer goods.

Russia is a unique tourist region in the world due to its Eurasian location. It has determined the diversity living on its territory peoples. The development of the tourism is the only possibility of preserving cultural traditions and customs of indigenous peoples of Russia.

The need for participation of Finno-Ugric peoples in the development of the tourism and hospitality industry is natural, because the Finno-Ugric republics, regions and habitats of the ethnic group are of 8% of the Russian territory with the population size about 9 million people, or 6.3% of the total population (Loginova 2011). A small Ural peoples of Russia, belong to the Finno-Ugric group such as Nganasans, Chuvans, Votes, Veps, Izhorians, who are critically endangered.

In modern conditions, the accelerated development of the sphere of tourist services in the Finno-Ugric regions is the basis of investment attraction, creation of new jobs, infrastructure development, and the whole increasing of the efficiency of the economy. The formation of tourist cluster will promote the solution of this problem. It will provide more efficient use of all resources of enterprises and organizations that are involved in the production process, tourism and recreational services. In addition, it will improve their quality and hence competitiveness in the internal and external markets (Maikova, Gvozdetskaya and Sarmaeva 2011). All of this actualizes the need to identify factors influencing the formation of tourist cluster, their analysis and an integrated assessment according to the degree and character of influence, map developing of the prospective development of tourist clusters in the region with a ranking of prospects for the development of certain types of tourism in Finno-Ugric tourist cluster.

The regions and countries of compact residence of peoples of the Finno-Ugric language group were chosen as a study area.

Currently, the Finno-Ugric world consists of 24 Finno-Ugric peoples. In Russia live 17 of them. There are the Mordovians (Erzya, Mokshas), Udmurts, Mari, Komi, Karelians, Ingrians, the Khanty, Mansi, Vepsians, Besermyan, Saami etc. Six Finno-Ugric peoples have their own national-territorial entities in the Russian Federation. There are the Republic of Mordovia, Mari El, Komi, Karelia, Udmurtia, Khanty-Mansi Autonomous District. The countries inhabited by the Finno-Ugric group are Hungary, Finland and Estonia (Karasev 2014).

The most famous natural sites of the Finno-Ugric regions of Russia include the Pechora-Ilych state biosphere reserve, National Park "Yugyd Va" in the Komi Republic, "Paanajarvi" in the Republic of Karelia, "Nechkinskij" in the Udmurt Republic, "Mariy Chodra" in Mariy-El, "Virgin Komi forests", nature reserve "Small Sosva" in the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous district, Mordovia state nature reserve them. P. Smidovich.

1. Explore importance of the problem

The assessment of the leading experts in the hospitality industry and tourism shows that in the twenty-first century the tourism is a major driving force in the tertiary sector of the global economy, which comes only after the telecommunications and information technology. According to the non-governmental international organizations (the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC)), the total investments in tourism are estimated at almost 700 billion dollars, which is about 11.3% of investment in the economy of all countries of the world. Currently, the tourism sector has 284 million jobs and 9.8% of global GDP. The average growth rate of international tourism to 2020 will be about 4.1% (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2017).

Russian industry of tourism and hospitality is at a stage of progressive development. According to the forecast of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), by 2020 Russia could enter the top ten countries with the most popular tourism destinations (World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), 2017).

The advantages of formation of the tourist cluster as a set of elements of the hospitality industry are shown in the complexity of services that makes a defining element in the development of demand. Just the cluster approach in the development of the tourism industry is the most prospective from our point of view. This problem is highly relevant for the major tourist centers, as the underdevelopment or complete absence of tourist, recreation and hospitality clusters impedes the effective integration of all elements of the sphere of tourist services, the operation of the tourist infrastructure, growth of investment attractiveness of this sphere of activity.

2. Literature review

Theoretical and methodological approaches to the formation of a tourism, recreation and hospitality cluster are represented in the works of Russian authors: Kosov (2013), Grishin (2016), Denisova (2009), Dutova (2010), Karpova and Valeeva (2015), Karpova (2011), Larionova (2007), Martysenko (2009), Onischenko (2012), Osadchy and Akhmetshin (2015), Popov (2010).

Foreign scientists have conducted a significant amount of researches, and many of them were based on the formation of ideas about the causes of creation and development of cluster structures. The most significant theories of the cluster socio-economic development of territories are: the theory of localization by Izard (1966) (in the context of economic and social geography); the theory of 'relations with suppliers and customers' by Hirschman (1995); the theories of economic growth due to the implementation of the export potential of the territory (Innis 1964); cluster model of regional development by Porter (2005).

In general, the majority of researchers draw a conclusion about the ability to improve the competitiveness of individual enterprises of the tourism industry by combining their efforts under a single territorial cluster and to generate synergies from the formation and promotion of a common regional tourist product.

The literature review shows a high degree of study of the issues. At the same time, in the empirical research the use of existing theories is hampered by their fragmentation, few factors of development of tourism and hospitality markets, especially in the ethno-cultural environment.

However, the problem of development of hospitality and tourism in ethno-cultural environment (including the Finno-Ugric world) and the formation of tourism, recreation and hospitality cluster of the Finno-Ugric regions is often beyond the borders of scientific studies as well as the formation and management of tourist clusters and the development of the tourism industry as a whole. In addition, this problem requires additional study, related to the identification and analysis of external and internal factors, influencing the development of hospitality and tourism on the territories of Finno-Ugric peoples.

3. State hypotheses and their correspondence to research design

Taking into consideration the fragmentation of theoretical and methodological basis of research in the study area, it is necessary to:

- identify the factors affecting the formation of tourism cluster based on the tools of factor analysis;
- establish a technique of a quantitative estimation of influence of factors on tourism industry;
- conduct research using methods SNW-analysis and integral evaluation of the degree of influence factors on tourism industry and hospitality;
- identify opportunities and prospects of different types and directions of tourism in Finno-Ugric tourism cluster.
- create a map of strategic development of tourism clusters in the study region;
- carry out a ranking of prospects for the development of certain types of tourism in Finno-Ugric tourism cluster due to available natural resources, geographical location, environmental well-being, well-preserved nature and traditional culture of the local population.

4. Methodology

In this study, we used the methods of factor analysis to identify the factors influencing the formation of tourist cluster. We gave a global assessment of the extent of the positive influence of external factors on the tourism industry of the Republic of Mari El based on the methodology of quantitative estimation of influence of factors on the tourism industry. We identified the ranks of components of investment risk and investment potential of the Republic of Mari El based on the methodology of ranking.

The use of methods of mapping allowed us to create the map of perspective development of tourist clusters in the studied region and justify the formation of Finno-Ugric cluster.

5. Results and discussion

5.1. Identification of factors of development of tourism clusters in the region and assessment of their impact on the industry of tourism and hospitality in the Republic of Mari El

The tourist and recreational activities contribute both to the resolution of the contradictions between socio-economic and environmental interests (Soldatova and Pustynina 2016) and to the preservation of cultural and historical heritage, strengthening of physical and moral health of the nation, but also allows to create a favorable image of the territory and its attractiveness for investment. It is in the concept of sustainable development of the territory.

The dynamics of all sectors and subsectors of the tourism industry is influenced by the common external factors of universal character (Okunev, Maikova and Soldatova 2012). It is possible to distinguish the crucial ones by using a comprehensive analysis of the basic parameters of socio-economic development of the region.

The assessment of the extent of the positive influence of external factors was conducted using the method of "SNW" - analysis (Maikova and Sarmaeva 2012). There is the numerical assessment of the degree of positive influence of each factor, while the strong positive impact is equal to 1, neutral position – to 0, and weak positive impact factor – to 0.5. In the context of this analysis, the weights of all factors were equal. Thus, the integrated assessment of the degree of influence varies in the range from 1 to 0.

$$D_{inf} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{12} F_i * S_k(N_i)(W_m)}{12}$$

where D_{inf} – the integral indicator of the degree of positive influence of external factors; F – external influence factor; i – the number of factors; S_k is the value of a strong positive effect (=1); N_i – neutral impact (=0); W_m – the value of weak positive influence (=0,5).

We obtained integrated assessment of $D_{inf} = 0,416$, due to the use of this method for quantitative estimation of influence of factors on the tourism industry, relating to the Republic of Mari El. It is obvious that when we have the maximum value, which equals to 1, there is a considerable potential for the development of the industry due to the positive influence of external factors. The results of evaluation of external factors are represented in Table 1.

Table 1. Assessment of external factors of development of the industry of tourism and hospitality in the Republic of Mari El, based on "SNW"-analysis.

Factor	Qualitative assessment of the factors		
	Strong position «S»	Neutral position «N»	Weak position «W»
Economic advancement		0	
Political stability	1		
Social and demographic development			0,5
Scientific and technical development		0	
Investment potential			0,5
Business activity			0,5
The competition rate in the industry of tourism and hospitality		0	
Ecology	1		
The security rate of tourism		0	
The effectiveness of public administration system			0,5
The development of trade and services			0,5
The condition and degree of tourist objects accessibility			0,5

Currently, the dynamic development of the industry of tourism and hospitality in the Republic of Mari El is constrained by the set of problems (table 2), despite the existing potential of domestic tourism and competitive advantages of the development of different types of tourism (Gvozdetskaya, Maikova and Okunev 2015).

Table 2. Specific internal factors of positive and negative influence on the development of the industry of tourism and hospitality of Republic of Mari El

Internal factors	
Positive influence	Negative influence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of information portal about tourist features of the town Yoshkar-Ola and Republic of Mari El (visitola.ru, visitola.com in Russian, Mari and English languages) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The imperfection of normative and legal base at the regional level in the field of tourism
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informational availability: there is an information about tourism in the Republic of Mari El in social networks, which is published in major Russian publications and e-magazine "Rest in Russia", located on the portal "in the Regions.ru" and on a "National tourism portal Russia Travel" (Rest in Russia, 2015) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weak infrastructural support of tourism and hospitality
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tourist city lights and informants are installed for the organization of tourist navigation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The underdevelopment of the accounting system of tourist flows
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The development of relations and cooperation with Russian tour operators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The lack of republican tourist products that meet international standards. Low concernment rate of tour operators and travel agencies for promotion of regional tourist product on the Russian and international tourist markets (Okunev, Maikova and Gvozdetskaya 2015)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tours of attractions, parks of the Republic are designed and implemented (National tourist portal 2017) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A weak information policy and branding of regional products
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased funding of tourism and hospitality industry (Purtov 2015) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant physical and moral deterioration of the infrastructure for tourism and hospitality
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is the State program of the Republic of Mari El on tourism development until 2020 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tourism is represented with a small number of travel companies and organizations.

According to the investment potential, the Mari El Republic took the 73rd place in the Russian Federation in 2015. The changes in the components of rank of investment risk are represented in Table 3.

Table 3 - Ranks of components of investment risk and investment potential of the Mari El Republic in 2010-2015 (Expert RA: Rating Agency, 2015).

Years	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Ranks of components of investment risk						
Social	62	78	79	76	70	72
Economical	49	65	62	61	52	30
Financial	69	69	52	53	48	39
Criminal	19	2	20	4	2	11
Ecological	15	44	22	42	42	46
Administrative	13	53	26	43	29	36
The average risk index (Russia=1)	1,135	0,357	0,329	0,309	0,266	0,260
Ranks of components of investment potential						
Tourist	71	70	70	71	72	73
Labour	65	65	66	65	66	67
Consumption	70	71	71	71	71	72
Industrial	68	67	67	66	65	63
Financial	73	72	71	71	71	72
Institutional	73	67	67	67	66	67
Innovational	68	68	76	64	64	68
Infrastructural	52	57	58	59	57	62
Natural-resource	43	43	43	43	43	44
Share in Russia's total potential	0,385	0,382	0,373	0,378	0,399	0,393

According to the tourist potential, the Mari El Republic is on the 73 place in Russia. The analysis of the investment potential of the Mari El Republic shows a slight change (average of 4 points). The greatest dynamics is characteristic of the innovative (the 64 place in 2014 and 2013 compared to the 76 place in 2012) and infrastructure components (the growth from 2014 to 2015 amounted to 5 positions) in the structure of the investment potential. The analysis of investment attractiveness of the Mari El Republic has revealed the objective possibilities of development of hospitality and tourism (geographical, ecological, natural, cultural, innovation), as well as factors that have a restrictive influence on the development of this sector (infrastructure, institutional, financial).

In general, the study of factors, affecting tourism in the Mari El Republic, revealed a number of factors, limiting its development:

- the lack of a single tourist brand of the Mari El Republic;
- a small number of tourist products, insufficient for realizing tourist potential of the region;
- a weak system of information support and promotion of tourist products and tourist opportunities of the Mari El Republic;
- the Republic is situated in the basin of the Volga, however, the cruise programs are not enough developed (the city of Kozmodemyansk is only involved).

5.2. The map of strategic development of tourist clusters in the Mari El Republic

We can create a map of perspective development of tourist cluster in the region on the basis of analysis of tendencies and dynamics of development of tourist market of the Mari El Republic, the extent and nature of influence of external and internal factors on the formation of the hospitality industry, as well as assessment of the level of investment potential and risks (Table 4).

The territorial, natural, geographical features of the Mari El Republic allow generating the following tourism clusters: the ethno-tourism, rural tourism, religious tourism, active tourism, recreational and business tourism.

Table 4. Map of perspective development of tourist cluster of the Mari El Republic.

Tourist cluster	Development prospect of tourist clusters of the Mari El Republic		
	High	Medium	Low
Ethno-tourism			
Rural and ecological tourism			
Religious tourism			
Recreational and cruise tourism			
Active and sport tourism			
Business tourism			

According to the ecological rate, the Mari El Republic is one of the prosperous regions of the European part of Russia. The Republic has a well-preserved nature and traditional culture of the local population. All of this provides great prospects for development of ethnographic, rural, ecological, spa and recreational tourism. In addition, there are all prerequisites for development of cruise tourism on the Volga River, business and sports tourism in the city of Yoshkar-Ola.

The development of ethnographic tourism, organization of tours, allowing you to compare the lifestyle, culture, traditional architecture and customs of these peoples, is possible in the most parts of the territory of the Republic. The traditional occupations of the population, such as basket weaving, manufacturing of bast and its products, weaving, embroidery etc. are of interest. Currently, the ethnography of the Mari people is mainly represented in the museums – GUK "National Museum of the Republic Mari El by T. Evseeva" in Yoshkar-Ola, the ethnographic Museum under the open air in the city of Kozmodemyansk and others.

The prospects of formation and development of ethno-cultural, rural, environmental, recreational, including health tourism in the Mari El Republic are due to available natural resources, advantageous geographical location, environmental well-being, well-preserved nature and traditional culture of the local population. These unique features give the possibility to form a Finno-Ugric tourism cluster according to the ethnic and cultural principle on the territory of the Mari El Republic.

The ethno-cultural tourism refers to the category of insufficiently developed types of tourism in present Finno-Ugric world. Meanwhile, the considerable attention is paid to the cultural environment, which allows generating the mass tourist flow in countries with a high level of development of the tourism and hospitality industry. The tourists, who prefer cultural tourism, are usually interested in places (areas) with global cultural value, characterizing features of life and life of other people (local choirs, ensembles, attributes of life, clothing, folklore, language, holidays, rituals, folk games and amusements, arts and crafts).

In this regard, the ethno-cultural component should be based in the concept of development of the industry of hospitality and tourism in Finno-Ugric world. Its effective use in conjunction with a modern infrastructure that meets international standards, including accommodation, food, sports, cultural-entertainment complexes, available means of transport and communication, a comfortable and safe place to stay, allows you to ensure the investment attractiveness of the Finno-Ugric regions to improve their image due to the formation of ethno-cultural brands (Komleva and Soldatova 2015).

However, it is necessary to solve a complex of problems for the formation of competitive industry of tourism and hospitality in the territory of the Mari El Republic. It is necessary to create high-quality tourist products, which include comfortable accommodation, varied and affordable services, a high level of service, safety, competitive price. It will require a coherent public policy, a complex salvation of the problem, related to the sphere of tourism and hospitality based on the state-private partnership and the formation of the tourist infrastructure of rest, food, entertainment, corresponding to modern requirements.

5.3. The formation of Finno-Ugric tourist cluster

The analysis of the current state of the hospitality industry and tourism, external and internal factors of development of investment attractiveness of the Finno-Ugric region, allowed us to reveal the background and justify the creation of tourist recreation and hospitality cluster.

The development of ethnographic tourism can be carried out in most territory of the Republic in the context of formation of the Finno-Ugric tourist cluster. Ethno-cultural peculiarities of Mari El allow organizing tours that introduce tourists to the life, culture, traditional architecture, customs, crafts, cuisine, folklore of the Mari people. When developing tourism products in the context of the Finno-Ugric cluster, 'the method of immersing the tourist in the environment of the indigenous population' should be used, for example, for providing the opportunity to visit ceremonial events. Ethnic elements should be used in the design of hotel complexes and restaurants.

While the formatting of the Finno-Ugric cluster, the significant attention should be paid to rural tourism. This segment can consolidate the agricultural, recreational, active, ethnographical tourisms on the principles of versatility and year-round use. In the Republic Mari El, such tourism destination has considerable potential for development, based on the ethno-cultural, environmental and recreational potential of the territory. In addition, at the initial stage, the rural tourism does not require significant investment, has a small payback period comparing to, for example, spa type of tourism. Rural tourism has great social significance – it provides the possibility of solving the problem of employment in rural areas, stimulate the development of the tourism industry, such as production of souvenirs, sale of agricultural products, berries and mushrooms to the tourists. In this case, rural tourism can be a source of investment in the development of agricultural production.

In the initial stages of development of the Finno-Ugric cluster, the most promising area for inclusion in the tourism product are: Gornomariysky District, Kilemarsky District, Kuzhenersky District, Mari-Tureksky District, Morkinsky District, Novotoryalsky District, Paranginsky District and Sernursky District.

The eco-tourism is one of the important and promising segments in the tourism cluster of the Finno-Ugric region. The unique nature monuments, which attract the tourists, are: The height of 'Vyatskiy Uval' (Kuzhenersky, Morkinsky and Volzhsky Districts), old mine workings 'Mountain Zadelye', mountain landscape 'Stone Mountain', national park "Mariy Chodra", the mountainous complex "Karman-Kuryk", reserve "Bolshaya Kokshaga", a group of karst lakes, rivers Ilet and Irovka, archaeological, historical and cultural monuments of the Gornomariyskiy District and the city of Kozmodemyansk.

The sanitary tourism may also be included in the Finno-Ugric tourism cluster as one of the most popular types of tourism in the Russian Federation. In the Mari El Republic, the main advantage of health tourism is the

presence of spa and resort institutions to the access sources of natural mineral waters, therapeutic mud. However, there is a serious problem of a high degree of deterioration of the material base of these institutions and the incompatibility of its modern requirements. Thus, the main objectives of the development of this area of tourism are as follows:

- the material-technical modernization of the spa and resort infrastructure of the Republic and the development of existing recreational areas in the promising regions (the Volga, Zvenigovsky, Medvedsky, etc.);
- the creation of conditions for development of tourist infrastructure for all areas of tourism in the Republic: the establishment of tour operators, the establishment of a network of excursion and environmental routes in the Republic, development of public catering – cafes and restaurants, the rental of goods for sports and active rest.

In summer, the recreational tourism can become a promising direction of development of the Finno-Ugric tourism cluster. For salvation of this problem, the tourist attractiveness of the territory will be provided by the tourist and recreational area in the settlement Kokshaysk (Zvenigovsky District), lake Shap, Tair, Karas, Yalchik, Deaf Lake, etc., the territory of national Park "Mari Chodra" and Volzhsky, Gornomariysky, Kilemarsky, Yurinsky and other areas.

The cruise tourism can be an important element of the Finno-Ugric cluster. Currently, only the city of Kozmodemyansk is involved in the cruise programs. The Sheremetev's Castle (village Yurino), Museum of the history of the shipping company (the city of Zvenigovo), settlement Kokshaysk (Zvenigovsky District), which is the closest settlement on the Volga river to the capital of the Republic, Yoshkar-Ola and with a developed recreational infrastructure are perspective territories for inclusion in the cruise routes. However, the development of this direction requires large financial investments for dredging, installation of landing-stages, construction of jetties, and creation of tourism infrastructure and preparing of tour programs in the promising tourist areas.

Conclusion

It is obvious that the creation of the Finno-Ugric tourist cluster will contribute to the formation of a modern highly effective and competitive tourist complex, which will provide many opportunities for satisfaction of requirements of the local population, Russian citizens and foreign citizens in tourist services. In addition, it will make a significant contribution to the development of the economy, including tax revenues, increasing the number of jobs, preservation and rational use of cultural and natural heritage.

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ISSN 2068 – 7729

Journal DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.14505/jemt>