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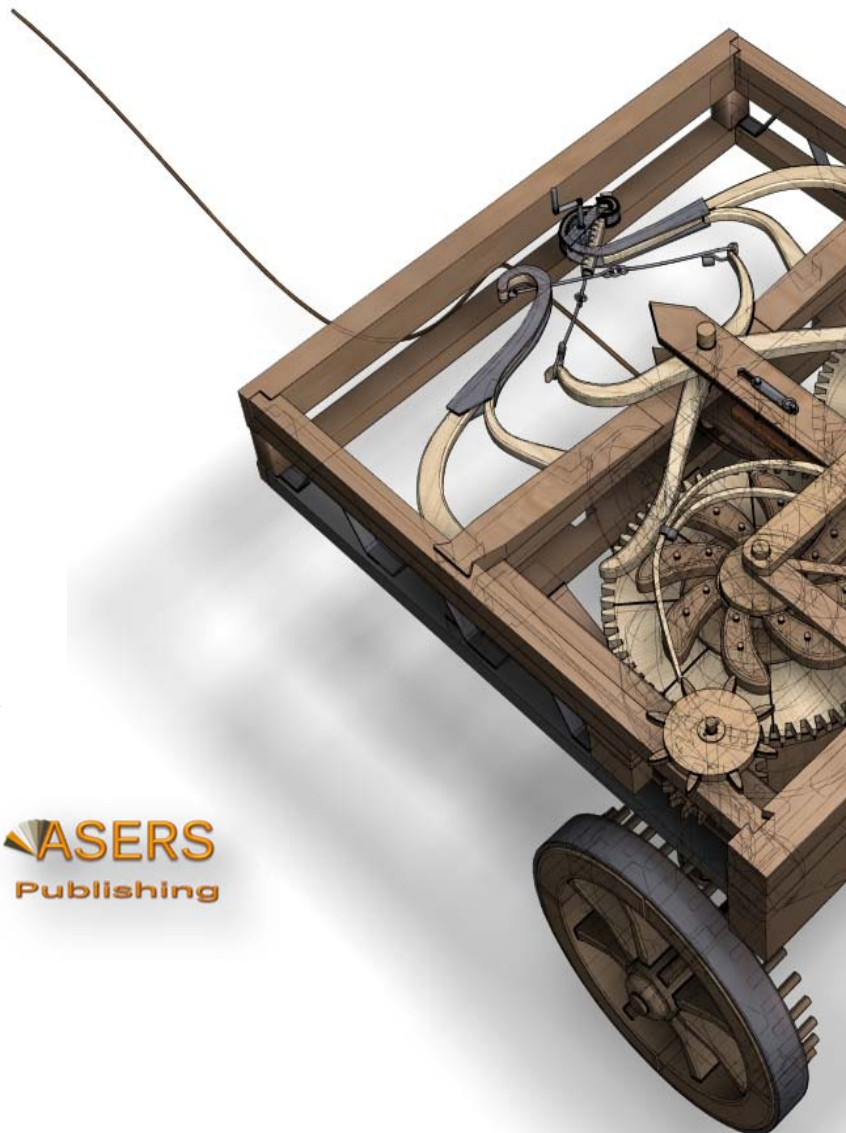
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Journal of Environmental Management and Tourism is an interdisciplinary research journal, aimed to publish articles and original research papers that should contribute to the development of both experimental and theoretical nature in the field of Environmental Management and Tourism Sciences.

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Impact of Tourism on Sustainable Development of Rural Areas: International Experience

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Abstract

Elimination of disproportions in the economic development of the country's regions and their transition to sustainable development is one of the priorities of Russian economic policy. This can be achieved by active search for the most effective directions of territorial development, actions aimed to form a positive image, and stimulation of profitable sectors of the economy. Tourism is one of the most effective directions for sustainable development of a territory. The article analyzes the scientific literature related to the problem of the connection between sustainable development of rural territories and rural tourism. The main rural tourism factors contributing to sustainable rural development and synergy effects from rural tourism have been identified based on an expert survey. Cases demonstrating the synergy effects of rural tourism are presented using the case method.

Keywords: sustainable development; rural areas; rural tourism; synergy; agritourism.

JEL Classification: L83; O13; O14; O18; R59.

Introduction

There is a decrease in the number of rural settlements and their population in the agricultural regions of Russia. The quality of life of the rural population is reduced in comparison with that of the urban (Danilov-Danilyan and Piskulova 2015). Such a situation in rural areas exists due to the inefficient use of natural, human, material, and other resources and the imbalance in the system "person – nature – economy". Considering the features of rural areas and the problems of sustainable development of regions, we can affirm that sustainable development

of rural territories (SDRT) involves the effective use of existing natural, resource, material, technical, intellectual, staff, and socio-cultural potential and tends to increase in the future.

In Russian practice, there is no unified opinion on the mechanism for ensuring SDRT. Thus, V.M. Bautin claims that SDRT is a system of organizational, economic, political, and legal measures aimed at ensuring irreversible and stable progressive changes in the production, social, and environmental spheres that occur proportionally and simultaneously in each component of the rural territory (Bautin *et al.* 2004; Nikolskaya *et al.* 2019, 1197; Savtsova *et al.* 2019, 1253).

E.V. Bagirova (2015) characterizes SDRT as a steady increase of positive social indicators, particularly the population's living standards, education, health care, etc., in accordance with the economic and environmental development of the rural territory. F. Mantino (2010) notes that the socio-economic development of rural territories is both an objective process, which is reflected in the influence of economic, political, social, demographic, resource, and other factors, and a phenomenon that has a subjective nature since it is carried out under the influence of managerial decisions of rural, district, regional, and national authorities.

Thus, according to V.K. Krutikov, SDRT is provided with production, social, environmental, and socio-cultural components characterized by a tendency to grow. The production component involves the development of agricultural and nonagricultural economic activities. The social component provides the reproduction of labor resources and the qualitative improvement of rural human capital. The environmental component involves the preservation of natural and land resources of rural areas and the increase in the efficiency of their use. A socio-cultural component preserves ethnic identity and self-identification of rural areas, folk traditions, and moral and spiritual values. The interdependence of these components forms the socio-economic environment of SDRT (Krutikov and Fedorova 2011).

D.B. Weaver (2004) believes that tourism is one of the effective directions of SDRT, since it has a positive effect on regional economy and ecology, expands the sphere of employment of the rural population, and provides tourists with organic food.

According to B. Farrell, rural tourism is a form of recreation in the countryside in a private house with wide opportunities to use the natural, material, and cultural potential of the region. The organizer is a rural family, which provides housing and food produced at a personal farm (Farrell and Twining-Ward 2005, 109).

Researchers believe that rural tourism can have pure and mixed types. Pure rural tourism provides travel services based on a private mini hotel. In this case, this activity is the main source of income. Mixed-type rural tourism is a hospitality service along with conducting personal (peasant) farming. In this case, income from hospitality activities, as a rule, will be an addition to the main income from agricultural or other activities (Azarova *et al.* 2019, 1376; Cawley and Gillmor 2008, 316; Novolodskaya *et al.* 2019, 340).

According to L.G. Horlings, rural tourism requires relatively insignificant investments at the initial stage. It is a sector where the creation of new workplaces does not require high professional knowledge and skills. Rural tourism can be a solution for those representatives of the rural population who lost their jobs or were forced to leave farming. The development of rural tourism in the future leads to a decrease in the outflow of human resources from rural areas, diversification of the local economy, and expansion of the overall range of tourism services (Horlings and Marsden 2014, 4).

The positive impact of rural tourism on the conditions and quality of life of peasants, according to researchers, lies primarily in the fact that it expands the sphere of employment of the rural population and provides additional income. Moreover, income comes not only from renting accommodation but also from providing a wide range of additional services (Ploeg van der 2002). At the same time, rural tourism is an important instrument for solving social problems, as it gives the rural population hope and motivation for cooperation and a chance to live fully in their native village. At the initial stage, these types of activities may not be financially profitable, but they offer solutions to the problems that villagers face (Kristensen *et al.* 2016, 749). Foreign experience shows that the main services that tourists expect from the owner are not only accommodation and meals but also the creation of a special and unique atmosphere of hospitality in a private house (Frochot 2005, 335; Sharpley 2002, 233).

The objective of the research is to analyze the international experience in rural tourism as an instrument for sustainable development of rural areas.

The research hypothesis is that the condition for sustainable development of rural areas is the synergy between tourism and other components of the rural economy.

Based on the research results, we can conclude that the objective was achieved.

1. Methods

The following research methods were used in the study:

- analysis of scientific literature on the problem of the interconnection between sustainable development of rural areas and rural tourism;
- an expert survey. Based on its results, the main factors of rural tourism that contribute to SDRT and the effects of synergy from rural tourism are identified;
- the case method – development of cases of the European experience of rural tourism.

The online expert survey involved 38 experts – tourism workers specializing in green tourism.

2. Results

According to the experts, the main factors of rural tourism contributing to SDRT are the following (Table 1).

Table 1. Main factors of rural tourism contributing to SDRT

No.	Factor	Characteristic	%*
1	Synergy	Tourism can benefit other sectors of the rural economy of a certain area through positive relationships, or synergy, with other aspects of living in this area	92%
2	Preservation and management of heritage	Protection of natural and cultural heritage through rural tourism	81.5%
3	Entrepreneurship development	Development of enterprises engaged in rural tourism	76%
4	Local community development	Attraction and retention of local people by tourism	71%

Note: based on the expert survey; * – the percentage of expert references

According to the results of the survey, the first place among the factors of rural tourism that contribute to SDRT is given to synergy, due to which rural tourism can benefit people and the economy of a certain area through positive connections with other aspects of life in this area.

The experts affirmed that the real synergy between tourism and other components of the rural economy occurs when the following components of rural tourism are presented: it helps strengthen and diversify the local economy; provides the local population with substantial income; has long-term prospects and not just short-term benefits for the region; avoids harm to national, regional, or local economies.

The experts identified the following synergy effects that arise due to the development of rural tourism (Table 2).

Table 2. Synergy effects from rural tourism

No.	Synergy effects	%*	Case
1	Synergies in a community	89%	Hultsfred Rock Party, Sweden
2	Crafts development	84%	Aosta Valley, Italy
3	Agritourism	76%	Ecological Agritourism Farm in Giza, Poland
4	Direct sale of farm products	71%	Villány-Siklós Wine Route, Hungary
5	Farm restaurants	68%	Styria, Austria

Note: based on the expert survey; * – the percentage of expert references

3. Discussion

Synergies in a community. In many rural areas of Europe, tourism is seen as an additional economic activity, due to which other sectors of the economy can become more viable. According to one of the experts, this happens if "hotels get products from local farmers or providers and use local craftsmen to restore or expand their area or if tourists buy local souvenirs". Local income from tourism taxes can help support utility services, and locals can benefit from investments in infrastructure that meets the needs of tourists. Local associations can get income from direct sales to tourists and servicing tourist events. For example, the Hultsfred Music Festival.

3.1 Case of Hultsfred Rock Party, Sweden

A remarkable example of successful innovation in tourism is the Hultsfred Rock Party, a rock music festival that attracts up to 25,000 spectators each year and brings significant income and new jobs to the community.

This example shows that locals, a group of teenagers, can take the initiative and involve the community in a significant tourist action and benefit from it. The initiative was launched in 1981 when teenagers, frustrated by the lack of entertainment for the youth in the small town of Hultsfred, decided to organize a rock concert. The first

concert was attended by 1,600 people, and this inspired the young people to keep working and gradually expand the annual event, which became the largest music festival in Sweden.

The organization of the festival has always been based on voluntary work. In a small town like Hultsfred, with only 5,400 people, it was easy enough to make people feel like it was "their" festival. Today, many of those who volunteered in the festival's early years attract their children to work.

In 1991, the Rock Party decided to build its own concert hall mainly based on voluntary work. The Rock City building now contains a restaurant and other public facilities, as well as offices and studios. This place is owned by six Rock Party companies, which together have an annual turnover of 6 million euros from music, media, and IT, as well as by other companies that have emerged around festival events.

The Rock Party also takes part in various educational programs, including a three-year course in Music Management at the University of Kalmar, as well as courses for organizers of musical events together with a folklore school, educational club, and courses for digital media distributors.

The organization tries to encourage local youth to be creative and find meaningful activities. The Rock Party emphasizes the importance of never forgetting one's roots. Though the Rock Party has hired workers and owns several companies, it remains a non-profit organization based on volunteer work.

Crafts development. Tourists like to buy useful and unusual gifts. This desire provides an opportunity for craftsmen to take part in this activity — one of the most popular types of synergy. This is evident from the example of the Aosta Valley, Italy (Musarò 2014, 93).

There are over 30 ceramic crafts workshops on the Greek island Sifnos, which produce traditional crockery and decorative items for tourists, providing jobs for more than 200 people. In many areas, handicrafts that were on the verge of extinction have been renewed to meet the demand of tourists. For example, the production of traditional earthenware in the Portuguese region of Alentejo and the revival of handicrafts in Croatia and woodcarving workshops in Greece (Hall 2004, 165).

3.2 Case of the Aosta Valley, Italy

The Aosta Valley in Italy is an example of how a rural community can create profits and jobs to provide added value to forestry products with substantial assistance from tourism.

The Aosta Valley is an autonomous region in northern Italy, with a wide central valley in the Alps and numerous side valleys.

The main city Aosta was founded 2,000 years ago at the time of the Roman Empire. The economy of the valley is based mainly on agriculture, certain industrial and service enterprises, and especially tourism. Tourists come all year round to admire the mountain scenery, go hiking or skiing, and so on.

On each side of the valley, there are pines, birches, and other types of forests. They are used for construction, furniture production, tools, etc. The locals have developed a strong tradition of woodworking craft over an extremely long historical period. This tradition is reflected in the skills of craftsmen and their products and is carefully supported by the local authorities.

The regional authorities in each of the side valleys provide financial support to vocational schools where the youth can acquire handicraft skills. Thus, historical skills are developed alongside continuous innovation. New wood products are born to delight the eyes of tourists.

Every year, on the last two days of January, the Fiera di Sant'Orso fair opens in Aosta — a tradition that has been maintained since 1001. Craftsmen and their apprentices gather to meet and present their products to the public during these two days. There are hundreds of stalls along the streets selling a variety of wooden products — bowls, figurines, carved flowers, mugs, chests, stairs, barrels, and many other items. The workshops of many craftsmen are open during the last six days of January. After that, the items are sold all year round in shops popular among tourists. Besides, they are exported from the valley for sale.

This tradition creates steady employment for many people in the valley, additional income for farmers, etc.

Agritourism. Thousands of farmers in France, Germany, Italy, and other countries receive a second substantial income from offering accommodation or certain activities for tourists. These services, often called agritourism, take many forms, for example:

- overnight stay and breakfast — the visitor settle in a rural house and is offered breakfast as part of the service. Some visitors stay for one or two nights, others — for a week or more;
- half-board or full board — dinner (half-board) or lunch and dinner (full board) is added, all provided by the farmer. In France, the offer of dinner is called *table d'hôte* (host table), which means eating a generous dinner of farm products and local wine with the farmer. This is how the farmer realizes added value to their own products;

- self-catering village — many farmers do not want to cook for visitors but have a house that they have transformed into apartments or country houses that are designed to let visitors cook for themselves (Fleischer and Tchetchik 2005, 493).

- a variety of activities for tourists who can stay on the farm or just come during the day. These activities may include horse and pony riding, fishing, shooting, water sports, educational excursions, and the opportunity to gather one's own food (e.g., berries) (Cordente-Rodríguez *et al.* 2014, 2437).

A universal example of agritourism is demonstrated by the case of the Ecological Agritourism Farm in Giza, Poland.

3.3 Case of the Ecological Agritourism Farm in Giza, Poland

The Marczak family from Giza, near Swietajno, in northeastern Poland, demonstrates a creative approach to organizing the farm tourism business.

The farm covers an area of 20 ha and is located in a picturesque area with hills and forests in the Masurian Lake District. The location of the district allows reaching the places that offer hiking and biking tours, water and car trips, such as the River Kurtynya, Augustow Canal, Lake Wigry with 18 islands (Wigry National Park), prehistoric forests, and the Baltic coast.

The goal of the Marczak family is to offer total rest during the vacation at their farm. The house is built in a local style with comfortable rooms for 20 guests. Tourists find themselves in a comfortable and eco-friendly environment and enjoy various types of entertainment.

The farm has 4 ha of park with two lakes and a beach. In the lakes, one can catch carps, tenches, sturgeons, and pikes. Guests can use a boat with oars, a sailboat, or a raft. There is a playground for children with a tower, swings, sandboxes, and slides; they can also play in an Indian village with tepees for 12 people by the lake and forest.

Guests can sleep in tents even on very cold nights. A fire can be made here: a large barbecue with benches for 40 people is set up near the tents. The farm offers food not only for guests but also for other tourists. This includes fish, as well as a variety of vegetarian products — vegetables, fresh fruit, honey, jam without sugar, and dried fruit — all produced at the farm.

The farm's pride is products made of whole wheat flour — bread, onion buns, apple and plum cakes, pasta, cottage cheese and apple rolls. There are also plantings of hazelnut (350 bushes) and raspberry plantations on the farm. The farm has the Ecoland certificate for the quality of organic flour and vegetables.

Direct sale of farm products. According to the experts, another synergy effect of rural tourism is the creation of added value to the products through their processing and direct sale to customers. Tourists can visit a farm to buy canned food, sausages, cheese, and other dairy products, wine, cider, and other drinks, products made of cotton or animal skin, and so on (Zhao and Getz 2008, 313).

The Villány-Siklós Wine Route in Hungary and Slovenian cultural and historical routes encourage tourists to visit farms throughout their travels in specific rural areas. The Cilento region in Italy has achieved a remarkable increase in mozzarella cheese production due to the efficient and reasonable marketing of this traditional product through direct sales to tourists at farms along the main roads. Local hotels and restaurants can also be a significant marketplace for farm products such as meat, fruits, and vegetables (Komppula 2014, 361).

In Barenton, France, the local authorities of Normandie-Maine Regional Natural Park have transformed a group of traditional farm buildings into the "House of Apple and Pear", where visitors can discover the local tradition of growing fruit trees and producing cider, calvados, and other drinks. Thus, visitor funds are flowing into the local economy, helping to preserve traditional agriculture and the rural landscape (McGregor and Thompson-Fawcett 2011, 174).

3.4 Case of the Villány-Siklós Wine Route, Hungary

This wine route in southwestern Hungary is a striking example of a tourism product that can be found in many parts of southern Europe and makes a significant contribution to the local economy. The Villány-Siklós Wine Route Association aims to promote tourism in the region in such a way as to create added value for wine and related culture in the area, which, in turn, will create new jobs, provide additional sources of income for residents, and make the region more attractive for foreign investors.

The wine route follows the territory of eleven settlements of the region Baranja located in the southern part of the Pannonian Basin, near the Croatian border. This region is characterized by weak economic development and low average salaries. The main tourist attractions are appealing landscapes, traditional architecture, and wine. However, until the early 1990s, tourism was not very developed here. Then, the region's leaders realized

that the quality of wines and the professionalism of winemakers in the Villány-Siklós microregion were high enough to serve the wine route at European standards. The communities of the micro-region enthusiastically responded to the offer of the local authorities. The mayor of the smallest town, Palkonya, who has already initiated the promotion of tourism in the microregion, has spearheaded the creation of the wine route.

The Villány-Siklós Wine Route Association appeared in 1994. It included local authorities, citizens' associations, individuals, as well as small and medium-sized enterprises. The concept of the wine route was developed by state experts in tourism, local development, and winemaking. Funding of 20 million forints (82 thousand euros) came from the European Union through the PHARE program. Carefully planned 30-km route united various tourist attractions and establishments. It included accommodation, wine tasting, and wine sales points, which together form an integrated tourism product in the area.

At the very beginning, the Association organized training for the locals, preparing them to create and maintain a wine route. It also provided further funding to improve the product of the wine route, offering, for example, training for the unemployed and small businesses, as well as interest-free loans to local entrepreneurs to create new jobs in the tourism industry.

The Association opened an office with the help of the PHARE funds in Siklós, the capital of the microregion. Employees selected by the regional project manager developed a strategic plan and program for the current management of the wine route. After that, they created a quality control system, a tourist information centre, and a marketing plan. High-quality standards are required from all companies providing tourism services on the wine route, including tasting and sales services for wine and accommodation.

Today, the Villány-Siklós Wine Route offers 60 wine sale points, 50 wine tasting points, 8 restaurants and taverns, 3 wine shops, 10 hotels and guesthouses, 32 farms offering accommodation in rural houses, 2 campsites, an equestrian facility, and a museum. The association has created a signature style for the wine route with a bright brand, built an advertising website, and developed a unified system of signs and a set of information stands along the route. In 2001, the Association opened a travel agency in Villány, which operates as a non-profit organization with the aim of successful marketing and sale of products and services of the wine route.

The agency offers tourists relevant information and specially designed local routes (two to three days long) wine lovers, develops customised programs to meet the needs of visitors, and promotes high-quality tasting facilities and residences. The Association has built strong relationships with more than 30 research and professional organizations and covers the membership of 91 entrepreneurs. The Villány-Siklós Wine Route has become a model for similar projects in Hungary. As a result, five new wine route associations have been established in the southern part of the Danube river basin. They joined forces with the Villány-Siklós Association to create a unified regional system of quality control and unified information flow.

Farm restaurants. The state Styria (Austria) has a law that allows farmers to keep a restaurant on their farm. These restaurants are called "buschenschenken" because their standard symbol is a cut-off bush set on sticks. The law imposes two conditions: the farmer cannot offer hot food so as not to compete directly with traditional restaurants and at least 80% of the food and drinks served at the buschenschank must be produced directly at the farm. The result is that several hundred farms can get the full retail value of wine, cider, meat cuts, bread, vegetables, fruits, milk, etc. through farm restaurants, plus service charges.

Conclusion

Sustainable development of rural areas in modern conditions means the formation of a rural community that can ensure expanded reproduction of the population and growth in the level and quality of life, production of food and agricultural products, implementation of environmental protection measures, economic use of available natural resources, and care for future generations. Thus, the transition of rural areas to a sustainable development model should be considered a priority in the development of the state.

One of the directions of sustainable development of rural areas is tourism, which has a positive impact on the economy and environment, increases employment of the rural population, and provides tourists with organic food.

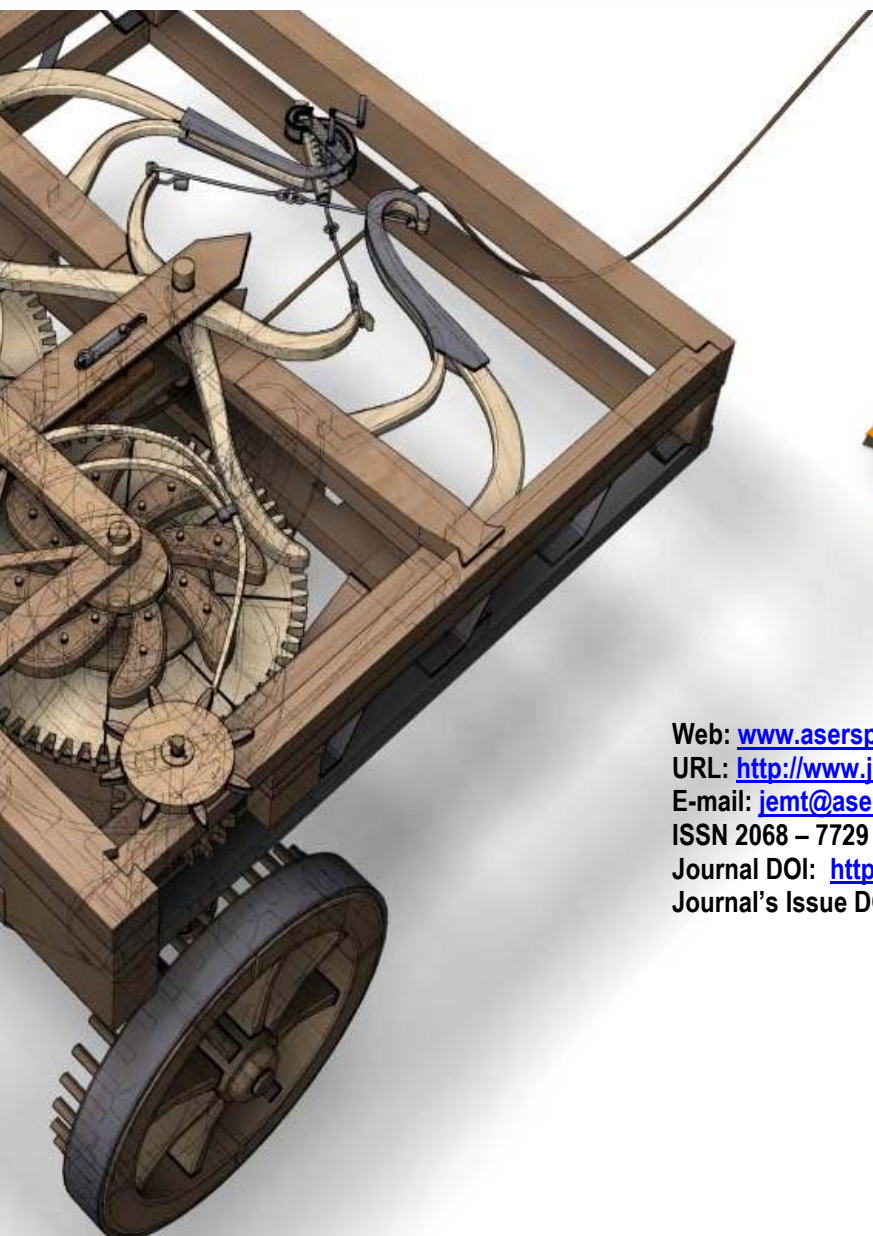
The development of rural tourism in most countries is seen as an integral part of the complex socio-economic development of rural areas. Even today, Russia is actively developing an understanding of rural tourism as a specific form of recreation in rural areas with wide opportunities for using natural, material, and cultural potential of certain regions. The study results confirmed the hypothesis that synergy between tourism and other components of the rural economy is a condition for sustainable development of rural areas.

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