

ASERS

Journal of Environmental Management and Tourism

Quarterly

Volume XIII

Issue 1 (57)

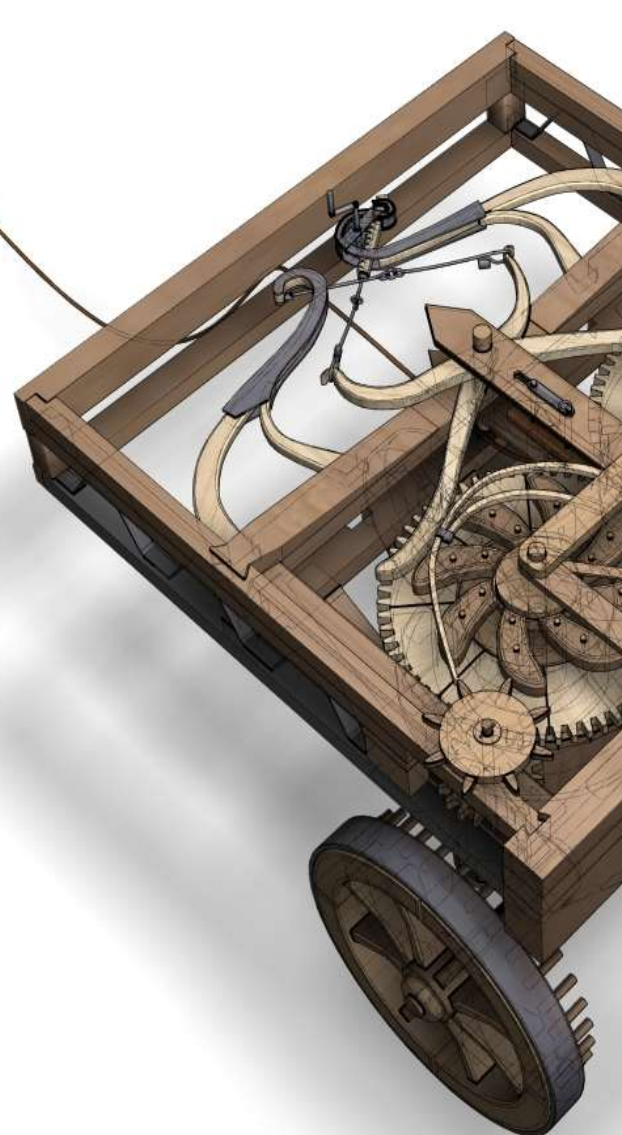
Spring 2022

ISSN 2068 – 7729

Journal DOI

<https://doi.org/10.14505/jemt>

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DOI: [https://doi.org/10.14505/jemt.13.1\(57\).19](https://doi.org/10.14505/jemt.13.1(57).19)

Analysis of Sustainable Development of SMEs and Factors Influencing to the Ecotourism Industry

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Suggested Citation:

Turekulova, D. *et al.* (2022). Analysis of Sustainable Development of SMEs and Factors Influencing to the Ecotourism Industry. *Journal of Environmental Management and Tourism*, (Volume XIII, Spring), 1(57): 211 - 222. DOI:[10.14505/jemt.v13.1\(57\).19](https://doi.org/10.14505/jemt.v13.1(57).19)

Article's History:

Received 8th of September 2021; Received in revised form 19th of October 2021; Accepted 28th of November 2021; Published 4th of March 2022. Copyright ©2022 by ASERS® Publishing. All rights reserved.

Abstract:

In order for companies, regardless of scale, to survive, function normally and have prospects for development in the current dynamic, competitive and business environment, partner search, outsourcing and participation of SMEs in the supply chains of multinational corporations are necessary. This is important because the process of globalization, integration, liberalization of markets has led to great business opportunities for SMEs, where financial sustainability matters.

Keywords: small and medium business; entrepreneurship; development strategy; sustainability; ecotourism.

JEL Classification: Q50; Z31; Z32; R11.

Introduction

An important aspect of ensuring a steady flow of funds necessary to cover operating costs is the conservation and diversity of ecosystems and their management. Ecotourism is a promising direction, which needs certain methods to achieve this goal. Development of ecotourism, first of all, assumes enjoyment of biodiversity, landscape, history and cultural activity. In order to ensure the value of the site for ecotourism it is necessary to attract investment, which is necessary to restore local ecosystems, protecting endangered species and endemic biota, as well as improving the natural landscape and construction of facilities for visitors.

Under the conditions of the transformation of society there are radical changes in small and medium-sized businesses. In addition to technological, social and innovative changes that are causing the transformation of social relationships between people, there is a transformation of the business model of small and medium-sized

enterprises. In addition to "evolutionary" factors, the COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the functioning of SMEs in 2020, which changed the way businesses operate, forced thousands of companies to close around the world, and forced to change the way companies operate. In this regard, the form and role of small medium-sized businesses, both in Kazakhstan and the world, are changing, as well as the structure of SMEs.

1. Literature Review

For the modern economic system of Kazakhstan, which has significant potential, one of the key conditions for sustainable development and integration into the world economic system is the effective functioning of small and medium-sized businesses.

With effective social support in the field of entrepreneurship, which implies an entrepreneurial environment, it is possible to carry out entrepreneurial activities properly. Entrepreneurial environment implies, first of all, the market, market system of relations, entrepreneur's freedom, *i.e.* personal independence, which allows to make such entrepreneurial decision, which will be the most effective, efficient and the most profitable.

Openness of economy, growth of urbanization in combination with technological development which are realized by realization of the State program "Digital Kazakhstan" contribute to increase of incomes of population and development of SMB.

Providing economically active population with workplaces, contributing to implementation of innovations and diversification of industries, small and medium enterprises contribute to development of economy of any country, as due to development and functioning of SMEs, competitive environment is formed and developed, industry and regional monopoly is overcome, market is saturated, export potential increases, jobs are created, middle class is formed, which in general creates favorable conditions for economic recovery.

The definition of small and medium-sized businesses in agriculture often differs from similar definitions in other industries. This is due to the fact that agricultural business can be large in scale and at the same time employ a very limited number of people or no employees at all, using the labor of seasonal workers who are employed for a certain period and to perform specific tasks. To this end, each country has developed certain criteria for classifying it as an SME (Table 1) (Gaidar 2019).

Table 1. Criteria for classification as SMEs in the CIS countries

Country	Sector SME	Industry-specific requirements	Number of employees	Financial performance	Peculiarities
Belarus	Microbusiness	No	1-15	-	-
	Small business		16-100	-	-
	Medium business		101-250	-	-
Russia	Microbusiness	No	0-15	up to 120 million rubles. (\$ 1.9 million)	
	Small business		16-100	up to 800 million rubles. (\$ 13 million)	
	Medium business		101-250	up to 2 billion rubles. (\$ 32.6 million)	
Armenia	Microbusiness	Yes	0-5	-	-
	Small business		6-50	-	-
	Medium business		51-100	-	-
Kazakhstan	Small business	Yes	0-49	Assets: no more than 60 thousand MCI	In order for a company to be classified as an SME sector, two conditions must be met
	Medium business		50-250	Assets: no more than 325 thousand MCI	

Source: compiled by authors

According to a study by Ștefan Cristian Gherghina, Mihai Alexandru Botezatu, Alexandra Hosszu and Liliana Nicoleta Simionescu (2020), SMEs play an important role in the economic development of the region, playing a prominent role in job creation, poverty reduction and economic growth. SMEs play an important role in

local economic development, playing a prominent role in job creation, poverty reduction and economic growth, but they face numerous barriers in terms of access to finance.

According to S.N. Orlov (2020), SMEs contribute to economic, social and political stability, rapid adaptation to market needs, effective application of new technologies and scientific developments, creation of a competitive environment, increased employment and higher tax revenues for budgets at all levels.

According to many scholars, there is a lack of research on how SMEs relate to social and environmental issues. Focusing on the relationship between SMEs and environmental sustainability, it can be argued that a small number of environmentally conscious firms have overcome some of the traditional business barriers to environmental engagement (Williams and Schaefer 2018).

Johan Graafland, Lans Bovenberg (2020) focused their study on the motivation of top managers in SMEs to embrace corporate social and environmental responsibility (CSR). Compared to large firms, the behavior of SMEs is disproportionately influenced by the values and motivations of their managers (Wickert, Scherer and Spence 2017). Therefore, interaction effects are more likely to occur in SMEs than in large firms.

A study by Eugene Tafadzwa Maziriri, Gordon Liu (2020) aimed to assess the impact of green packaging and green advertising on the competitive advantage and business performance of SMEs. A conceptual research model was developed using quantitative research methods and a simple random sampling method was applied to identify the relationship between the models.

The development of the innovation process reflects the general state of the economy and is determined by socio-economic changes. The main background of these changes is related to the formation of a new entrepreneurial culture, the order and methods of coordination and interaction between the subjects of innovative activity. The basis of innovative development is formed by small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which are technological leaders in the emerging spheres of the economy, develop new market segments, generate production and contribute to the formation of a completely new scientific and technological structure (Chebukhanova 2019).

The research results of Sabirova R.K., Musaeva A.A., Tazhidenova A.R. (2021) were the formulation of methodological and theoretical provisions on the development of small and medium-sized enterprises in the modern economy and proposals for their implementation. The value of the study lies in the comprehensive quantitative and qualitative analysis of the share of small enterprises.

For example, Murzakhmetova A., Mukhamedzhan A., Zhakupova S. (2020) analyzed the dynamics of small and medium-sized businesses in different sectors of the national economy over the past 10 years and identified the main factors affecting its development, pressing problems and modern trends.

Influenced by the evolution of digital technologies, the established industries and the global business landscape are undergoing a major transformation. In particular, the intersection of digital technologies and entrepreneurship is believed (Nambisan 2017) to provide ample opportunities for research, since digitalization can help solve the controversial assumption about the differentiation between innovation processes and results. Technological change not only helps create new productive assets and opportunities to compete with old industrial models, but it also allows new business models to be developed and supports radically new strategies to drive development, even in rural areas.

In this regard, I would like to note that ensuring the food and economic security of the country, the social significance of agriculture and its dependence on climatic and many other external factors require state support for this sector of the economy, especially for small and medium-sized businesses.

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are considered to have potential innovation potential and can create new market opportunities. Venture capital can financially support business activities for economic growth and manage and facilitate the growth of SMEs. According to Junjuan Du research, Zheng-Qun Cai (2020) analysis aimed to further develop the theory of enterprise growth. It provides a theoretical framework and a practical framework to encourage venture capital to invest in SMEs, address financial constraints for SMEs, and improve SME growth.

In determining the structure and level of regional development, attention is focused on the specifics of economic development, where the role can be played by agriculture, which uses as indicators such indicators as the share of those employed in agriculture among the economically active population, as well as the share of agriculture in the structure of gross domestic product and gross national product. As a rule, agriculture employs more than half of the economically active population, so these indicators are quite high in most developing countries of the world.

Production growth is achieved by expanding the areas under crops, increasing the number of livestock, as well as increasing the number of people employed in agriculture, *i.e.* it develops in an extensive direction.

Therefore, one of the most important sectors of the economy in all countries of the world can be noted the agricultural sector (Barkhudar Sh. Gusenov *et al.* 2018).

Forced modernization and development of innovation is one of the factors of effective functioning of the national economic system in modern conditions. The first President N. A. Nazarbayev, defining the strategic priorities of the new stage of modernization of Kazakh society in the program of long-term development of the republic - Strategy "Kazakhstan - 2050", noted the modernization of agriculture as a necessity (Bedelbayeva and Lukhmanova 2017).

There are certain problems of functioning of this industry which include: pollution of water resources, deforestation and degradation of forest ecosystems, destruction of the natural habitat of many species of living organisms and, as a consequence, extinction and extinction of rare and other species, as well as reduction of vitamins and microelements in crop products and accumulation of harmful substances such as nitrates, hormones, pesticides, antibiotics and others in products, both crop and livestock (Bekezhanov, Erkinbaeva, 2017).

The main directions of development of the agricultural sector, where the role of agricultural SMEs in the economy of the country is indicated in the works of Lukhmanov G., Baysholanov K., Shiganbaeva N., Abenov B., Sambetbaeva A., Gusenov B. (2019).

As noted, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) play an important role in the economy, contributing to GDP, GNP, and employment. However, the effective combination of economic, environmental and social SMEs is a major challenge, since economic performance is often favored over environmental and social performance in order to remain competitive. Most of the studies that focus on the sustainability of SMEs have considered the impact of a few limited factors (e.g. lean production, green technology, innovation, etc.).

Of course, there are many factors influencing SME sustainability, one of which is pandemic, namely the impact of COVID-19 on agri-food entrepreneurship, government measures and support for agri-food entrepreneurship, and the shift in agri-food entrepreneurship toward digitalization, innovative ideas and new market solutions.

We would like to point out that there is some gap in a consistent and robust framework for sustainability performance analysis, which aims to measure and improve sustainability performance. A study by Chrysovalantis Malesios, Debashri De Andreas Mursellas, Prasanth Kumar Dey, Konstantinos Evangelinos (2021) fills this knowledge gap by addressing two research questions:

- 1) what practices and performance criteria are considered to analyze sustainability performance in a broad ecological, economic, and social context;
- 2) how they are related, and what methods are used to determine the relationship between sustainable development practices and effectiveness.

The pandemic crisis has forced society to focus on the important role played by the views of scientists who have made significant contributions to the reform of general agricultural policy:

- 1) food production and distribution in the environment (Altieri and Nicholls 2020; Di Vaio A., Boccia F., Landriani L., Palladino R. 2020; Mishra A., Bruno E., Silberman D. 2021);
- 2) climate change issues (Mastronardi L., Cavallo A., Romagnoli L. 2020) and economic development (Mishra A., Bruno E., Zilberman D. 2021).

The pandemic provides an opportunity for agricultural and nutritional development, which is not only an agricultural imperative but also a global entrepreneurial imperative. Indeed, the COVID-19 crisis has created difficult conditions, but at the same time it has also opened opportunities for entrepreneurship in the agri-food sector.

Sustainable tourism alone without ecotourism faces challenges in meeting the goals of environmental protection, awareness, socio-cultural protection and economic development (Sapiyeva *et al.* 2020). Ecotourism can be seen as a tool for enhancing sustainable tourism as it emphasizes the principles of sustainable tourism. Appropriate implementation of ecotourism can help a destination economically, socially and environmentally by creating more jobs, developing investment opportunities, protecting the destination's culture, environment and natural resources.

The International Ecotourism Society has studied the issue more deeply and presented a list of specific principles for the implementation and practice of ecotourism, as evidenced by studies by Ahmad Salman, Mastura Jaafar, Diana Mohamad (2020). Ecotourism is aimed at studying the landscape, nature, habitat, preserving the ecosystem and promoting the socio-economic development of the territory (Ayachi and Jaouadi 2017; Hakim 2017). Ecotourism also helps local people in the area by providing them with an alternative source of life that is considered more sustainable (Harilal and Tichaawa 2018). The goal of ecotourism is to conserve local resources,

protect biodiversity in the region, and try to develop a way to minimize resource use that can not only provide tourists with a natural experience, but also bring economic benefits to the local community (Hunt *et al.* 2017).

The link between conservation and ecotourism is very important to understand, as it is also strongly linked to UNESCO's biodiversity goals for achieving sustainability in the area (Pan *et al.* 2018), (Boley and Green 2017). Sites with potential for ecotourism are also hotbeds of biodiversity, so the right knowledge of ecotourism, along with good governance, can help protect biodiversity and, as a result, provide strong economic incentives for conservation (Vaidianu, Adamescu, Wildenberg and Tetelea 2017).

Many researchers, such as Sarhan *et al.* (2017), Natalia, Yosef and Halog (2019), and Hoppstadius & Dahlström (2018), have also argued that ecotourism helps to balance the economic, social, and environmental aspects of an area and that it is a They argue that ecotourism is an ideal tool to achieve this.

Thus, when implemented correctly, ecotourism helps to achieve a sustainable development balance between biodiversity conservation and economic goals. The successful implementation of ecotourism development has brought many success stories in recent years, through which:

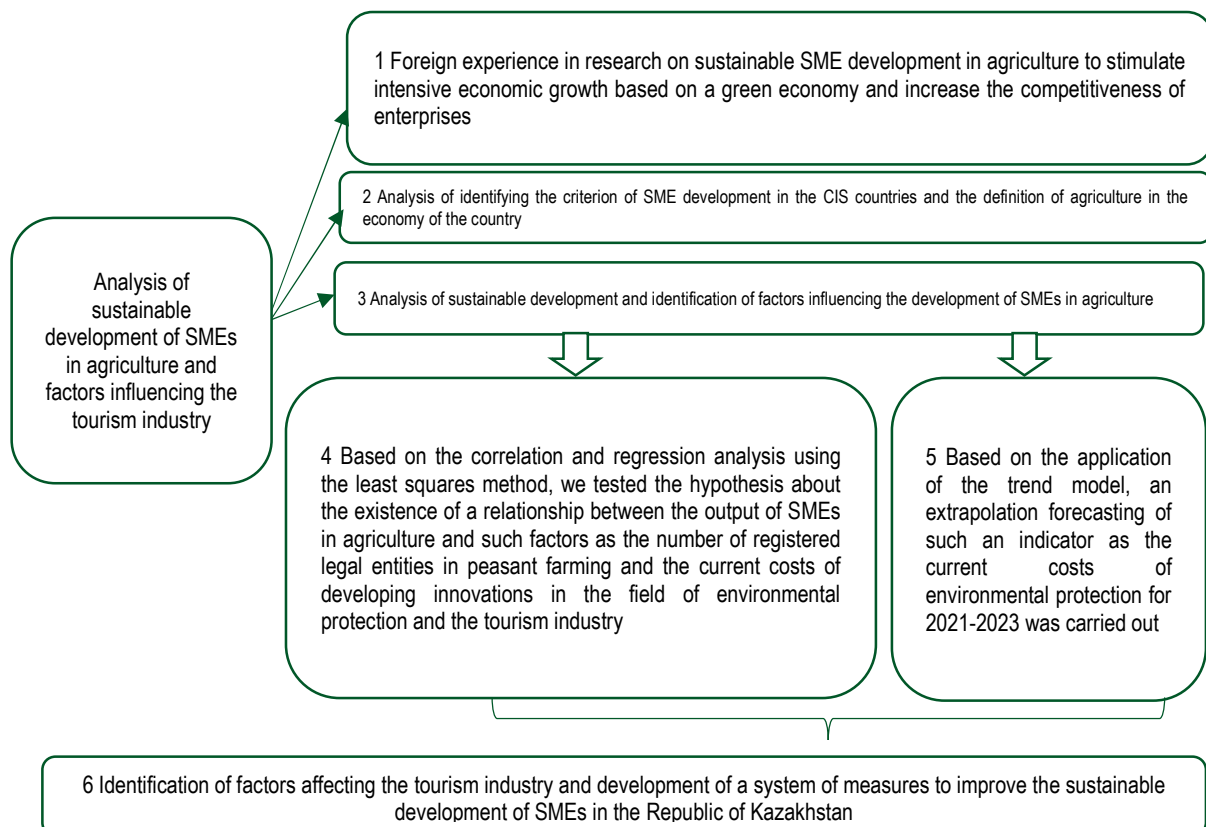
- the life support of people is improved,
- the damage to the environment is reduced,
- awareness is raised,
- research knowledge is strengthened, which helps in the development of tools for sustainable tourism development.

However, in order for approaches to the inclusion of ecotourism to be successful and effective for sustainable development of the region, this review determines that it is necessary to follow all the principles of ecotourism in order to lead to sustainable tourism development in the region.

2. Research Questions

Small and medium-sized businesses in agriculture are facing serious environmental challenges that affect regional and national economies and shape new realities. Such challenges include land degradation and desertification, mismanagement of urban infrastructure, industrial and historical waste, air pollution and reduced water resources that negatively affect both the population and the development of the economy as a whole (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Research questions



Source: compiled by authors

As a long-term direction of structural policy in the field of science and business, the "green" model of business development to create and actively develop SMEs in the face of global competition is seen as a prospect for sustainable development of small and medium-sized businesses in agriculture and factors affecting the development of the tourism industry.

In this regard, there is a need to identify factors that affect both the development of SMEs in agriculture and factors that have a negative impact on the environmental component, requiring the development of strategic tasks to solve these problems, since the need to develop and support sustainable development of small and medium entrepreneurship in modern conditions of Kazakhstan is a priority task that requires a number of measures to stimulate the development of the country using a system of indicators that are developed depending on the development strategy of business entities and state policy.

3. Methodology and Analysis

Agriculture in Kazakhstan is one of the primary sectors, which is given quite a lot of attention, since export of wheat is one of the main sources of foreign exchange earnings in the economy of the republic. Kazakhstan completely provides itself with bread and exports not less than 70% of harvest even in the most bad years. In spite of the fact that the country is located in the zone of risky agriculture, and grain harvest may differ in different years by more than 50%, Kazakhstan ranks second in the world by the amount of arable land per capita, and is the largest exporter of grain and flour. About 74% of the territory is suitable for agriculture. The industry employs over 1.4 million people.

Currently, the share of the agricultural sector is about 5% of the country's annual GDP. For comparison, they show that the same indicator in 1980 was 22.6%, and in 1990 - 34%. According to them, the share of agriculture in Kazakhstan's GDP was constantly decreasing until 2010, but then stabilized at about 4.2%. Meanwhile, one of the important motivating factors for the development of agricultural production and processing remains the injection of financing in the form of subsidies. Nevertheless, access to the necessary resources is still limited, this is confirmed by the manufacturers themselves, as well as by experts and international institutions.

On average, subsidies in Kazakhstan amount to no more than 4-5% of gross agricultural output, which is significantly lower than the permissible level of the WTO. Also, Kazakhstan is inferior to the EAEU partner countries. In 2015, the volume of subsidies under the so-called "yellow basket" in the Republic of Belarus - \$ 1.5 billion, in Russia - \$ 3.3 billion. At the same time, the President of the country Kassym-Jomart Tokayev instructed the government to develop cooperative chains in the countryside "from field to counter", after which the Prime Minister of the Republic of Kazakhstan was instructed to update the concept of the state program for the development of the agro-industrial complex, as well as to increase the amount of funds allocated for the spring field work more than doubled in order to ensure the gross output in crop production up to 3.1 trillion tenge.

At the same time, in 2019, the GDP of agriculture amounted to 5.1 trillion tenge, including:

- the share of crop production GDP - 2.8 trillion tenge (or 54.7% of the total GDP of agriculture),
- the share of GDP of livestock - 2.3 trillion tenge.

Thus, with an increase in GDP from crop production in 2020 by 9.7%, the funds allocated for sowing were doubled, or by 100%, and the area for grain crops - by 250 thousand hectares. The export of Kazakhstani agricultural products, taking into account the sale of raw materials, has been steadily growing over the past five years.

In 2019, exports increased 5.9% to \$3.3 billion. More than 70% of this is accounted for by crop production. About 80% of agricultural products are sold in their original state, without any processing. At the same time, in 2019, the export of processed products decreased by 20.7% compared to 2018. But due to currency revaluation in monetary terms, the decline occurred only by 2.3%, to \$ 1.1 billion.

Thus, SMEs are deprived of the opportunity to engage in deep processing and animal husbandry, orienting crop production, first of all, for export. As a result, the value chain is broken and feed prices are high domestically.

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Undoubtedly, crop production is the highest priority for foreign investment due to the improved vehicle fleet, technologies and rapid marketing of crop products for export. However, the numbers tell a different story. So, in 2019, \$ 10.1 million of foreign investments were attracted. The analysis shows that over four years, receipts are decreasing by 37% per year. If in 2015 the volume of foreign direct investment was at the level of \$ 71.5 million, and in 2019 - \$ 10.1 million, then over five years there has been a sevenfold decrease.

So, for example, comparing three agrarian regions – North Kazakhstan, Kostanay, Akmola for the distribution of subsidies for crop and livestock production, it was concluded that in these areas the main emphasis is on crop production (more than 60% of subsidies are directed to the development of crop production) (Table 2).

Table 2. The amount of subsidies in the areas of livestock and crop production

Region	Livestock, thousand tenge	Crop production, thousand tenge	Total amount, thousand tenge
2019			
North Kazakhstan	7507703,7	14277488,1	21785191,8
% of the total	34,5	65,5	100
Akmola	4594433,0	10871438,7	15465871,7
% of the total	29,7	70,3	100
Kostanay	6761404	956212,8	1632356,8
% of the total	41,4	58,	100
Total	18863540,7	34711069,6	53574610,3
%	35,2	64,8	100
2020			
North Kazakhstan	9850785	20437330	30288115
% of the total	32,5	67,5	100
Akmola	6594433,0	14091388	20685821
% of the total	31,9	68,1	100
Kostanay	7100000	13972605	21072605
% of the total	33,7	66,3	100
Total	23545218	48501323	72046541
%	32,7	67,3	100

Source: compiled by authors according to www.stat.gov.kz

In terms of directions, the distribution of subsidies is leveled with a slight preponderance in favor of crop production (Table 3).

Table 3. Distribution of subsidies in the Republic of Kazakhstan by areas

Subsidies	Crop production, thousand tenge	Livestock, thousand tenge	Total thousand tenge
Livestock	-	40673246839	40673246839
Fertilizer	19138436739	-	19138436739
Pesticides	26800767236	-	26800767236
Seeds	9497363160	-	9497363160
Hectare subsidy	7667397000	-	7667397000
Total	43965527396	40673246839	84638774235
%	51,9	48,1	100

Source: compiled by authors according to www.subsidies.goldau.kz

Kazakhstan's favorable geopolitical position, its natural and recreational resources, its world-class cultural and historical heritage, its potential to develop new tourism products and its ability to meet all the necessary basic conditions make it one of the key players on the world tourism map. Insufficient information about Kazakhstan, about its tourist resources does not allow the country to attract foreign tourists; in the world practice, not only central, but also regional authorities are engaged in the promotion of national tourist products.

There are factors contributing to the development of inbound tourism as follows:

- socio-economic situation of the population;
- high prices and low quality of tourism products, in comparison with international products;
- simplified passport and visa regime for a number of foreign countries.

Despite the fact that Kazakhstan is a young state that does not yet have a serious reputation in the international market as a tourist destination, the country has a unique opportunity to turn this situation in its favor - provided, of course, that this process is carried out under proper management and control (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Opportunities for the development of ecotourism in Kazakhstan



Source: compiled by authors

In the context of an increase in the flow of tourists, the question arises of improving the infrastructure of tourism and recreation and bringing it to the level of international standards. In accordance with this, the regions are divided into the following tourist sites, with the aim of developing regions, improving conditions and expanding the territory. For a number of regions, the development of territories where support for DIS, as well as organizations in the tourism industry will be carried out, is an opportunity to activate local resources, increase tax revenues and revenues of service industries, and expand the scope of employment of the population. The formation of recreational centers provides:

- development of small and medium-sized businesses, in the sphere of innovative technologies and industrial infrastructure;
- creation of conditions for the protection of agricultural lands by including them in the zones of the preserved natural landscape;
- creation of incentives for the development of agricultural production in suburban areas, including the formation of its profile, taking into account the needs of organizations of sanatorium-resort destination;
- city-forming effect in the formation of resort cities, and the solution of a number of problems of small and medium-sized cities.

Insufficient funding for the development of tourism and recreation, poor infrastructure of tourist facilities, the seasonal nature of tourist facilities, lack of qualified personnel, etc. are the main obstacles to the development of tourism in specially protected natural areas of Kazakhstan. To solve these and many other problems in the industry, the National Program of Development of Tourism Industry of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2019-2025 was approved in 2019. At the same time, the active role of the state in the first stages of the state program should provide the necessary support for the further development and competitiveness of the subjects of this industry, which offers tools for transforming tourism into a highly profitable sector of the economy, whose task includes the creation of 75,000 jobs in remote rural areas. Identified and demonstrated tourist and recreational resources of the regions of the country, necessary for the development of ecological tourism.

In Kazakhstan, ecological tourism is developing slowly, nevertheless, the number of projects on this topic is growing, and in the coming years it will be possible to predict an increase in offers in this market segment. Specially protected natural areas have the greatest potential in the development of ecological tourism; it is necessary to select priority areas for the development of ecotourism.

Providing export and import services in various sectors of the economy, Kazakhstan, like other countries, presents its product to foreign tourists.

The share of Kazakhstan in the world export of services under the item "Travel" in 2018 was 29%. By 2018, the share of travel also increased significantly due to the growth in the export of personal travel services. The increase in travel is associated with various activities that are taking place in the country, as evidenced by the following data (Table 2).

Table 2. Visitors served by accommodation places by purpose of travel by region in 2020 (people)

Region	Total	Personal	
		residents	non-residents
Republic of Kazakhstan	3 581 340	2 081 391	57 384
Akmola	237 671	167 404	1 976
Aktobe	85 050	42 345	3 700
Almaty	482 877	440 091	517
Atyrau	84 534	10 676	675
East Kazakhstan	41 466	16 603	1 057
Zhambyl	94 479	58 129	736
Karaganda	199 891	97 141	997
Kostanay	141 960	88 838	4 388
Kyzylorda	50 704	15 053	43
Mangistau	160 504	62 210	259
Pavlodar	71 763	31 726	879
South Kazakhstan	102 632	66 880	679
Turkestan	103 747	72 296	1 134
West Kazakhstan	352 355	228 709	1 394
Nur-Sultan city	421 050	212 345	14 190
Almaty city	737 263	348 920	20 920
Shymkent city	213 394	122 025	3 840

Source: compiled by authors according to <http://www.stat.gov.kz>

The forecasted values for 2020 were not justified, since the coronavirus pandemic had a great influence, respectively, the indicators have a significant tendency to decline. It is too early to talk about the forecast of the annual value for 2021, and it is not correct to compare the annual values and the values for 3 months in 2021.

Tourist services are represented by such an indicator as the volume of services rendered by places of accommodation, where ecotourism was designated as services in the field of culture and recreation (Table 3).

Table 3. Dynamics of the shares of export of transport services and trips of the Republic of Kazakhstan (million dollars)

Year	Services in the sphere of tourism, culture and recreation	Other business services	Tourism services
2004	0,1	172,1	15,6
2005	0,2	178,6	11,7
2006	0,3	172,4	19,7
2007	0,4	294,9	25,9
2008	0,8	407,1	33,4
2009	0,8	386,0	24,8
2010	1,8	384,6	30,6
2011	1,0	389,1	32,6
2012	1,3	400,8	35,4
2013	1,2	544,3	39,6
2014	1,5	512,6	39,8
2015	1,2	411,3	28,4
2016	0,2	476,2	21,9
2017	0,4	368,7	32,3
2018	0,9	461,9	32,6
2019	1,5	246,1	31,5
2020	1,5	57,3	15,6

Source: compiled by authors according to <http://www.stat.gov.kz>

Tourist destinations in Kazakhstan have attractive opportunities for investors due to a combination of factors, including:

- a significant potential for inbound tourism from countries such as China, India and Russia, as well as a continued increase in domestic tourism, thanks to an increase in population and income.

- a unique combination of natural landscapes and climatic conditions that create a unique environment for year-round recreation.
- a rich historical, cultural and religious heritage of the Turkic world and the Great Silk Road, which forms a rich ethno-cultural program.
- significant support from the state, providing preferences, benefits and subsidies for investors, as well as financing the construction of engineering infrastructure (Table 4).

Table 4. Types of tourism in Kazakhstan in accordance with the matrix of the tourism sector product

Indicator	Healing and wellness	Business tourism	Sports tourism	Religious tourism	Educational tourism	Social tourism	Cultural-cognitive	Adventure tourism	Congress tourism	Eco tourism
MICE tourism		+							+	
Beach tourism	+		+					+		+
Short break	+		+	+	+	+	+	+		+
Holidays in the mountains and lakes	+		+		+	+	+	+		+
Active and adventurous rest			+			+		+		+
Cultural tourism				+	+	+	+			+

Source: compiled by authors

Conclusion

Modern ecotourism as an economic phenomenon can be characterized by the following postulates:

- 1) is of a production nature;
- 2) generates ecotourism products and services that cannot be accumulated and transported;
- 3) creates new jobs in the development of new territories, thereby being a catalyst for the accelerated development of the national economy;
- 4) is a mechanism for redistribution of national income;
- 5) is an impetus for the growth of national income, employment and development of local infrastructure, improving the standard of living of the local population;
- 6) return on investment, which is characterized by a high level of efficiency;
- 7) the resource base acts as an effective means of protecting nature and cultural heritage;
- 8) ecotourism environment is compatible with many sectors of the economy and human activities, as their differentiation and discreteness creates a potential difference in , which initiates a need for people to change places and learning.

Small and medium-sized businesses around the world perform several main functions, which determine the choice of certain statistical indicators used to assess the development of the sphere of small and medium-sized enterprises:

- firstly, it serves to create jobs and provide employment, including self-employment;
- secondly, small and medium-sized businesses create added value and export products abroad. Moreover, in developed countries, the share of SMEs in the creation of added value can reach more than 50% of the gross domestic product. Accordingly, to assess the impact of the sector, indicators of its share in GDP, GRP, turnover, exports, the share of exporting firms, etc are used;
- thirdly, the sector of small and medium-sized companies increases the competitiveness of the economy as a whole by increasing the number of firms, which makes it possible to improve the quality of products and services. In this case, different estimates of labor productivity in the sector of small and medium-sized firms as a whole are used, as well as estimates of the average size of firms;
- fourthly, the sector of small and medium-sized enterprises is significantly more diverse in terms of flexibility and diversity of forms of entrepreneurial activity, which provides opportunities for better meeting the needs of the population and large producers. Therefore, various assessments of the structure of small and medium-sized businesses are used by the number of firms, by industry, by region, employment, provision of services, etc .;
- fifthly, small and medium technology business contributes to the creation and development of new sectors of the economy, the creation of new services and products that contribute to the diversification of the

economy. To assess this impact, various indicators of the number of startups, the development of venture investments, the birth rate of firms, etc. are used.

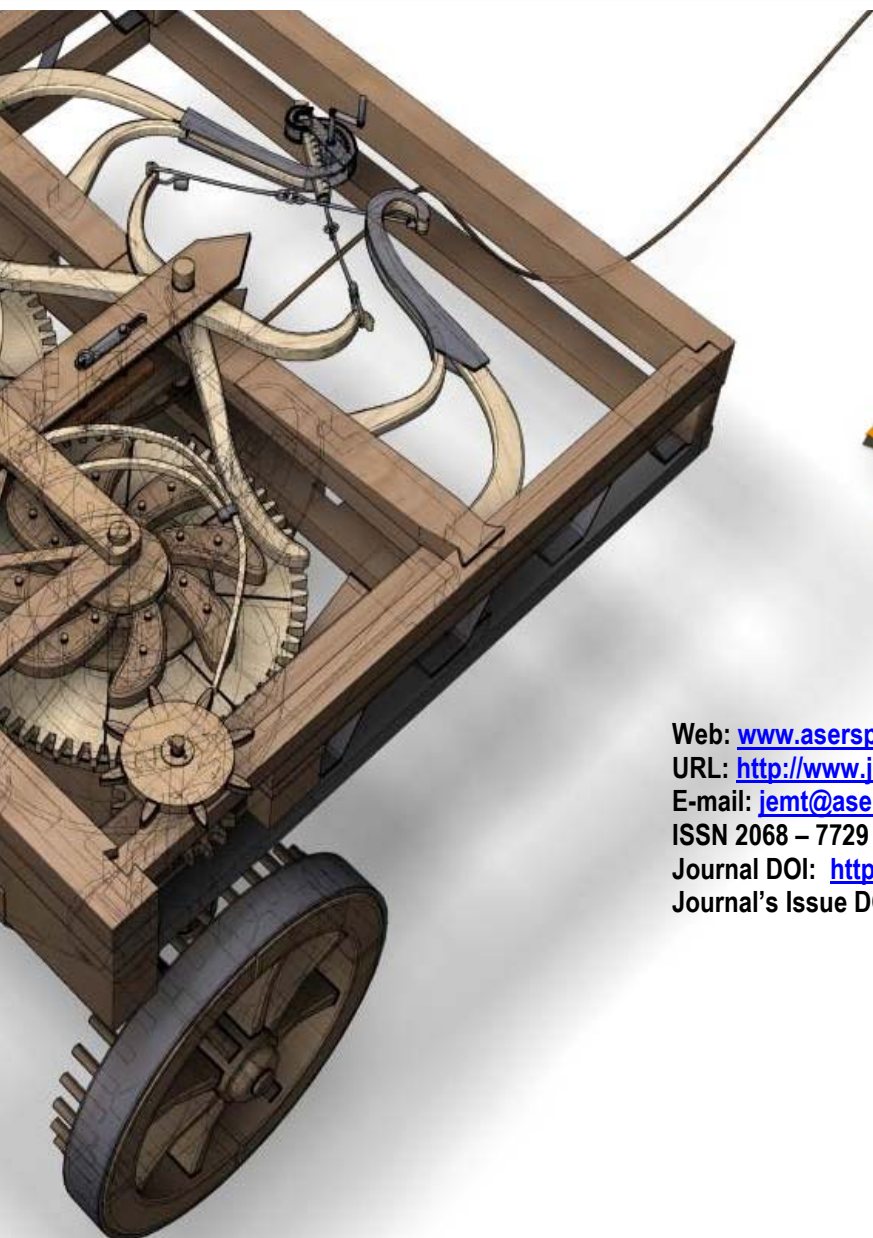
▪ sixth, states spend significant funds to support the small and medium-sized business sector, therefore, very often different estimates of the amount of support are used, as well as their results (created and retained jobs, the amount of taxes received from new enterprises, etc.).

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ISSN 2068 – 7729

Journal DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14505/jemt>

Journal's Issue DOI: [https://doi.org/10.14505/jemt.v13.1\(57\).00](https://doi.org/10.14505/jemt.v13.1(57).00)