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**PROSPECTS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF ECOTOURISM**  
**IN UKRAINE BASED ON THE EXPERIENCE OF AUSTRALIA**

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Based on modern understanding of ecotourism, oriented towards the principles of sustainable development, necessity of the identification of appropriate travel types has been proven. Traditional evaluation criteria such as the motivation of travel and the volume of tourist flows, given their limitations, do not allow to solve the task in full and adequately. When organizing trips related to access to natural complexes, the priority problematic issues are the assessment of the impact on the natural and cultural environment, and a critical analysis of possible consequences with a view to preventing or minimizing them.

According to the forecast of the WTO "Tourism Vision 2020", by 2020 the number of international tourist visits will increase to 1.6 billion units (in 2000, 702 million international visits were expected, in 2010 – 1.018 billion), which indicates a favorable outlook for the development of the industry. In the near future the most promising types of tourism will be cruises, ecological, adventure, cognitive and thematic tourism. Ecotourism will be the most effective tool for sustainable development and economic growth of the backward regions of the world.

In tourism, the principles of sustainability were formulated by the WTO and the World Travel and Tourism Council. They are reduced to environmental, cultural, economic sustainability, as well as the sustainability of local communities. Sustainability in tourism means non-essential use of natural and cultural potential on the basis of a program-targeted approach to the development of tourism; transition of tourism enterprises to resource-saving technologies, reduction of industrial waste; involving the local population in the decision-making process for the development of tourism through consultations; partnership in public and private sector relations; promoting tourism to the socio-economic recovery of individual territories and entire states.

One of the most attractive places for ecological tourism is Australia. Australia is the smallest continent on Earth, the lowest and driest in the climate from all continents of the planet. It is washed by two oceans – Indian and Pacific. The Australian continent is one of the oldest blocks of the earth's crust. Australia is one of the world leaders in the development of ecological tourism. The country was one of the first to ratify the Convention on World Heritage Monuments: now in Australia, 11 such monuments are registered. On the continent, there are about 3 thousand national parks and reserves: these territories for travelers are safe. Good camping and well-maintained tourist routes are organized in most national parks.

The culture of Australia and Oceania is a combination of British settlers with a culture of indigenous people and immigrants from various islands of the Pacific. The rich and diverse traditional Maori culture is of particular interest to tourists: a unique art minted in wood and other natural materials.

Equally attractive is ecotourism in Ukraine. On the territory of our country there are 4 biosphere and 19 nature reserves, 40 national nature parks, which are a "pearl of the wild". To create a developed system of ecological tourism, an important condition is the biological diversity of natural ecosystems. Variety of landscape and natural conditions of Ukraine makes it possible to widely use mineral waters and therapeutic muds, climatic resources and other components of recreational potential.

Economic aspects of the organization of tours are determined mainly by transport costs. However, rational use of choice and organization of tours allows to minimize costs. Each region of Ukraine has its unique natural and resource potential, which is the basis for the development of ecotourism. But there are a number of problems that need to be addressed.

These regional problems include: the need to develop an overall strategy for the development of the ecological tourism industry; improving the management of this industry at the regional level; lack of scientific support; the need to improve training for ecotourism; Insufficiency of information and advertising support of this type of tourism; providing financial support; ensuring comprehensive protection of the natural environment, as the basis for the existence of ecotourism and sustainable development of the regions.