Essential, legal and environmental aspects of sustainable development of Arctic tourism

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Abstract. The article examines some issues of sustainable development of Arctic tourism in the Russian Federation. The authors make an attempt to formulate the concept of "Arctic tourism". They analyze existing regulatory framework for the development of Arctic tourism, consider categories and types of Arctic travel on current examples, and identify problems of sustainable Arctic tourism development. The conclusion is that development of mass tourism is not mandatory, as tourism in this region should be developed purely as an exclusive one, because it is necessary to regulate visits to protected natural areas, since otherwise there arise risks of losing the pristine nature of the Arctic.

1. Introduction
The word "Arctic" is of Greek origin, as "Arktos" means "bear." This is related to the orientation of people to the Polar Star, the main northern landmark, and the constellations of the Big and Small Dipper. The Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation (AZRF) includes the continental shelf (the ocean floor and the bowels of the underwater regions of the earth), as well as the territories of eight states, including Sweden, Finland, USA, Russia, Norway, Canada, Iceland and Denmark [1].

The total area of the land part of the Russian Arctic is about 5 million square kilometers.

There are more than 2.5 million people living in AZRF. This is about 40% of the population of the entire Arctic.

The Arctic zone of Russia provides a fifth of the federal budget revenues.

The territory of eight subjects of the Russian Federation is included in the AZRF, four of which are located entirely in the Arctic zone and four just partially [2].

In the Russian Federation, there are a number of legal and regulatory documents more or less related to the development of the territories of the AZRF, which deals with Arctic tourism, for example, approved by the President of the Russian Federation "Strategy for the development of the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation and the provision of national security for the period up to 2020" [3].

Moreover, the decree of the President of the Russian Federation of May 7, 2018 No 204 [4] calls for an increase in the volume of services exports in non-commodity sectors of the economy, including

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tourism. Currently, the Ministry of the Russian Federation for the Development of the Far East and the Arctic and the Project Office for the Development of the Arctic are developing a program document of the state level "Arctic 2035" [5].

A positive factor in the development of tourism in the Arctic is that many infrastructure problems are getting solved, in particular, transport accessibility and energy support, within the framework of the implementation of the Russian Government's Decree of April 21, 2014 No 366 "On the Approval of the State Program of the Russian Federation "Social and Economic Development of the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation" [6].

The Security Council of the Russian Federation progressively broadcasts the basic principles of the development of the Russian Arctic. When holding international joint events under the auspices of the Arctic Council [7], problems of developing the tourist potential of the Russian Arctic are being discussed quite actively, including issues related to transport and logistics support of Arctic tourist destinations, ensuring the safety of tourists, and support and preservation of the national identity of the indigenous peoples of the Russian north [8].

This Arctic development strategy outlines the following objectives: development of tourism infrastructure in the Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation, formation of an accessible and comfortable tourist environment, and promotion of tourism in the Arctic in the national and international tourist markets.

The purpose of this study is defined by the authors as consideration and analysis of the essential and environmental aspects of tourism development and sustainable tourism in the Arctic territories.

2. Methods

In preparation of this article, the authors employed the following methods of analysis: classification, logical and content analysis, search, systemic approach, and comparison.

3. Results

To date, the concept of "Arctic tourism" has become widespread, although there is no generally accepted and established definition of the term. This fact is due, firstly, to the vagueness of the very concept of "Arctic", and secondly, talking about the goals of Arctic tourism, we can note sports, educational, pilgrimage and business.

However, a number of authors attempt to formulate this concept. For example, Yu.F. Lukin in his book "Arctic Tourism in Russia" writes that "it is tourism that is localized directly in the Arctic region" [9]. In his work [10], the author gives a different definition of Arctic tourism, implying "domestic and international tourism in the Arctic, which is a promising sector of the Russian economy."

A.A. Bertos [11] under the term "Arctic tourism" considers "visits to the Arctic for recreational, educational, sports, religious and other similar purposes, not related to profit and employment."

The authors of a number of scientific papers on the topic of Arctic tourism do not formulate the concept of Arctic tourism at all, but only consider the tourist potential and prospects for its development [12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17].

We propose to interpret "Arctic tourism" as tourists' visits to attractions located in the Arctic territories for various purposes, such as cognitive, sports, pilgrimage, business, environmental, etc.

By types, Arctic tourism can be divided into extreme, recreational, cruise, etc.

Table 1 provides a look at examples of these trends.
Table 1. Types of Arctic tourism.

| Type of travel | Example |
|----------------|---------|
| Pilgrimage     | Visiting the church of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker, erected in 2008 during the reconstruction of the northernmost Russian border outpost, which was opened in 1981 and named after J.I. Nagursky, the world's first pilot to fly over the Arctic. |
| Recreational   | Tours, especially popular with tourists from China, such as "A Breath of Fresh Air" for residents of Chinese metropolises, and "Northern Lights" (considered in China a good sign); In the Nenets Autonomous Region and the Komi Republic, there are package tours "Weekend in The Arctic" and "Chum Weekend" (from the "chum", a traditional temporary dwelling of local peoples) [18]. |
| Sports         | • Arctic yachting;  
|                | • Skiing tours;  
|                | • Sea kayaking on the White Sea. |
| Business       | Trips to Russia's only offshore ice-resistant oil-producing platform Prirazlomnaya for the extraction of hydrocarbons on the Arctic shelf. |
| Cognitive      | • Transition through the Arctic Circle;  
|                | • Visiting the North Pole;  
|                | • Historical and archaeological tours;  
|                | • Visits to the "Big Gate" canyon on the White River with steep walls 80-90 meters high;  
|                | • Projects of the Russian Geographical Society, etc. |
| Cruise         | Cruises on the nuclear icebreakers of Rosmorflot. |
| Environmental  | • Chukotka glaciers and volcanoes;  
|                | • Pegytmelsky Nature Park (protected natural area);  
|                | • State-managed Arctic Nature Reserves: Great Arctic, Wrangel Island, Putoransky, Taimyrsky (biosphere), Ust-Lensky, Gydansky, Nenetsky, Laplandsy (biosphere), Kandalakshsky, Pasvik (observation of whales, walruses, polar bears);  
|                | • Russian Arctic National Park. |
| Ethnographic   | • Safari on snowmobiles and reindeer sleds with sleepovers in chums in Naryan-Mar;  
|                | • Arctic hunting and ice fishing [18, 19];  
|                | • Overnight stay on deer skins in a real chum at the Nenets camp. |
| Extreme        | • Crossing the Bering Strait on sleighs and skis or on foot with sleepovers in Arctic tents and guest houses;  
|                | • Helicopter route to the North Pole. This tour includes skydiving, swimming and ice diving in the Arctic Ocean;  
|                | • Journey on dog sleds. A real immersion into the world of wildlife and ancient traditions of the North. The route passes through the extreme areas of the Far North with permafrost, including the ascent to Mount Chiltald. |

Tourism in the Arctic is quite diverse in terms of purposes and types of travel. In addition to these types, we can also mention tourist trips to some of the most beautiful villages in Russia in the "small Southern Arctic" (we are talking about the Karelian and Archangelsk villages). Compared to the "Big Arctic," "Small" is more accessible to the public. In the "Small Arctic" there are such villages, visiting which, tourists fall into the past, they have neither doctors, nor the most important resource for the city dweller at present, mobile communication. At the same time, tourism could be the only way to survive for the population of such villages.

It is also possible to note the possibility of developing a gastronomic direction in tourism in the territories of the AZRF. Dishes such as freshly caught fish from local lakes and rivers, whitefish, muksun or nelm, first frozen, and then cut into finest slices, or tender meat of deer, grown on free grazing, on purest jagel, or deer sausage without any foreign additives, shangi (round pies), cloudberry jam and much more should not leave potential tourists indifferent [20].

The following measures of government support for the development of tourism in the Arctic can be considered:
• a set of federal laws on state support for business in the Arctic adopted in August 2020;
• the opportunity for entrepreneurs to obtain the status of a resident of the Arctic zone, in order to receive tax benefits and non-tax preferences. Status of resident of the Arctic zone can be obtained by legal entities (or individual entrepreneurs) registered in the Arctic, planning to implement a new investment project or launch a new type of economic activity with capital investments of at least 1 million rubles;
• as part of the development of the territories of the tourist-recreational cluster "Arctic", a research expedition was organized to study potentially attractive routes on the Taimyr Peninsula in the north of the Krasnoyarsk Territory, including to study the coast of the Khatanga Bay, which is currently a territory of spontaneous tourism, while tracking the number of tourists and assessing the degree of their anthropogenic impact to minimize the negative impact on the arctic flora and fauna is extremely difficult;
• a large-scale modernization of the airport in New Urengoy.

4. Discussion

Key trends in the sustainable development of tourist destinations in the Russian Arctic include:
• a trend towards development of environmental tourism, in which the obligatory component is the increase in the culture of consumption in tourism;
• sustainable development of the Arctic territories of the Russian Federation, while maintaining balance between economic benefits and changes in the economic, social, environmental and cultural spheres of these territories;
• sustainable development of Arctic tourism in Russia should not be accompanied by such phenomenon as "overabundant" or "excessive tourism."

Active participation of tourists in this research and data collection can help in altering the travelers’ view of environmental protection. From the cruise ships, tourists usually see the icy snow-white landscape. But by going to the Arctic coastline and seeing how much debris is brought to shore, tourists can change their mind by understanding how much the Arctic is interconnected with other regions of the world, from which much of the global waste flow originates [21]. This more critical perspective, coupled with positive experiences of contributing to the “public good” through the scientific data collection process, can serve to enhance and deepen the visitor experience, so passengers can return home more aware of the discrepancy between their expectations of the Arctic as a place separate from human intervention and the reality of the Arctic influenced by human activities. While no studies specifically focused on the impact of civic science engagement of cruise passengers on passenger attitudes and behavior, passengers who simply took educational programs aboard Arctic expedition cruise ships reported that they subsequently began to value wildlife and loneliness more.

5. Conclusions

Thus, the following principles of sustainable tourism development at the AZRF can be considered:
• support for the economy of tourist destinations located in the AZRF;
• tourism business in these regions should observe the environmental concepts, that is, not cause damage to the environment, for which it is necessary to provide training of staff and personal tourists, at least, in the basics of environmental responsibility.

One of the problems of the development of Arctic tourism is the cost of tours. Primarily, it is associated, of course, with long distances, which tourists have to travel. Despite the high cost of tours to the Arctic, Arctic tourism can be accessible to Russians. To date, there are examples of the organization of tours at the price of about 30 000 rubles per person, in the Russian Arctic (Karelia, Nenets Autonomous Region, Republic of Komi), designed for 10 days, the price of which includes travel fares. Unfortunately, due to insufficient information coverage of this, few tourists know about it. In the work [13], author proposes to use the social network Instagram as an option to solve this problem.
There are also a number of problems related to the lack of specially trained personnel. Here we can propose to open majors in colleges and lyceums to train staff for working in tourism taking into account the Arctic specifics.

Another problem is the underdeveloped tourist infrastructure of Arctic settlements, including the lack of a hotel base. The current measures of state support, as well as the development of public-private partnerships, can help.

One of the proposals to develop the accessibility of Arctic tourism for Russian residents may be the provision of a number of benefits for children and family tourism.

Sharing the opinion of a number of experts that the Arctic mass tourism is not needed, we agree that tourism in this region should be developed purely as exclusive. This opinion is connected with the need to regulate visits to protected areas, as well as the need to observe the concept of eco-friendly tourism, because otherwise there are risks of losing the primordial nature of the Arctic.

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