

CREATION OF ECO HOTEL CONCEPTS: INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE AND POSSIBILITY OF ITS APPLICATION

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Abstract. The relevance of the topic, as well as the development of the eco-activity in the hotel business is due to the fact that the formation of an ecological tourism product is impossible without the appropriate infrastructure. The popularity of the tourism cluster depends on a single concept that allows emphasizing its individuality and specificity, as well as the most efficient use of the recreational, natural, cultural and other potential of the region. Eco-hotels and complexes have firmly occupied their niche and found their regular customers, whose lists are updated every year. Eco-hotels are very popular among tourists in the USA and Europe. This is connected not only with the environmental activities of these hotels, but also with the list of additional services unique to each hotel. The ability to relax without harming the environment has become a major factor in the popularity of eco-hotels. The first place in the number of eco - complexes is rightfully occupied by the United States of America. In Russia, the

popularity of eco-hotels is still questionable. Many hoteliers use the prefix "eco" in order to attract more guests, and in fact, their hotels have nothing common with the eco-hotel. This often damages the impeccable reputation of eco-hotels in the global market.

Keywords: eco-tourism, environment, ecology, tourism product

1. INTRODUCTION

Since 2010, there has been an active development of ecotourism as an independent direction in tourism, which is accompanied by the formation of a special, particular infrastructure involving, among other things, the construction of eco-hotels.

Before proceeding to consider the essence and features of eco-hotels, we briefly analyse what eco-tourism is. [2]

The preconditions for the emergence of ecotourism date back to a relatively recent time and are associated with environmental degradation, an

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abundance of cars, factories and people in large cities. People want to escape from the crowd, be closer to nature, where they can admire beautiful landscapes and breathe fresh air. Ecotourism differs from the usual one with a special attitude to the surrounding world, pristine nature and its gifts [3].

The main purpose of ecotourism is to increase the awareness of travellers about the natural conditions of their stay, places of visit, respect for the culture and traditions of local communities, and at the same time to minimize any negative environmental consequences resulting from tourism activities [7,9].

In modern society, the direction of eco-tourism is becoming more and more popular and actual.

One of the directions for the introduction of environmental technologies is the creation of eco-hotels. Eco hotel is just becoming a hobby, or mainstream.

The concept of "eco-hotel" is interpreted in different ways. Some people understand this as an environmentally friendly vacation surrounded by nature; others believe that the construction and existence of this hotel will bring the least harm to nature (eco-friendly). Nevertheless, at the moment it is the first interpretation that prevails in the domestic market,

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although with the development of ecotourism, as well as with an increase in the number of hotels in Russia that meet international standards and with increased competition between them, the environmental responsibility of hotels and the selectivity of guests will increase in our country. [10, 11, 12, 13]

Integration of the sustainability concept in the hospitality industry is aimed at promoting cleaner production of the hotel product through the efficient use of resources.

Eco-hotels are a promising business. Active transition to environmentally friendly methods involving respect for natural resources, the use of renewable energy sources and waste management can increase hotel revenues. In international hotel practice, the term "eco-hotel" is considered as a hotel functioning with regard to the principle of environmental responsibility and through the use of environmental technologies [2].

2.METHODS

The construction of new format hotels or the reorientation of existing hotel enterprises into ecological ones can solve several diverse and different level tasks at the same time, namely: to save resources at the enterprise level, improve economic

performance by following the current trend, promote the development of the tourism cluster and the formation of ecological infrastructure in the region , promote the ideas of a "green" way of life in society, form a market for environmental products and services, improve the image of a region and a country. [7, 8]

The study was carried out using general methods of scientific knowledge: comparison, abstraction, mathematical modelling, analysis and synthesis. A system analysis method was used in the work to solve the set tasks. To visualize the presentation of data, a graphical method was used.

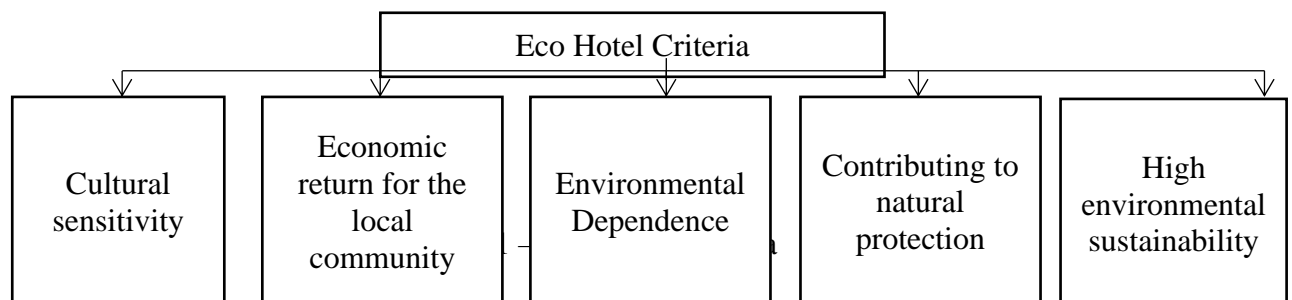
3.RESULTS

The main aspects which are most characteristic of eco-hotels can be divided into two groups:

- Effective waste management (minimization and disposal of waste);
- Reduction in the use of various resources (electricity, water, purchased goods).

It is these areas that formed the basis of the eco-policy of many hotels, and such hotels in every way inform customers about the measures taken to ensure that this facility becomes environmentally friendly.

The main criteria for an eco-hotel are shown in the figure 1.



A specific feature of eco-hotels is functioning according to the principle of harmonious proximity to nature without polluting the environment with the products of vital activity of tourists. In the modern world, hotel managers are developing their own strategy to reduce environmental damage, thereby constantly improving their own approach to the problem of greening. This is expressed in compliance with the laws, standards, codes of the company,

as well as the use of new innovative "green" technologies [2].

Ecological hotels are in demand today by tourists in many countries of the world as an exotic accommodation, particularly in impenetrable jungles, as an ecological school, where an additional service is the study of various types of local plants and animals.

Existing eco-hotels are diverse and differ from each other in their specifics, allowing them to be classified according to various criteria (table 1).

Table 1 - Classification of eco-hotels

Criterion of classification	Varieties of eco-hotels
Eco-certificate	Certified
	Uncertified
The presence of environmental technology	Full cycle green hotels
	Availability of environmental resource-saving technologies
	Not eco-friendly
Type of building	Traditional dwellings: cottage, chalet, shed, hovel, hut, tent, igloo, plague, wigwam, yurt.
	Exotic buildings
	Campsites: - tent camps; - summer wooden houses

Ecological situation	Using environmentally certified materials and substances in construction, decoration, furniture, and household appliances.
	Partially using environmental materials.
	Not using environmental materials.
Food concept	Having own gardens, apiaries, fruit and vegetable farming, meet production farming.
	Using environmentally certified non-domestic food products.
	Using food products and mass production semi-finished products.
Organization of leisure activities with an environmental focus	Offering visits to protected areas, ecological routes and trails, bird and animal watching; pot-holing, cycling routes.
	Offering traditional folk crafts as leisure activities: hunting, fishing, gathering, traditional needlework.
	Offering classic animations not related to the environment.
	Not having animation programs.
Availability of wellness resources and infrastructure	Having unique healing resources: mineral, thermal waters, therapeutic mud.
	Having a Wellness & SPA-zones, specialized rejuvenation and rehabilitation programs, yoga sites.
	Having a standard set of wellness services (bath, gym, pool, sports grounds).
	Not having information technology in principle / ECO format.
Availability of information technology	Having innovative means of communication, “smart” information technologies, the latest equipment, including those saving energy resources.

	Having a standard set of communication services and equipment.
	Not having information technology in order to observe the natural format of leisure.
Green propaganda	Actively promoting green ideas.
	Promoting green ideas from time to time.
	Not having environmental education programs.

In some hotels, almost everything is ecologically saturated:

- Natural materials are used for decoration: wood, cork, stone, and lime;
- Organic paints;
- Recycled paper for household needs;
- Environmentally friendly detergents for cleaning;
- Organic food on the menu;
- Natural cosmetics, oils and procedures using healing algae and herbs in Spa-salons.

There are ecological hotels with their own apiaries, farms, and gardens. Guests of such hotels can optionally take part in gathering apples, cherries, strawberries or vegetables, take care of animals, and familiarize with the basics of agriculture. Eco-farms and facilities ready to receive guests are gaining popularity not only in Europe but also in Russia. Such property not only provides accommodation services and programs

matching the profile, but also produces certified farm products. The hotel restaurants use their own products: milk, eggs, meat, which are produced directly on the farm, vegetables and fruits - from their own garden and greenhouses, mushrooms and berries - from the nearest forests [6, 15, 16].

Thus, from an official point of view, an eco-hotel is a certified hotel, so its building must undergo international certification of compliance with certain standards in order to pass assessment of the performance of the property at the design, construction and operation stages. There are a lot of such standards, among the voluntary certification systems in the world there are more than ten standards. However, most of them are of a national character.

4. DISCUSSION

In developed countries, much earlier than in Russia, they thought about



the problems of depletion of natural resources, environmental pollution, excessive consumption of goods; this led to the creation of various "green" programs both at the government and business levels. Moreover, the greatest attention was focused on those who were the first to take active steps to make their business environmentally responsible. The hospitality industry did not remain aloof from this process [19, 20].

Due to the huge amount of waste, the hotel business and event management are one of the most polluting industries in the service sector. That is why the introduction of green programs is so important in this industry. Currently, eco-hotels are being built in Europe, the USA, Canada, Australia, Turkey, and other countries. There are about 150 eco-hotels in Europe. The Nordic countries are far ahead of the whole world in the development in this area. There are more than 200 eco-hotels in little Sweden only. Each country, as a rule, has its own environmental certification body that develops standards. Focusing on these

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requirements, a hotel understands what it should strive for and what "green" areas to develop. The most famous environmental standards in the hotel industry are the Northern Swan and the European Flower [1, 3, 4, 5].

Dozens of resorts have opened around the world, and especially in its places which are the most quiet and untouched by industrial and technological development, in different variations exploiting the theme of "organic" relaxation useful both in terms of health and from the point of view of caring for the environment.

Consider some of the most popular eco-hotels in foreign countries and in Russia.

Eco-resort Mashpi Lodge, Ecuador.

Being at an altitude of 900 meters above sea level, and lost in a cloudy forest, Mashpi Lodge is a standard of eco-friendly residence. The hotel was built relatively recently in 2012, and the latest nature-friendly technologies were used in its construction (Fig. 2).



Fig. 2 – A room at the Eco Hotel Mashpi Lodge, Ecuador

As befits to a real eco-business, Mashpi Lodge is actively involved in the life of the local population, and also keeps a team of scientists who monitor the preservation and enhancement of the natural wealth of the equatorial lands. Thanks to their efforts, we can meet not only ferns and bromeliads, but also new varieties of orchids in the jungle in territory of the resort [8, 14, 17, 18].

Eco Resort “Song Saa”, Cambodia.

The Eco-resort Song Saa occupies a separate island at the Koh Rong archipelago in Cambodia and does not occupy the last place in the protection of the nature in this Asian country (Fig. 3).



Fig. 3 - Eco Resort Song Saa, Cambodia

The owners of this modern eco-resort have invested \$ 500,000 in it, setting up an environmental protection

fund. Among their initiatives are a 100-fold increase in the area of the marine reserve, the protection of coral reefs and

local fauna, as well as providing local schools with solar energy. In doing so, they earned the favourable attitude of all eco-tourists, who, among other things, are very enthusiastic about spa treatments in Song Saa [3].

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Eco-hotel Butterfly House Bahia, Brazil.

Thatched roofs and rough walls of the Butterfly House Bahia and the inner surroundings of the bungalows and lodges are the exact opposite of their wild appearance (Fig. 4).



Fig. 4 - Eco Hotel Butterfly House Bahia, Brazil

Expensive pieces of furniture and bizarre art objects collected by the Eco Hotel owner Chloe Gibbs around the world are also organically integrated in the bohemian style of the interior of the rooms. The Brazilian boutique hotel is impressive in all its eco-indicators: the heating here is performed from solar energy; the materials used in the decor

comply with ethical standards (for example, Colombian bamboo), and the waste is recycled in accordance with all rules. The hotel was built during 10 years in order not to disturb the local ecosystem [9].

Eco-Hotel Wilderness Hoanib Skeleton Coast, Namibia (Fig. 5).



Fig. 5 - Wilderness Hoanib Skeleton Coast Eco Hotel, Namibia

The organizers of this small-sized eco-resort are doing a great job: they care about the local population of lions, and hotel guests can take a direct part in this job.

Waking up in an ascetic designer bed (there are 7 double rooms and one family room) at the foot of a hill in the most remote part of Kaokoveld (an

arid region in Namibia), you can have breakfast with an impressive view of the Skeleton Coast National Park, which seems to have come off the picture of an African safari, and then head towards the wild [1].

Eco Village “Six Senses Yao Noi”, Thailand (Fig. 6).



Fig. 6 - Eco Village “Six Senses Yao Noi”, Thailand

The village of Six Senses Yao Noi located next to the tourist Phuket is a luxury model eco-village where you will not find a single plastic product, and organic products are delivered directly from their own garden.

The Six Senses brand is one of the foremost in its niche. The hotel accommodates up to 200 guests who spend long hours admiring the views of

Phang Nga Bay and listening to jazz music. A kind of concierge is assigned to each of the guests (he is called Chicken Mamma in the rustic manner here); warning your desires, they will help to reveal all the secrets of this Asian resort [45].

Eco-hotels “Anantara Bazaruto Island Resort”, Mozambique.

Anantara resort on the island of Bazaruto is the embodiment of the escapism culture by belonging to the

largest network of eco-hotels in the world (44 resorts) (Fig. 7).



Fig. 7 - Eco Hotels Anantara Bazaruto Island Resort, Mozambique

An overmastering dialogue with nature can be conducted endlessly: there are thickets of jungle and strange birds outside the window; there is a swimming pool flowing smoothly into the ocean bay on the terrace; there is a comfortable hammock under the palm tree on the beach; and there are whales, sea turtles and many different fish species in the waters of the Indian Ocean. [20]

Topas Ecolodge, Vietnam.

The Topas Ecolodge Hotel is located in the city of Sapa being the main tourist destination of northern Vietnam. It is a small mountain resort on top of two hills (Fig. 8). Electricity is used to the lowest amount; all waste from the kitchen is sorted: food leftovers are given to farmers for feeding livestock; empty bottles, cans and boxes are reused by local residents. Waste water irrigates the soil in the village vicinity after water filtering in special tanks.



Fig. 8 - Topas Ecolodge Eco Hotel, Vietnam

The main part of the tour program here is a visit to mountain villages and the study of tribal culture. The hotel offers visitors locally produced goods, many outdoor activities,

including mountain biking and hiking in Hoanglien National Park, one of the most popular eco-tourism destinations [45].

Eco Camp “Sápmi Nature Camp”, Sweden (Fig. 9).



Fig. 9 - Eco Camp “Sápmi Nature Camp”, Sweden

Reindeer herders will share stories about the traditional Sami

lifestyle with guests at the northern Swedish Sapmi camp. The owner of the

“base” Lennart Pittja, a specialist in the development and promotion of Sami tourism, presents guests a new type of recreation that does not deplete natural resources and does not violate the life of the northern peoples. [20]

Tourists can observe the northern lights and the starry sky from comfortable wigwams, visit deer pastures and get acquainted with the culture of the North.

Eco-resort “Aristi Mountain Resort & Villas”, Greece (Fig. 10).



Fig. 10 - Eco Resort “Aristi Mountain Resort & Villas”, Greece

Crystal Rivers, bottomless gorges and snowy mountain tops is the view which opens from the window of the mountain “Aristi Resort & Villas”. Tourists can rent a room or a whole house arranged among the forests high in the mountains of northern Greece. Residences are built of stone and wood in perfect harmony with the landscape; only LED lamps are used for lighting;

wastewater is treated using a high-tech tertiary treatment system and waste is utilized to the maximum [21].

Eco-hotel “The Lodge at Valle Chacabuco”, Chile (Fig. 11).

An eco-hotel in the Chilean Chacabuco Valley is located in the heart of Patagonia Park, where there was a pasture of sheep and cattle some time ago.



Fig. 11 – “The Lodge at Valle Chacabuco” Eco Hotel, Chile

Hiking, scenic camping and guided hikes are available for guests. Mountain houses made of stone mined in the valley are finished with marble and recycled wood and operate in accordance with strict green policies regarding the use of electricity and biodegradable cleaning products. The park is protected by several thousand square kilometres of land where herds of guanacos and deer graze, flocks of pink flamingos walk, foxes, armadillos, cougars and many other species of birds and other mammals roam [1].

5. CONCLUSION

Eco-hotels are gaining more and more popularity among tourists, as their main focus is on environmental

protection and the use of energy-saving technologies.

Russia must universally develop the production of building materials used in the construction of eco-hotels. This applies to concrete and modern insulating materials, steel structures, and the recycling of used materials and industrial waste.

By introducing "green" construction technologies, Russia will receive not only standard benefits in the form of lower energy costs, resource savings and a reduction in the harmful effects on the environment, but also a natural growth of the country's economy increasing industrial production and introducing innovative technologies.

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