

## ЕКОЛОГІЧНІ ПРОБЛЕМИ

UDC 338.48

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## SECTORAL PRIORITY OF RURAL GREEN TOURISM

*The article examines the concept of rural green tourism, its role and significance, identifies the specifics of the rural green tourism development, their impact on tourism and the economy of Ukraine. Tourism contributes to the inflow of financial resources into the country, which brings income not only to tourism firms, but also provides tax revenues to the budget, increases demand for products and services, thereby stimulating the development of related industries. One of the most prioritized is rural green tourism, as it contributes to solving social and economic problems in villages, which is characteristic of modern Ukraine. In modern conditions of the Ukrainian economy development, the structure of the tourism industry is changing due to the development of promising types of tourism, including rural green tourism. This is a specific form of recreation in the countryside, which has wide possibilities of using the natural, material and cultural potential of certain regions.*

*Keywords: tourism, rural green tourism, development, specifics.*

## ГАЛУЗЕВА ПРІОРИТЕТНІСТЬ СІЛЬСЬКОГО ЗЕЛЕНОГО ТУРИЗМУ

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*У статті розглянуто поняття сільського зеленого туризму, його роль та значення, визначено особливості розвитку сільського зеленого туризму, їх вплив на туристичну діяльність та економіку України. Туризм є сучасною та однією з найдинамічніших галузей економіки. Україна володіє значним потенціалом для розвитку як внутрішнього туризму, так і міжнародного. Туризм сприяє притоку в країну фінансових ресурсів, що дає доходи не лише туристичним фірмам, але й забезпечує податкові надходження до бюджету, збільшує попит та продукти та послуги, стимулюючи тим самим розвиток суміжних галузей. В сучасних умовах розвитку економіки України змінюється структура туристичної галузі за рахунок розвитку перспективних видів туризму, в тому числі сільського зеленого туризму. Серед альтернативних видів туризму одним з найбільш пріоритетних є сільський зелений туризм, оскільки він сприяє вирішенню соціальних та економічних проблем в селах, що є характерним для сучасної України. Це специфічна форма відпочинку на селі, яка має широкі можливості використання природного, матеріального і культурного потенціалу певних регіонів. У статті визначені мотиви туристів, які обрали метою подорожі – сільський зелений туризм. На основі аналізу законодавства України щодо сільського зеленого туризму визначено основні напрями державної політики,*

які сприятимуть подальшому ефективному розвитку цієї галузі. Розглянуто особливості туристичного пакета послуг зеленого туризму, які полягають у задоволенні потреб відпочивальників шляхом об'єднання зусиль окремих господарств, наприклад, харчування та проживання – в одному господарстві, отримання додаткових послуг – в іншому тощо. Визначені особливості дозволять забезпечити вищий рівень розвитку сільського зеленого туризму на певній території та позиціонуватимуть його як важливий засіб стимулювання й інвестування соціально-економічного розвитку села.

**Ключові слова:** туризм, сільський зелений туризм, розвиток, особливості.

**Statement of the problem.** Tourism is a modern and one of the most dynamic branches of the economy. Ukraine has significant potential for the development of both domestic and international tourism. Tourism contributes to the inflow of financial resources into the country, which brings income not only to tourism firms, but also provides tax revenues to the budget, increases demand for products and services, thereby stimulating the development of related industries. Among the alternative types of tourism, one of the most prioritized is rural green tourism, as it contributes to solving social and economic problems in villages, which is characteristic of modern Ukraine.

**Analysis of recent research and publications.** The question of the development of rural green tourism was studied by the following economists: Didyk N.V., Varshava O.V. [3], Dyuk A.A., Burlaka N.I. [4], Stankevich-Volosyanchuk O.I., Teblyashkina L.I. and other scientists. However, given the urgency of the issue of rural green development tourism, there is a need for a deeper study of the concept of this type of tourism, as a promising type of tourism for improving the tourism industry and for reforming the economy of Ukraine in general.

**Setting the task.** The purpose of the article is to study rural green tourism as a priority tourist destination, its specifics and impact on the tourist market and tourist offers.

**Summary of the main research material.** Currently, the tourism industry of the world is experiencing times of active development and formation of new directions. In parallel with traditional types of tourism, all kinds of non-traditional forms of recreation and travel are spreading. The spread of ideas of environmentalization of life is having an increasing influence on the field of tourism. Rural green tourism is considered one of the directions of the steady development of the tourism industry, which is aimed at protecting Ukrainian nature and cultural-historical heritage, promoting interethnic tolerance and involving people in active participation in solving their own financial problems, providing employment for the unemployed, as well as overcoming the seasonal nature of the tourist product due to Ukrainian climate.

The terminological definition of rural green tourism is proposed in the draft Law of Ukraine "On Rural Green Tourism" as a recreational type of tourism, which involves the temporary stay of tourists in a rural area (village) and receipt of rural green tourism services. This concept has become widespread

among Ukrainian travelers and tour operators, as well as state structures dealing with issues of regulation of this type of tourism in Ukraine. The term "rural green tourism" is legislated, the legal meaning of which is interpreted as recreation in a Ukrainian village.

Domestic and foreign scientists consider rural green tourism as a specific form of recreation in private farms in rural areas using the property and labor resources of a private agricultural household or a farm, natural-recreational features of the area and the cultural, historical, and ethnographic heritage of the region, and as tourism that takes place in rural settlements.

According to the definition of the Union for the Promotion of the Rural Green Tourism Development, rural green tourism, as a type of tourism, is recreation in rural, resort or nature conservation areas, which requires properly equipped private estates and appropriate infrastructure [6].

It is worth noting that rural green tourism is recreation in private farms in rural areas interesting for tourist attractions. The main attraction in rural green tourism is a set of factors that have a beneficial effect on a person: health, aesthetic, cognitive. Rest in the countryside is not a resort with a lot of tourists. The local state of relaxation is especially needed by city dwellers. Many tourists are happy to celebrate the New Year and Christmas holidays in the village or simply relax with friends or family.

The mostly cozy atmosphere is reinforced by the positive emotional influence of the surrounding area: mountains, forests, rivers, lakes, and the sea. Landscapes and ecology are very often important for choosing a vacation spot. Often, in addition to the provided accommodation services of various categories and delicious home-cooked meals, hosts offer a whole range of additional services: picking berries and mushrooms, excursions, hiking in the mountains, fishing, which diversify and enrich the experience of recreation.

According to the official statistics of the WTO, "green" trips now account for from 7 to 20% of the total volume of tourist trips.

The rate of growth of rural green tourism is estimated at 10-20 to 30% per year, and its share in revenues from international tourism reaches 10-15%.

According to estimates of the European Federation of Farming and Rural Tourism (EuroGites), only the European market of this type of tourism is currently about 2 million beds. Potentially the Ukrainian

market is able to receive almost 150,000 "green" tourists [7, p. 7].

Today, rural tourism is developing at a fairly fast pace and in some countries attracts the attention of a large number of foreign tourists. In terms of popularity, vacations in rural areas in these countries are second only to vacations at sea now. The most successful examples include Italy, France, Ireland, Great Britain, Spain, and Germany.

In most European countries, rural green tourism is encouraged at the state level. It is not by chance that in these countries the share of eco-travel is more than 20% of all tourist services, and the rate of annual growth reaches 30%.

Rural green tourism is an important factor in solving socio-economic problems of the village – it is the growth of employment in the village, the development of rural infrastructure, obtaining stable and significant incomes by the villagers, strengthening the budget of rural settlements.

It is important when studying rural green tourism as a priority tourist destination to consider the reasons for choosing this type of recreation. Based on the research of inquiries about this type of tourism among tourists, the reasons for which they chose this type of tourism were the following: communication with the environment, ecological food, immersion in rural life, financial availability of recreation, need for peace, family traditions, doctor's recommendation, participation in agricultural work.

Schematically, the motives of tourists who chose rural green tourism as the purpose of their trip are shown in Figure 1.

As the analysis of Figure 1 showed, it should be noted that the first place among the reasons for

choosing rural green tourism as a tourist destination is communication with the environment – enjoying the scenery, swimming in reservoirs, walking in the forest, picking berries and mushrooms (31%). The second place, 16%, is taken by food sustainability, i.e. products that households grow themselves. Immersion in village life, learning about customs and traditions, participating in village entertainment is typical for 14% of tourists. Today, a significant reason for vacationing in the countryside for 12% of tourists is its financial availability, because not everyone can afford an expensive vacation at a resort outside of Ukraine. The need for peace is significant for 11% of the population, as a result of which a person rests from the hustle and bustle of the city, calms down and regains strength. 8.5% of tourists have a family tradition regarding such recreation, and 5% of the population explained their need to use rural green tourism only on doctor's recommendation. And 2.5% is voluntary participation in agricultural work.

It is worth noting that rural green tourism, on the one hand, allows domestic city dwellers and foreign tourists to relax in an ecologically clean area for relatively little money, on the other hand, it raises the villagers' standard of living by providing services to tourists, making souvenir products, etc. An important role in the formation and development of rural green tourism is played by tourist resources – a combination of components of natural and socio-economic conditions and cultural values to meet the people's tourist needs. These resources can be divided into the following groups: 1) natural: climate, water resources, terrain, flora and fauna, national parks, picturesque landscapes; 2) socio-economic conditions and resources: economic-geographic location of the

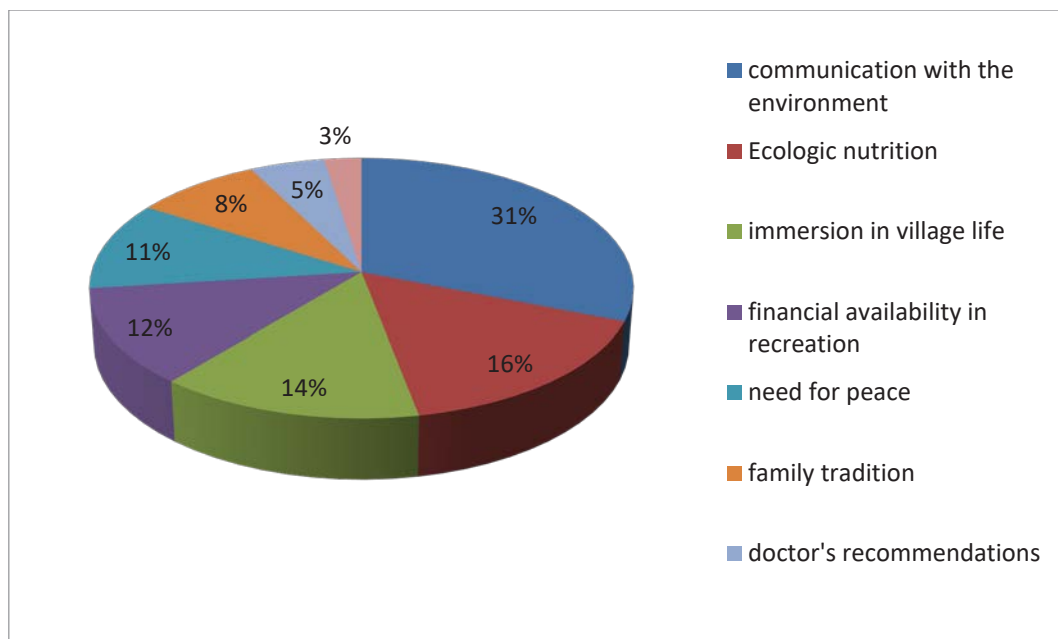


Figure 1. Reasons for choosing rural green tourism

territory, its transport accessibility, level of economic development, available labor resources, etc.; 3) cultural and historical: cultural, historical, archaeological, ethnographic objects.

The main goal of rural green tourism is to create a new tourist product that goes beyond the traditional idea of the tourist offer of Ukraine, and should take into account the natural, historical and cultural specificities of the regions, and also significantly diversify the traditional offers of Ukraine.

Quality rest in the field of rural green tourism depends on the choice of travel routes, places for recreation, agricultural and folk museums, as well as tourist service centers with pointmen and guides. Rural green tourism is a tourism activity related to a rural environment, a rural house and activities that focus on nature and people. It belongs to alternative or small-scale tourism and is one of the ways of moving away from the devastating practice of mass (industrial) tourism, the material base and tourist product of which are characterized by strict standardization, a complete orientation to economic goals and a large degree of neglect of ecological, social and moral values, which rural green tourism provides.

Rural green tourism is a promising direction of small tourist business, which involves active recreation in rural areas. The variety of types of tourist activities, such as educational, recreational, health ones, makes rural green tourism one of the attractive types of recreational activities, the popularity of which is growing constantly. This type of tourism is one of the ways of tourism industry transition to sustainable development and rethinking of natural and cultural values. It makes it possible to use the existing housing stock, reduce investment costs and prevent excessive use of forest and pasture land. The low density of tourist flows in rural regions makes it possible to distribute tourist facilities on the territory more evenly, which not only has a positive effect on the environment, but also brings additional income to the local population.

The result of the development of rural green tourism will be better landscaping of rural estates, streets, villages; a higher level of incentives for the social infrastructure development, an increase in the cultural and educational level of the rural population.

A prerequisite for rural green tourism, unlike many other types of tourism, is the ecological well-being of the natural environment. Its identification on the territory of Ukraine and its effective presentation on the tourist market with the aim of increasing a certain novelty for the potential consumer have signs of primary innovation – a corresponding generally accepted concept. They include the following: 1. Climatic conditions that contribute to the use of recreational opportunities of a certain territory throughout the year. 2. Landscape resources – attract tourists with their features, for example, mountain massifs create

conditions for the development of mountaineering, skiing, hiking and sports tourism; gypsum caves can be used for speleotourism; picturesque plains – for recreation and treatment; geological formations have cognitive and aesthetic significance, etc. 3. The sea, rivers, lakes, ponds are promising for therapeutic purposes (hydro mineral and thermal waters, therapeutic mud), for extreme tourism and organization of individual routes. 4. Floristic recreational resources combine all the diversity of the plant world, which has medicinal properties, scientific-cognitive and natural-aesthetic value. 5. Faunal recreational resources are natural resources that combine the entire diversity of the animal world. In the case of hunting tourism for foreigners, the historical features of national hunting should be taken into account. 6. National parks, nature conservation institutions, the territories of which include natural complexes and objects of special ecological, historical and aesthetic value, are divided into zones: protected regime, commissioned regime, educational tourism, recreational use.

The services of rural green tourism are carriers of various specific properties that reflect its usefulness, meet certain needs and requirements of people. The usefulness of products (services) of rural green tourism reflects its consumer value, which in turn should be evaluated, that is, its quality should be determined. As the analysis showed, the potential consumer of rural green tourism services is attracted by proximity to nature, picturesque landscapes, clean air, complemented by the hospitality of the hosts and traditional village life.

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Research on the development of tourism, in particular rural green tourism, has shown certain features that must be taken into account for the further effective functioning of this area.

The peculiarity of the rural green tourism development is that it is carried out both at the macro and micro levels. Features of the rural green tourism development at the state level should be considered as follows: the need to attract a larger amount of investment for its development; imperfection and bureaucratic procedures of the system of issuing licenses and permits to business entities; too many types of taxes that must be paid by business entities operating in this field; manifestation of imperfect financial and credit policy and inflationary processes in the activity of objects in this sphere. The disadvantage of the rural green tourism development at the state level is that it is not sufficiently popularized compared to other types of tourism.

An important task for the development of rural green tourism is the regulation of the regulatory and

legal framework in the field of rural green tourism, taking into account the changing conditions of the external environment. This should ensure effective interaction of state and public structures for the successful development of this industry.

As the analysis showed, for the effective development and regulation of rural green tourism, the Law of Ukraine "On Rural Green Tourism" should be enacted, the draft of which was adopted by Verkhovna Rada Resolution No. 2179 dated November 16, 2004. This Law defines general legal, organizational, and socio-economic principles of the implementation of the state policy of Ukraine in the field of rural green tourism and is aimed at ensuring the rights of citizens to rest, for freedom of movement, for health protection, for a safe environment for life and health, for satisfaction of spiritual needs and other rights during tourist trips, which are enshrined in the Constitution of Ukraine. It establishes the principles of rational use of tourist resources and regulates relations related to the organization and implementation of rural green tourism on the territory of Ukraine [3].

Based on the analysis of the legislation of Ukraine regarding rural green tourism, we determined that the main directions of state policy that will contribute to the further effective development of this area are as follows: improvement of the legal basis for regulating relations in this field of activity; defining rural green tourism as an important part of the tourism industry of Ukraine, encouraging national and foreign investments in this area and creating new jobs; development of inbound and domestic rural green tourism, promotion of its transformation into a highly profitable and competitive element of the tourism industry; creation of appropriate conditions for the development of rural green tourism, support of priority areas of tourist activity in this area by simplifying and harmonizing tax, currency, customs, border and other types of regulation; comprehensive encouragement of citizens of Ukraine to participate in the development of the rural green tourism field as a highly profitable element of the tourism industry and an additional source of replenishment of personal income of citizens, local and state budgets; taking into account consumer demand for certain types of rural green tourism services when developing and approving national and local regional development programs. The directions of state policy in the field of rural green tourism are schematically shown in Figure 2.

The analysis confirms that the further development of rural green tourism requires in-depth research of this industry and its support from the state. In Ukraine, at the national level, there are no institutions dealing with the development of rural green tourism. The initiative in the implementation of these functions is taken by various public organizations.

One of the most active structures uniting the activities of estate owners is the Union for the Devel-

opment of Rural Green Tourism in Ukraine. This all-Ukrainian non-profit public organization, which unites the owners of estates and is the initiator of the spread of ideas for the rural green tourism development was founded in 1996 [6].

The purpose of its operation is to popularize recreation in the Ukrainian countryside, promote the development of rural infrastructure and self-employment of the rural population, preserve cultural heritage and the natural environment. On the initiative of the Union, regional units (centers) of rural green tourism were created and are successfully functioning in 17 regions of Ukraine. They are engaged in informing about the recreational opportunities of the regions, work on the image of their region and control the quality of the tourist services provision by the relevant entities.

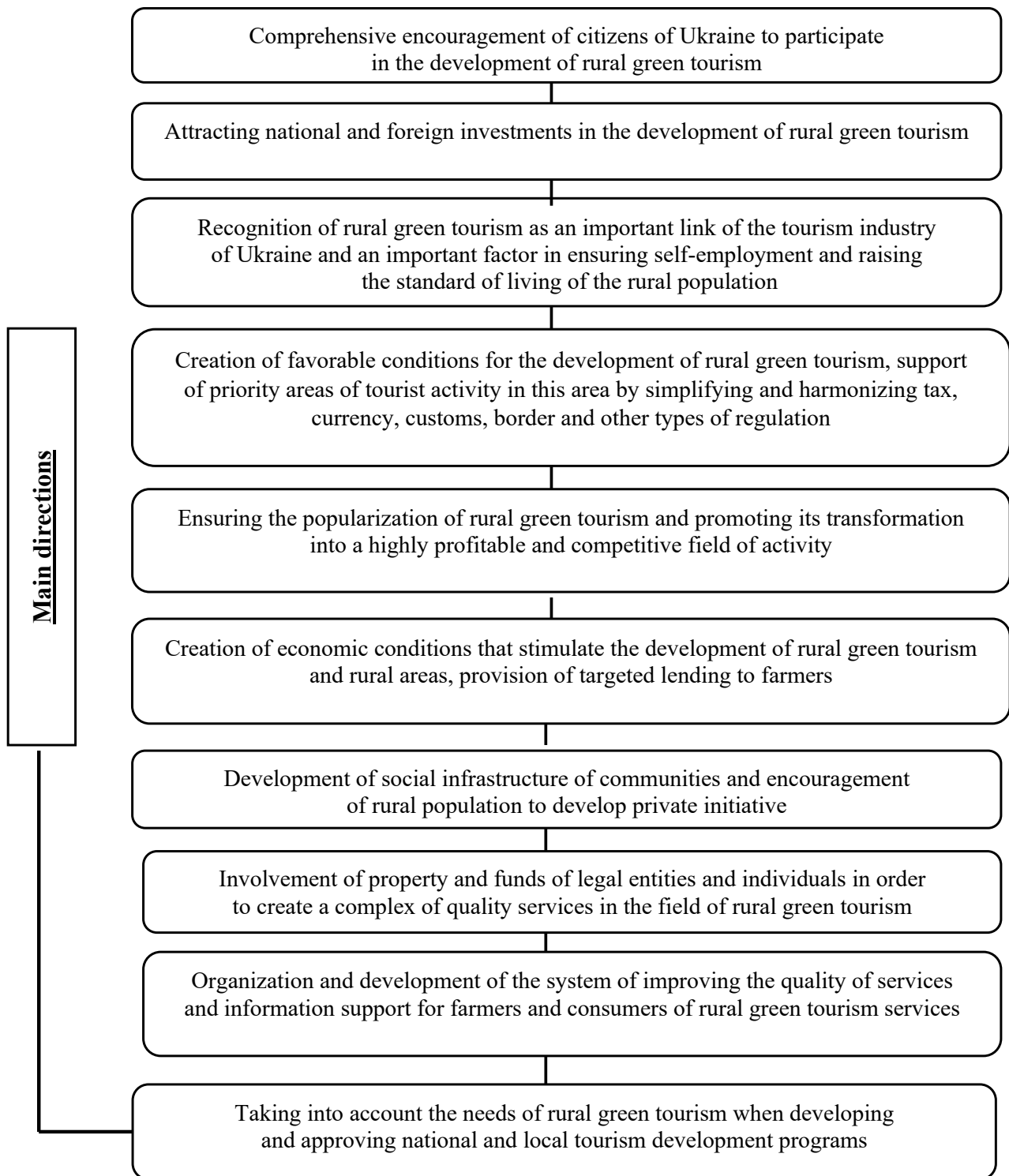
About 850 estates in 20 regions of the country are members of this association of citizens. However, it is impossible to accurately determine the number of offers on the rural tourism market, because even more hosts operate independently.

The development of rural green tourism should be supported both at the state level and at the level of public organizations. Its main aspects are agrarian-social, cultural-tourist and ecological-natural. Therefore, for the successful development and regulation of rural green tourism, the interaction of state and public structures that take care of the relevant industries is necessary.

To support the development of rural green tourism at the regional level, it is necessary to implement measures aimed at creating a highly profitable tourism industry, which should provide for the needs of domestic and international tourism, taking into account the natural – climatic, recreational, social – economic and historical – cultural potential of the region and its opportunities.

The development of rural green tourism and the creation of an information electronic database of estate owners who are engaged in tourism activities for the provision of rural green tourism services through the Internet, tourist resource cadastres, the release of advertising and informational catalogs of rural green tourism objects will attract the attention of the population to recreation in rural area and will make it easier for tourists to choose a place to rest, and will also facilitate the process of selling the tourist services they offer and increase their volume, which in turn will ensure a higher level of their efficiency [2, p. 105–106].

Natural – recreational conditions, climatic – landscape resources, historical – cultural potential should be considered very favorable for the development of rural green tourism. National and landscape parks play an important role in the further development of rural green tourism, because they provide an opportunity to combine a full-fledged rest with learning about the natural and historical and cultural potential of the



**Figure 2. Main directions of the state policy in the field of rural green tourism**

region. Many tourists like to visit these sites, country estates can be the best overnight base for travelers. The use of national and landscape parks in rural green tourism will be a favorable and desirable factor for the development of the local economy and the improvement of the local population welfare.

The peculiarity of the tourist package of green tourism services is to meet the needs of vacation-

ers by combining the efforts of individual farms, for example, food and accommodation – in one farm, obtaining additional services – in another, etc. There is a simultaneous combination of other equally important, but auxiliary elements (components) of rural infrastructure (restaurants, cafes, shops, etc.). A tourist product, which acts as a complex of services aimed at meeting the needs of tourists during a trip,

and is the main product on the tourist market in the field of rural green tourism, depends on the following criteria: the quality of accommodation and food, the optimal ratio of prices and farm services, weather conditions, ecological situation in this area. An unsatisfactory situation according to at least one of the criteria listed above can lead to a decrease in consumer demand for recreation in this area. And since demand is the main regulator of the price level, the specified features will allow to ensure a higher level of the rural green tourism development in a certain territory and will position it as an important means of stimulating and investing in the socio-economic development of the village: promoting the development of the village infrastructure, comprehensive development of rural areas and rural infrastructure, creating new sources of income for the rural population, as well as better provision of rest for city dwellers in rural areas; popularization of Ukrainian culture; dissemination of knowledge and information about historical, natural, ethnographic features of Ukraine.

The above-mentioned features will also contribute to the effective improvement of a person's mental and physical condition. Wonderful natural landscapes, clean air, healthy natural food, exciting adventures –

all this allows you to acquire a special moral and psychological state, which is completely different from the one inherent after a vacation on the sea coast. The production of rural products, the use of traditional products, national culture and natural resources, assistance in agricultural activities will help the tourist discover the authenticity of folk traditions and the unique beauty of the surrounding nature.

Summarizing the above, we can conclude that at the current stage, rural green tourism remains a highly promising branch of tourism, is of great importance for the economy of Ukraine, attracts not only domestic tourists, but also tourists from many countries of the world, contributes to the establishment of foreign economic relations with various states. Every year the development of rural green tourism in the regions of Ukraine becomes more powerful and one of the promising ways of solving social issues related to the employment of the population in all regions and their socio-economic development. Fulfillment of the tasks set for the further development of rural green tourism will contribute to its quality development, organization and management, as well as the attraction of investments in the tourism industry and the economy of Ukraine.

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