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Tourism potential of the Korgalzhyn reserve

Potential of tourism development in Kazakhstan, including the area of Korgalzhyn in Akmola region is discussed in the article. Activity of UNDP in Kazakhstan and the Information and Resource Center for tourism of the Korgalzhyn area is considered.

Keywords: ecotourism, Specially Protected Nature Territories, tourist services in Korgalzhyn reserve

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Туристский потенциал Коргалжынского заповедника

В статье рассматривается потенциал развития туризма в Казахстане, в том числе в Коргалжынском районе Акмолинской области. Рассмотрена деятельность программы развития ООН в Казахстане и Информационно-Ресурсного Центра по туризму Коргалжынского района.

Ключевые слова: экотуризм, Особо Охраняемые Природные территории, туристские услуги в Коргалжынском заповеднике.

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Қорғалжын қорығы туристік потенциалы

Мақалада Қазақстандағы, оның ішінде Ақмола облысы Қорғалжын ауданындағы туризм дамуы потенциалы қарастырылады. Қазақстандағы БҰҰ даму бағдарламасы мен Қорғалжын ауданы туризмі бойынша ақпараттық-ресурстық орталық қызметтері көрсетілген.

Түйін сөздер: экотуризм, Ерекше қорғалатын табиғи территориялар, Қорғалжын қорығындағы туристік қызметтер.

Korgalzhyn area has a great potential for tourism development. It is a steppe and lake-land sparsely populated and less-changed by economic activity. Here is Korgalzhyn reserve-specially protected nature territory, a unique place on the territory of Central Asia, which is just 150 km from the capital of Kazakhstan, Astana. It was founded in 1968. The area is more than 237 hectares, with 199.2 hectares account for reservoirs.

The climate is sharply continental. Dryness and sharp fluctuations of air temperatures within year, month and even days are characteristic. Average temperature of January is -17°C , and July $+20^{\circ}\text{C}$. Two lakes of the reserve – Tengiz and Korgalzhyn – are connected among themselves.

Lake Korgalzhyn is a kingdom of reeds and cattails. Their thickets occupy 70-80% of a water surface. The reed divides a reservoir into some large gulfs and a set of the reaches which have received independent names of lakes. The lake Tengiz (in Kazakh "sea") has a water surface area of 1590 sq.km, length of the coastline of 488 km. This huge bitter and salty drainless reservoir takes the 12th place among the lakes of the CIS. The mineralization of its waters is 5-6 times higher than the salinity of the world oceans.

Korgalzhyn State Natural Reserve has gained international popularity as a place of mass concentration of migratory and moulting waterfowls. But special charm is given to this place by its well-known inhabitants – pink flamingos.

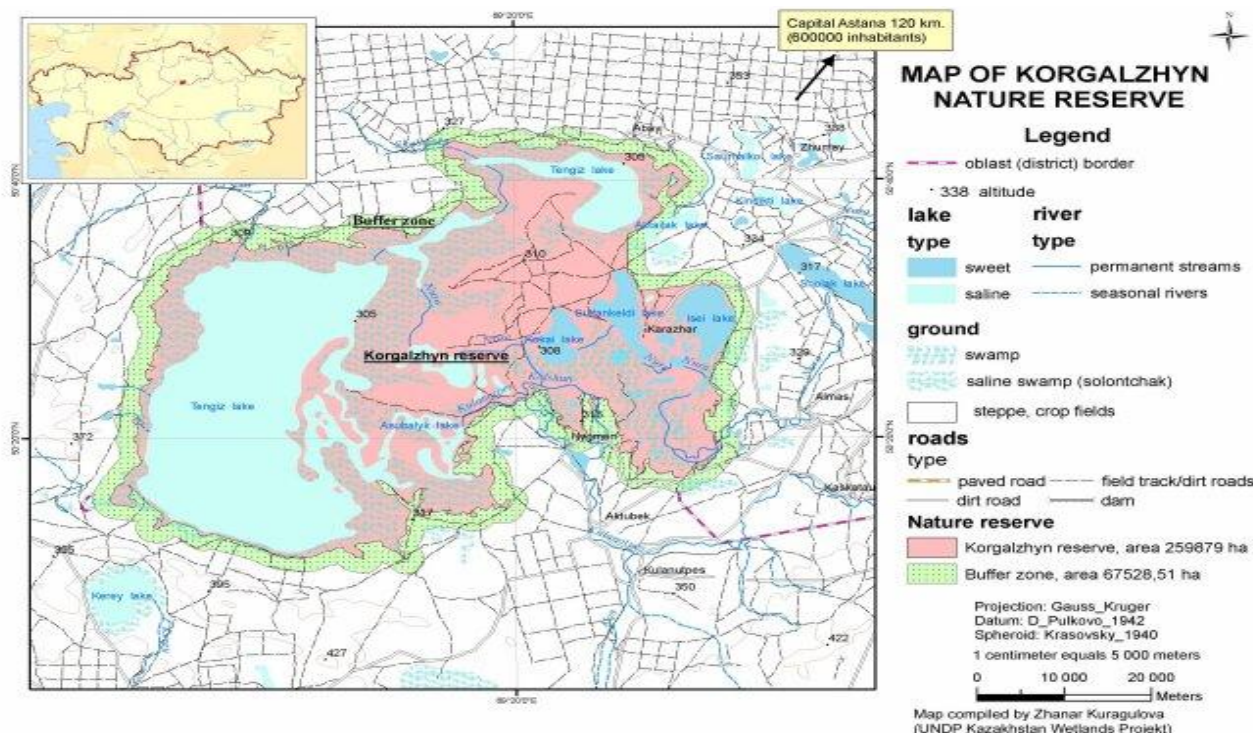


Figure 1 – Map of the nature reserve «Korgalzhyn» [1]

It is the world's northernmost nesting colony of flamingos. Back in the Paleogene, when the entire Tengiz-Korgalzhyn cavity was covered by the sea of Tetis, they have nested here. The population of flamingos in a season reaches 60,000 individuals. Forage base of Lake Tengiz can provide nutritional requirements for the 15-16 million birds. It should be noted that the Tengiz-Korgalzhyn lakes do not have equal lakes within migratory routes.

The untouched nature strikes and creates special conditions for rest. The period of reserve visit from May to September 4 ecological routes (optional) are organized [2]:

1. "Akku" automobile, tourist and excursion, educational and enlightening, the length is 90 km, duration is 7 hours.

2. "Flamingo" automobile, tourist and excursion, educational and enlightening, the length is 155 km, duration is 11 hours.

3. "Akbroken" automobile, tourist and excursion, educational and enlightening, the length is 220 km, duration is 9 hours.

4. Aksu-Zhabagli and Korgalzhyn Reserves: Ornithological tour.

In 1978 the department of excursion service was created. There is also a museum with a rich

collection of exhibits reflecting fauna and flora of steppe and lake areas.

A modern Visit Center which is the largest in country attracts thousands inhabitants of our republic and foreign tourists whose numbers are increasing every year. Registration of visit of KSNR (Korgalzhyn State Nature Reserve)- 500tg.

All routes start with a visit of Visit Center in Korgalzhyn. After visiting of museum tourists leave to the reserve. Survey of the territory of the reserve and supervision over birds are provided.

You can reach it by automobile, taxi, bus during 3 hours. Direction –Korgalzhyn track. The base of busses and rout taxis is on the “Sapazhay-Astana” bus station.

For rest in the Karazhar there is a tourist camp with two - four-seater wooden houses: single beds, bedside tables, TV (satellite TV), refrigerator. The guest house with a full range of household accessories is located. Cost of house with two-seater 2000 tg and four-seater 4000tg. There is an opportunity to carry out a walk on the lake on the boat, to fish from a pier. There is a convenient coastline for a beach, nearby the lake with salty mud in 10 km from Karazhar.

Table 1 – Extra services in the Karazhar [3]

Type of service	Cost for one person, tenge (tg)	Time	
Bathhouses	1000	1 hour	
Type of service	Cost for one person, tg	Time	
Parking (transport unit)	80	1 day	
Yurta rent	350	1 day	
Shower	350	0,5 hour	
Work of guide	1250 (group up to 20 people)	1 day	
Work Inspector - guide	1600 (group up to 20 people)		
Dining services (gas stove, microwave, refrigerator, electricity, water, tables, chairs)	150	1 hour	
Cooking service (customer products)	2000	1 day	Group up to 5 people
Cooking service (customer products)	3000	1 day	Group up to 10 people
Cooking service (customer products)	5000	1 day	Group up to 20 people
Ecological fee	140	1 day	Payment at the entrance to the reserve

"Fishing dawns" is sports/amateur fishing. In the period from December to February sports/amateur fishing is organized on specially allocated sites of the reserve of the Korgalzhyn state natural park. For convenience of fishermen in the Karazhar there are 6- 8-seater inhabited lodges. Cost of one place in tenge - 1500. Meals are not provided. There is an equipped kitchen, for preparation of hot food.

As a conclusion we can say that, unfortunately, Korgalzhyn remains an unknown place even for locals, in spite of the fact that it is located only in

three hours' journey by car from Astana, and the set of different types of birds are concentrated exactly there. It should be noted that Korgalzhyn is listed the natural territories being a part of World Natural Heritage, according to UNESCO classification.

Low-popularity of the territory assumes that tourism here is rather new and not widespread. Nevertheless, there come a large number of people from all over the world who watch birds, and low-popularity of this place helped to avoid environment pollution that, unfortunately, is observed in other places.

Reference

- 1 United Nations Development Programme in Kazakhstan.
- 2 Official site of the Information and Resource Center for tourism of the Korgalzhyn area of Akmola region.
- 3 http://www.kazakhstan.orexca.com/rus/korgalzhyn_reserve_kazakhstan.shtml