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## NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE OF JIZZAKH REGION AS DEVELOPMENT FACTORS OF ECOTOURISM

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### ABSTRACT

The cultural and natural resources of the regions are an important factor in the development of eco-tourism. In total, there are 427 cultural heritage sites in the Jizzakh region, of which 268 are archaeological monuments, 100 are architectural monuments, 59 are monuments of monumental art.

### KEYWORDS

Cultural heritage, ecotourism, architectural monuments, monumental monuments, archaeological sites, ethnotourism, pilgrimage tourism, historical archaeological sites.

### INTRODUCTION

The legal principles of safeguarding the cultural heritage objects in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan are being systematically enhanced. The Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan, relevant laws, and legal acts provide important guidelines for these activities. Specifically, the legal mechanisms for organizing these activities are clearly defined in the laws pertaining to "the extraction and importation of cultural treasures," "the preservation and utilization of cultural heritage objects," "the preservation and utilization of archaeological heritage objects," "the procedures for

archival work," and "regulations concerning museums" [1,2,3,4,5].

The cultural heritage is divided into tangible and intangible forms. If we consider tangible cultural heritage, it includes archaeological sites, monumental landmarks, architectural and artistic treasures. As for intangible cultural heritage, it encompasses oral traditions and expressions, including language as an essential component; performing arts; customs, rituals, and festivals; knowledge and practices related to nature and communities; and expertise and skills associated with traditional craftsmanship. The rapid disappearance of intangible cultural heritage under the

conditions of globalization and the pressures of mass culture has necessitated international efforts to preserve it. These traditional intangible values, passed down from generation to generation and from person to person, require constant revitalization by the human community. In today's world, where there are urgent and complex challenges in managing the environment, understanding and acknowledging the crucial role and significance of both natural and cultural heritage is imperative [4].

The total number of immovable cultural heritage objects in Uzbekistan is 8208. Among them, there are 4748 archaeological sites, 2250 architectural treasures, 678 monumental artworks, and 532 significant locations. In the rankings based on cultural heritage objects by region, Samarkand region holds the second position with 1607 cultural heritage objects, followed by Kashkadarya region with 1468 immovable cultural heritage objects and Bukhara region with 829 tangible and intangible cultural heritage objects. Jizzakh region secures the seventh position among the fourteen regions with 427 cultural heritage objects.

The purpose and mission. Enhancing the sustainable utilization of natural resources for the development of society and recognizing the mutual influence between nature and society as a fundamental factor. The article aims to promote the phased organization and optimization of heritage formation and activities, contributing to stability and overall prosperity in society and proving its significance by addressing the social instability and degradation of the utilization of natural resources. Comprehensive study of recognized objects and events of cultural and natural heritage, as well as the scientific basis for their preservation and utilization policies, has provided an opportunity to achieve the goal of the research work.

Based on this, we have endeavored to integrate the scientific provision of the phased component of heritage management, focused on identifying and studying fundamental strategic issues in the field, with the resolution of related practical challenges.

- Identifying the historical and geographical initial conditions of heritage formation.
- Exploring the position of heritage in the evolution of resource utilization.
- Determining the interconnection between heritage events and the sustainable development of society.
- Formulating the scientific basis for understanding the regional differentiation of cultural and natural heritage.
- Developing the geographical aspects of heritage management.
- Proposing conceptual approaches and specific recommendations for promoting heritage ideas and advancing sustainable development education.

An exclusive focus on the level of organization, historical preservation, and tourist attractions in the Jizzakh region until the 20th century was not carried out through dedicated expeditions. Starting from the 20s and 30s of the 20th century, under the initiative of the Turkistan People's Commissariat, special ethnographic expeditions were organized to the Kattakurgan and Jizakh regions of the Samarkand province. Since the late 20s of the XX th century, particularly in 1928, with the efforts of Sredazkomstaris (Central Asia's Committee for the Preservation of Art and Nature, Museum Affairs, and Ancient Monuments), there has been a systematic focus on the study of historical monuments in various places of Central Asia. Under the leadership of archaeologist M.Ye.Masson, a special expedition was organized,

through which the history of Mirzachul sardobas was studied. Additionally, the Andreev-led expedition was conducted in the settlements of Jizzakh and Nurata, as well as the surrounding areas of the Kyzylkum desert [1]. Under the leadership of I. Zarubin, ethnographic expeditions were organized to the districts and volosts of the Samarkand province, as well as the Farish, Sintob, Karatash, Nakurt, Bogdon, and Tosin volosts of the Jizzakh district, resulting in a comprehensive collection of statistical and ethnographic information. Some of these expeditions focused on gathering information about the historical significance and societal functions of sacred sites and pilgrimage destinations during that period. For instance, M. Andreev's work includes compiling a list of mosques, cemeteries, and other material cultural heritage sites, with a significant emphasis on the activities of religious leaders, scholars, and clergy. [2] It is not difficult to understand that from the perspective of Soviet bureaucratic ideology, this issue was addressed. From the mid-20th century onwards, research on the history and material cultural heritage of the Jizzax region began, with the initial studies being associated with the names of Ya. Gulamov and A. Muhammadjanov. Based on the research of the 1980s, N. Rahmonov and A. Umaraliev provided a comprehensive overview of the cultural history of Soviet Uzbekistan in their work "Sketches of the Cultural History of Soviet Uzbekistan." This publication documented various components of culture, including cultural heritage sites, museums, and the condition of historical landmarks during the Soviet period, presenting general information about their adaptation to the requirements of the Soviet system.

The research methodology is based on the principles of dialectical materialism, taking into account the modern paradigms of geography and related fields of knowledge, and making predictions about them. It

addresses the phased heterogeneity of the phenomena being studied.

### Research and its results

The ancient Silk Road in Jizzakh has been one of the most significant strategic assets. It has been revitalized based on the demands of the new era and now serves as a valuable asset in international tourism as well. In the vicinity of Jizzakh, there are a total of 427 cultural heritage sites, with 268 of them being archaeological sites, 100 being architectural landmarks, and 59 being monumental artworks.

The continuation of Mirzachul's legacy is shaping the districts of Jizzakh. Although these areas are referred to as rural zones, they are not devoid of any traces of ancient settlements. Within the Jizzakh region, there have emerged cities like Arnasoy, Dustlik, Paxtakor, Zafaraobod, and Guliston, which have been newly established within the past 40-50 years. Alongside these, Jizzakh, Forish (New village), G'allarol (Sarbozor), Baxmal, and Zomin, which have been known since ancient times as large villages, have now transformed into bustling urban centers. They are being developed with stadiums, open water reservoirs, tennis courts, botanical gardens, sports facilities, and playgrounds, all meeting the demands of the modern era. Consequently, Jizzakh, Paxtakor, Gallaorol, and other cities frequently host prestigious sports competitions [8].

Jizzakh holds a significant position as one of the crucial strategic assets of the ancient Silk Road. It has been revitalized to serve a purposeful role in international tourism, aligning with the demands of the new era. The "Gate of Temur" plays a vital role in this regard. Situated near the convergence of the Zarafshan River, known for its abundant water flow, and the Baxmal gorge, the Gate of Temur benefits from the presence

of the Sangzor (Tashlak) River, which traverses through the mountains and contributes to enhancing the climate conditions of Jizzakh city and its environs. Consequently, Jizzakh city, along with its western, northern, and eastern directions, experiences hot summers and cold winters. The mountain ranges of Turkistan (Zamin region) and Nurata (Gallaaral and Farish regions) to the south create a barrier against the harsh desert winds. The warm (in summers) and cold (in winters) winds that originate from the Farish lakes frequently influence and alter the climate in the city's vicinity. The presence of the Arnasay Lake, which provides a significant level of humidity, prevents the region from experiencing extreme temperatures like the regions of Kazakhstan. Hence, the ancient rural zones of Jizzakh witness excessively hot summers during the season.

The mountainous regions of Zamin, Baxmal, and Farish districts are consistently favorable in terms of climate. There, orchards and vineyards are found, providing a nourishing environment for the physical well-being of students and youth, as well as serving as dwelling places for hardworking individuals. Notably, there are sanatoriums of national significance, namely "Zamin" and "Farish," which contribute to the overall well-being of the community. Another distinctive feature of this region is the common practice of grazing and cultivating livestock in most households and farms. Traditional celebrations and festivities are also abundant, as they are deeply rooted in the cultural heritage passed down from generation to generation. Therefore, the folk orchestras, customary traditions, rituals, and narratives found in the folklore of Jizzakh region serve as invaluable cultural legacies passed on from ancestors to descendants.

| Nº | District, city       | Overall | Archeology | Architecture | Monumental<br>artistic legacies | Pilgrimage sites and | Ecotouristic<br>destinations                   |
|----|----------------------|---------|------------|--------------|---------------------------------|----------------------|--|
| 1  | The city of Jizzakh  | 32      | 9          | 13           | 10                              | 2                    | Sangzor river, Molguzar mountain ranges        |
| 2  | Sh.Rashidov district | 50      | 40         | 4            | 6                               | 10                   | Molguzar mountain ranges                       |
| 3  | Zamin district       | 109     | 73         | 33           | 3                               | 30                   | Turkistan and Molguzar mountain ranges         |
| 4  | Farish districts     | 34      | 15         | 15           | 4                               | 11                   | Nurata mountain ranges, Aydar-<br>Arnasoy lake |
| 5  | Zarbdar district     | 22      | 11         | 3            | 8                               | -                    | Mirzachul                                      |



|    |                    |     |     |     |    |    |   |
|----|--------------------|-----|-----|-----|----|----|---|
| 6  | Gallaral district  | 71  | 47  | 9   | 14 | 6  | Sangzor river, Molguzar mountain ranges                           |
| 7  | Yangiabad district | 29  | 18  | 11  | 1  | 12 | Turkistan mountain ranges   |
| 8  | Baxmal district    | 68  | 55  | 11  | 2  | 8  | The Turkistan and Molguzar mountain ranges, and the Sangzor river |
| 9  | Mirzachul district | 5   | no  | 1   | 4  | -  | Mirzachul   |
| 10 | Dustlik district   | 3   | no  | no  | 3  | -  | Mirzachul   |
| 11 | Arnasay district   | 1   | no  | no  | 1  | -  | The Aydar-Arnasoy lake and Qyzylkum                               |
| 12 | Paxtakar district  | 3   | no  | no  | 3  | -  | Mirzachul   |
| 13 | Zafarabad district | no  | no  | no  | no | -  | Aydar-Arnasoy lake and Mirzachul                                  |
|    | OVERALL            | 427 | 268 | 100 | 59 | 79 |   |

Within the Jizzakh region, there are a total of 427 cultural heritage sites, including 268 archaeological relics, 100 architectural landmarks, and 59 monumental art treasures. Among the districts within the region, the most prominent in terms of cultural heritage sites are Zamin (107 sites), Gallaral (71 sites), and Baxmal (68 sites). On the other hand, Arnasoy and Zafarabad districts are considered to have the lowest number of notable cultural heritage sites.

The tourism prospects in the rural areas of the province are divided into three levels: high (level 1), medium

(level 2), and low (level 3). Level 1 includes the villages of Zamin, Baxmal, Gallaral, and Jizzakh districts. Level 2 includes the towns of Forish and Yangiobod. And at a relatively lower level (level 3), we can include the districts of Zarbdar, Mirzachul, and other districts located in the Chul region. However, it should be emphasized that all historical sites in the province have not been adequately studied or developed in terms of tourism infrastructure. It is necessary to take measures to conduct archaeological surveys on these territories and to restore them accordingly.

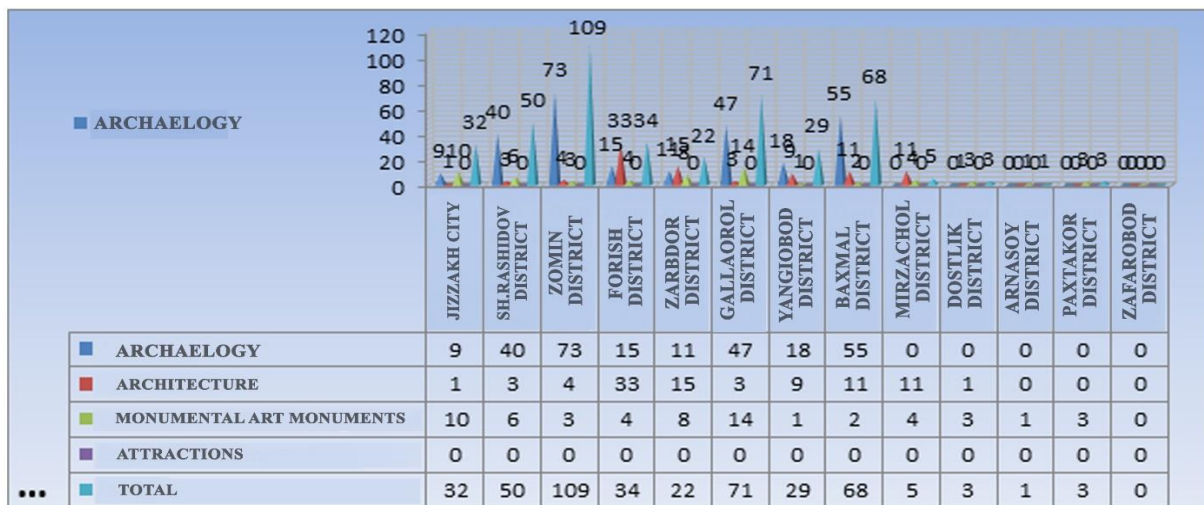
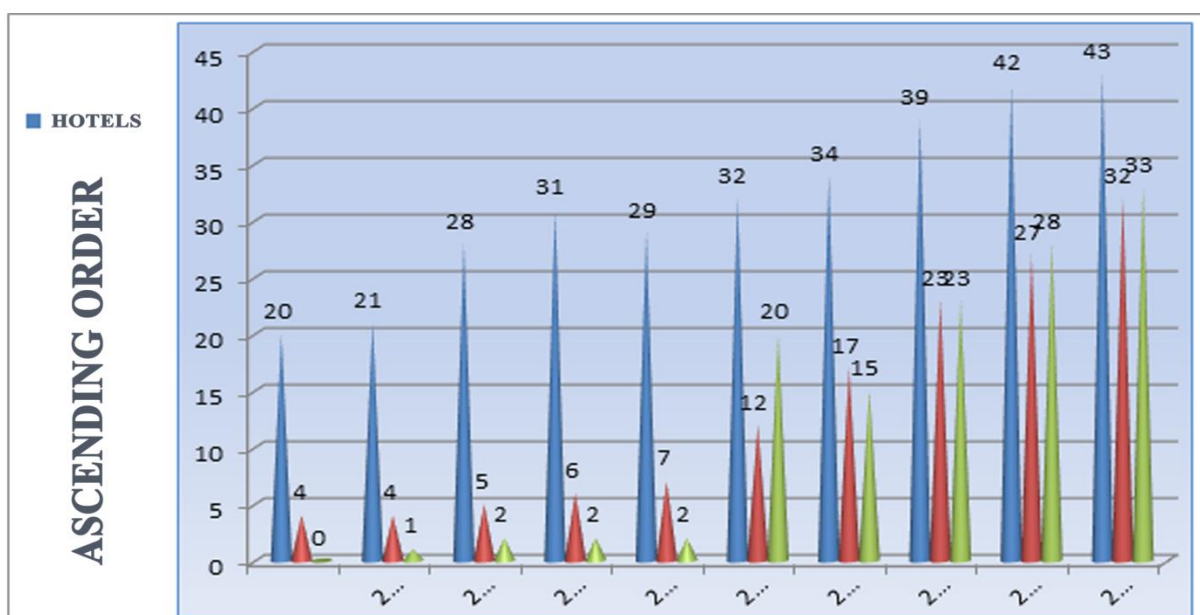


Diagram 2. The number of villages in the districts of Jizzakh Province and the tangible cultural heritage objects located within their territories.

Based on the indicators in diagram 3, it can be observed that the districts of Gallaral, Baxmal, and Zamin, which offer opportunities for tourism development at level 1, are located along the northern and western slopes of the Turkistan and Malguzar mountain ranges, making them significant from an ethnographic and historical standpoint as ancient settlements. In the areas with

moderate level tourism possibilities, there are relatively fewer objects, indicating their relatively recent historical significance. As for the districts with level 3 tourism potential, they have been established within the last 70 years, indicating their proximity to the present time.



### **Diagram 3. The ten-year progression of the means of establishment in the province of Jizzakh**

Located in the picturesque foothills, the natural environment and climate of the districts situated along the Tugai rivers have played a vital role in the emergence of a burgeoning tourism industry in these regions, as well as the ongoing efforts to elevate them to global standards. Moreover, in areas possessing low to moderate tourism potential, the development of agrotourism can be pursued in conjunction with other forms of tourism such as rural tourism, fishing tourism, ecotourism, sports revitalization, and ethnographic tourism. The foundation of Jizzakh region's economy, encompassing predominantly agricultural activities, particularly horticulture, sericulture, and silkworm breeding, relies heavily on rural communities. For instance, while Gallaral district specializes in cotton cultivation, Farish is renowned for grape cultivation, Baxmal excels in apricot production, and Zamin predominantly focuses on sericulture. Similarly, the main rural economy of Mirzachul, Dustlik, Paxtakar, and Zarbdar districts revolves around the cultivation of cotton, silk, and other staple crops.

The unique treasures and phenomena of cultural and natural heritage are predominantly manifested through their associations with preserved areas of natural, historical, cultural, and multifunctional significance. Furthermore, they can be attributed to various factors, often being characterized by unofficially protected sites that particularly hold significant natural and socio-cultural functions.

### **CONCLUSION**

In accordance with the national regulations outlined in Article 5 of the Resolutions of the 119 th decision of the Cabinet of Ministers on "Inclusion of cultural and natural heritage in the Representative List of UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage, as well as in the

World Memory List, in the period 2021-2030 by the Republic of Uzbekistan," the archaeological site of Xanbandi and the Zamin Mountains in the Farish district of Jizzakh region have been proposed for inclusion in the World Heritage List.

However, the preservation of cultural heritage objects in these areas remains insufficient. During subsequent research in the Gallaral district, it was discovered that construction work had been carried out at the archaeological site of "Sarbazar" (Kanchikar hill) located within the Sarbazar Nature Reserve. Specifically, a car wash facility had been built within the territory of the cultural heritage site without proper authorization from the Jizzax Regional Department of Cultural Heritage, following the decision made by the Gallaorol district governor on December 12, 2015, to allocate the land to a citizen named T.B. Additionally, in Zamin district, damage was caused to the non-moveable cultural heritage object "Jin tepa," located within the "Navai" Nature Reserve, Achchi village, by the resident Abdukarimov Maksud, who constructed a residential building on the property without permission from the authorities. Furthermore, the western part of the non-moveable cultural heritage object "Jar tepa," located within the "Sirgali" Nature Reserve, Gallakor district, Zamin, has been partially encroached upon by the road services unitary enterprise of Zamin district. As a result, the estimated amount of damage inflicted on the state amounted to 477,576,800 Uzbekistan sum.

The identification and protection of cultural heritage objects that are currently being observed necessitate the implementation of measures that cannot be delayed in terms of their significance in today's world. This is because the preservation of the region's tangible and intangible heritage is vital for the

development of ecotourism, ensuring that natural and recreational areas are adequately represented. All of the objects in the province are located in natural habitats, contributing to the enrichment and enhancement of ecotourism routes. In other words, the conservation and sustainable utilization of cultural heritage is viewed as one of the fundamental factors for the economic and social development of the region [7].

Based on the above, we propose and the following:

1. Each cultural heritage object should primarily be transformed into historical and ethnographic museums within the framework of visitor complexes.
2. Allocating funds from ecotourism routes specifically towards the exploration of archaeological sites and cultural heritage objects located in these areas, as well as the development of sustainable utilization projects.
3. Installing protective measures and information boards at natural and cultural heritage sites along ecotourism routes.
4. Increasing the production of informational and promotional videos highlighting the natural and cultural heritage objects in the region.
5. Engaging in scientific and practical study of the intangible cultural heritage, such as folk groups, renowned craftsmen, and other examples of intangible heritage, for the purpose of shaping ecotourism routes.
6. Establishing a comprehensive group of tour operators and guides who possess extensive knowledge about the natural and cultural heritage of Jizzax province.

7. Creating publications and collections that encompass the oral traditions, legends, folk songs, rituals, and customs that enrich the province's cultural and artistic heritage.

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