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ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN UKRAINE: OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROMOTION THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA AND INTERNET MARKETING, BASED ON THE EXAMPLES OF NORWAY AND ICELAND

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Abstract

Ecotourism is a rapidly developing industry in the world and has been attracting more and more attention in recent years. Compared to other countries, the promotion of ecotourism in Ukraine is still at an early stage. Nevertheless, efforts are being made to promote ecotourism in the country, in particular, with a focus on its natural and cultural heritage. In this regard, the purpose of this article is to examine the opportunities and ways to promote ecotourism in Ukraine through Internet marketing, in particular, through the use of social networks and other online tools. The article also analyses the experience of other countries where ecotourism is a popular destination in the tourism industry, such as Norway and Iceland. The study solved the following tasks: identifying areas in Ukraine where it is possible to develop ecotourism, taking into account the experience of European countries; formulating strategies for promoting ecotourism in Ukraine, using Internet marketing tools. The article uses general scientific methods to obtain substantiated results and recommendations for promoting ecotourism in Ukraine. The paper highlights the theoretical aspects of ecotourism development, analyses the experience of Norway and Iceland in this area, and offers specific strategies and materials for promoting ecotourism in Ukraine.

Keywords

ecotourism, tourist activity, marketing, promotion, Ukraine, Norway, Iceland.

Problem statement

Ecotourism is important for reducing the negative impact of tourism on the environment and contributes to the development of local communities and the socio-economic advancement of regions and countries. Ukraine, in turn, has great potential for the development of this type of tourism on its territory due to its rich biodiversity, unique natural areas and other protected areas, which will certainly be attractive to ecotourists.

The relevance of the topic

lies in the need to preserve natural and cultural heritage, which is becoming increasingly important in the face of the planet's environmental problems. Therefore, ecotourism, along with social media as a powerful tool in society, has great potential to attract tourists and promote the conservation of natural and cultural sites. In this regard, the study of the use of social media as a tool for promoting ecotourism and preserving natural and cultural heritage requires further attention and study.

Analysis of recent research and publications

There is a growing interest in this type of tourism in Ukraine. Many local researchers and practitioners are actively researching and promoting the potential of ecotourism as a means of preserving the environment and developing local communities. Their scientific work (Beidyk, 2001; Novytska, 2013; Posokhov, 2019) addresses the main problems of ecotourism in Ukraine, such as the lack of infrastructure and legal regulation of the industry. Prominent researchers and practitioners include O. Beidyk, I. Dubovych, I. Posokhov, Y. Moskovyak, O. Dmytruk, and L. Bezugla. Their research and recommendations have a positive impact on the development of ecotourism in Ukraine and contribute to the formation of environmental awareness among tourists.

As we can see, Ukraine has scientifically sound and progressive practices in the field of ecotourism. However, the country is only taking the first steps to promote ecotourism in the tourism markets.

Objective

The purpose of the article is to study the possibilities and ways of promoting ecotourism in Ukraine through Internet marketing, in particular, through the use of social networks and other online tools. The main **task** is to analyse the experience of countries such as Norway and Iceland, where ecotourism is a popular destination in the tourism industry, and to identify the most effective methods of promoting ecotourism in Ukraine. The material of the article can be useful for marketers, tour operators, ecotourists and all those interested in the development of ecotourism in Ukraine.

Summary of the main material

Megan Epler Wood, founder of The International Ecotourism Society (TIES) and author of important publications on the subject, has, in our opinion, provided one of the best definitions of this concept. Ecotourism is a form of sustainable tourism that focuses on responsible travel to natural places that preserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people (Wood, 2002).

The history of ecotourism can be traced back to the late 1960s and early 1970s, when concerns about environmental preservation and sustainable development began to emerge, and it was only in the 1980s and 1990s that the world witnessed the rapid growth of ecotourism as a market niche.

It is believed that the term "ecotourism" was first used by Héctor Ceballos-Lascuráin, a Mexican architect who later became an environmentalist, who defined it as "tourism involving travel to natural areas for the purpose of preserving, observing, exploring or experiencing the natural environment" (Ali et al., 2021; Dobričić et al., 2022; Stanković et al., 2021). His interview with representatives of the Inkaterra Machu Picchu Pueblo Hotel reveals that he coined the term "ecotourism" in July 1983, when he was Director General of Standards and Technology at the Mexican Secretariat of Urban Development and Environment (SEDUE) and founding president of PRONATURA, an influential environmental NGO in Mexico (Inkaterra Machu Picchu Pueblo Hotel, 2014). Despite the fact that almost 40 years have passed since the term ecotourism was first introduced, it is still relevant and valid. This is confirmed by the fact that the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has adopted it as a basis, thus playing a key role in the development of ecotourism.

The World Tourism Organisation and some scholars (Johnston, 2014, p. 6) point out that ecotourism, as a sub-sector of the tourism industry, is the fastest growing in many parts of the world and is developing more than four times faster than most other types of tourism.

When it comes to the digital expression of ecotourism's popularity, we can learn that the global ecotourism market generated USD 181.1 billion in 2019 and is estimated to generate USD 333.8 billion by 2027, showing a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 14.3% from 2021 to 2027 (Himanshu & Roshan, 2021).

At the same time, there are ongoing discussions about what constitutes "real" ecotourism. The concept of ecotourism is often misinterpreted and used as a marketing tool to promote nature-related tourism activities that do not contribute to environmental conservation or improve the well-being of people in local communities. Uncontrolled actions of tourists and non-compliance with environmental standards can lead to disruption of the natural balance, pollution, etc.

Therefore, we would also like to highlight the points of the theoretical basis of ecotourism (Donohoe & Needham, 2006, p. 192), where the authors of which emphasize that this type of recreation should be based on nature orientation, conservation, environmental education and sustainability, benefit sharing and responsibility. Practices that do not meet the above criteria can be called "pseudo-ecotourism" (New World Encyclopedia).

We would like to highlight the experience of a country that has implemented a number of steps to support and encourage sustainable development practices in the tourism sector. Iceland has developed its own certification

system for tourism operators that promote the principles of sustainable development. This includes close cooperation with local communities to ensure that they benefit from ecotourism activities, and their interests, needs or concerns are taken into account. These actions help to create a sense of ownership and pride among local communities and contribute to the long-term sustainability of the industry.

Ecotourism, as part of the tourism industry in Iceland, also makes a significant contribution to the country's economy, which suffered during the financial crisis of 2007-2008. The industry is projected to be worth €7.02 billion in 2030 (Centre For Public Impact [CPI], 2016).

We can see that certification contributes to the economic growth of ecotourism and the country's economy as a whole. This happens both by attracting investors who are interested in green initiatives and by working directly with local suppliers. In addition, ecotourism helps the population become more conscious of preserving and protecting the country's natural resources.

It is therefore logical that such an important aspect of the Icelandic ecotourism industry, which is based on various organisations that certify ecotourism practices, is also popular in another country rich in unique natural landscapes, Norway.

For example, Norwegian companies that meet standards, rules and guidelines for environmental sustainability, social responsibility and sustainable development are certified by Green Travel. Additional criteria include waste reduction, promotion of regional growth, use of renewable energy sources, efficient use of water resources and energy efficiency. And tourists in Norway can use Green Travel-accredited destinations when choosing their tour.

Other organisations and certifications that encourage tour operators to apply environmental practices in their operations include Eco-Lighthouse (a certification scheme focusing on environmental management in business), Green Key (an international environmental label awarded to accommodation providers and restaurants that meet environmental standards), Nordic Swan Ecolabel (a system that certifies companies for their sustainable and environmentally friendly operations and social responsibility).

The Rainforest Alliance is an international organisation that accredits travel agencies located in protected areas in more than 70 different countries. Its criteria include economic viability, social responsibility, nature and culture preservation. The Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) and the Norwegian government have similar criteria for implementing ecotourism practices and promote the "Leave No Trace" principle, which encourages visitors to minimize their impact on natural areas by throwing away all litter and respecting wildlife (Sustainable Tourism in the North). Therefore, Norwegian ecotourism provides an exceptional form of outdoor recreation based on caring and responsible attitude towards nature, biodiversity and resources.

However, it has been argued (Viken, 2006, p. 39) that ecotourism should not be seen as a separate concept in Norway, as most Norwegian tourism is already aligned with its principles and is inherently sustainable and environmentally beneficial, and nature-based practices are deeply rooted in society.

Nevertheless, it is worth noting that ecotourism could be a potential solution to improve the reputation of Eastern and Central European countries, as they are often associated with the socialist past and its industrial heritage, where environmental pollution was not a concern.

Although Ukraine has diverse and unique natural landscapes, including the Carpathians, steppes, and the Black Sea coast, it is worth noting that this type of tourism is not as popular as in the countries discussed earlier. Therefore, it is important to conduct a study on the benefits of ecotourism development in Ukraine based on successful initiatives in other countries, such as Norway and Iceland.

Biodiversity can be highlighted as a good incentive for ecotourists in Ukraine to visit nature reserves, national parks and other wildlife areas to learn more about the amazing range of wildlife, including brown bears, lynxes, wolves, rare bird species, etc. Cultural heritage can also be a good reason to develop ecotourism, as Ukraine has a historically rich and diverse culture.

Despite the fact that Ukraine has significant potential for ecotourism development, there are also some obstacles that need to be overcome in order to fully and effectively develop this industry on its territory. The authors of this article see the lack of infrastructure as one of the main obstacles to development, as potential sites for this type of tourism are often located in areas where there are usually no roads, electricity or water supply. This is often due to the fact that ecotourism enterprises in Ukraine face difficulties in securing funding for their operations and expansion due to limited access to financial resources.

In our opinion, this lack of funding, support and promotion of ecotourism activities is mostly due to the fact that politicians and the general public are not sufficiently aware of the ecotourism opportunities in Ukraine. In addition, there is a lack of coordination between government agencies, ecotourism enterprises and local communities, which, together with the lack of rules and guidelines for ecotourism, can lead to the emergence of unscrupulous tourism operators who are able to exploit the environment and local communities for their own

benefit. Without proper control, ecotourism activities can lead to environmental degradation.

The paradox of the ecotourism industry is that, while it can be harmful to the environment and wildlife if not carefully managed, the economic benefits it brings act as an incentive for governments and local people to protect ecosystems and animals that might otherwise be destroyed (CABI, 2004).

The war has also damaged natural areas and ecosystems in Ukraine. Currently, 900 protected areas in Ukraine are occupied or subject to hostilities, covering 1.2 million hectares, or about 30% of the area of all protected areas in Ukraine (Ministry of Environmental Protection and Natural Resources of Ukraine, 2022).

It is difficult to read about what is happening on the territory of the first Ukrainian reserve to be included in the UNESCO list, Askania-Nova. Due to hostilities, missiles or their parts hitting the reserve, fires have repeatedly broken out, injuring animals and burning plants listed in the Red Book of Ukraine (Detectives Investigative Journalism Bureau, 2022). It is important to understand that animals can also suffer psychologically from the consequences of war, as they have been witnessing hostilities since the first days of the war.

We would like to point out that other countries trying to promote ecotourism have faced the problems described above, but the problem of the destruction of the nature reserve fund is unique to Ukraine. Therefore, it is necessary to find a balance between tourism development and environmental protection, so that future generations can also enjoy the beauty and richness of Ukrainian nature.

In order to start creating a sustainable and ethical ecotourism sector in Ukraine and unlock the full potential of the industry, a variety of approaches and methods can be applied now. These may include establishing cooperation with local communities, developing ecotourism routes that take into account the ecological and cultural characteristics of the region, introducing environmental standards and certification, attracting funding for ecotourism development, raising awareness of environmental issues and conservation of natural resources through various training and information events. And most importantly, with the advent of the Internet and social media, ecotourism can be promoted through the use of numerous online platforms.

Depending on the target audience, geographical location and marketing goals, ecotourism can be promoted in different ways. In the early days of its development, ecotourism advertising was usually carried out through travel brochures, magazines and agencies. Promotional materials emphasized that ecotourism destinations have special qualities and provide an opportunity for responsible and safe exploration of nature.

While sharing attractive photos or videos of unique wildlife and local cultural experiences on social media can be useful, it is not enough to promote ecotourism. An effective marketing strategy for this industry typically involves highlighting the distinctive and sustainable characteristics of the destination or travel package, as well as targeting environmentally conscious and socially responsible visitors.

There are many marketing strategies that can be used to effectively promote ecotourism. To achieve success, it is important to develop a variety of tactics to reach the target audience. The methods listed in Table 1 are just a few examples of the many promotional tools that can be used through the use of the Internet.

Table1: Modern strategies for promoting ecotourism through the use of the Internet

Name of the strategy	Strategy description
Online platforms	Online platforms can help promote ecotourism by providing easy access to information. For example, websites and mobile apps with a collection of recommendations and reviews of ecotourism destinations (TripAdvisor, Booking.com and Airbnb) allow tourists to quickly find the information they need and make informed choices. In addition, online booking of ecotourism tours and services can be a convenient tool for tourists, allowing them to book and pay for their trip online, providing convenience and speed in the process of planning and organizing a trip.
Social networks	The use of social media as a tool for ecotourism marketing not only allows to attract the attention of potential customers, but also to communicate with them, which is important for building mutually beneficial relationships. For social media marketing campaigns to be successful, you need to use hashtags to help spread the word about your services. On Facebook and Twitter, for example, you can post photos and videos of ecotourism destinations, as well as hold online contests that will stimulate interest in this topic. Instagram is an ideal platform for visual marketing, where you can post photos, videos and stories that showcase natural beauty and a lifestyle that promotes nature conservation. And YouTube is a great place to post videos that explain ecotourism in detail.

Content marketing	Informative blogs, articles, videos and photos can be created to showcase the destination's exceptional features, such as unique flora and fauna and local culture. Content marketing can also include video tours, virtual tours and other content formats that allow potential visitors to learn more about the proposed destination. Content marketing can be a very effective tool for promoting ecotourism when used in conjunction with other marketing strategies.
Search engine optimization (SEO)	Improving a destination's website for search engine optimization (SEO) can improve its visibility and ranking in search results, especially when users search for ecotourism-related keywords. As a result, more organic traffic can be directed to a travel agency's website, increasing its reach and potential to attract visitors interested in sustainable tourism. In the digital world, search engine marketing allows you to gain a better understanding of your customers and determine what type of ecotourism destination should be promoted to each group of people.

Source: Dwivedi et al. 2020

Typically, ecotourism is marketed in a way that emphasizes the natural, cultural, educational and unique aspects that can be experienced, while stressing the importance of responsible and sustainable travel.

Marketing strategies will almost always focus on the natural beauty of the country, its abundant wildlife and the various outdoor activities available. However, the organisers of such marketing campaigns may differ significantly depending on the level of ecotourism development in a particular country.

In recent years, the ecotourism industry has increasingly used virtual reality and interactive web content in marketing campaigns, encouraging users to create their own content. The use of virtual reality technology allows potential ecotourists to learn more about the destination and the activities on offer before making a booking. This creates interest and helps to increase the number of visitors.

In countries with a strong focus on environmental protection and ecotourism development, governments have established regulations and policies aimed at preserving natural resources. In addition, governments are working with tourism industry stakeholders to develop ecotourism initiatives. For example, The Icelandic Tourism Cluster is a collaboration between the government and the private sector of the tourism industry, which aims to promote sustainable tourism development and innovation in the industry, and help its members adopt ecotourism practices.

Iceland clearly demonstrates a commitment to sustainability in the tourism industry, as many of the ecotourism activities offered in the country, such as geothermal and glacier tours, are powered by renewable energy. This underlines Iceland's position as a leader in sustainable development and makes the country more attractive to ecotourists. The Icelandic government has also established The Icelandic Tourism Board, which is responsible for promoting Iceland as a tourist destination with a focus on sustainable development.

The Norwegian Ecotourism Association also provides its members (from small family businesses to large corporations) with a range of resources and support services, including marketing strategies, training and certification programmes. In addition to supporting its members, the Association also aims to raise awareness of ecotourism and make Norway more attractive for environmentally responsible travel. To achieve these goals, it encourages responsible behaviour among tourists, which includes promoting low-carbon transport choices, minimizing waste and energy use, and respecting local culture and the environment.

In general, while Norway has a well-developed ecotourism industry and lives up to Abhijit Naskar's slogan "Nature does not belong to us, we belong to nature", Ukraine is still in the early stages of promoting its own ecotourism sector.

We believe that in order to gain the support of the Ukrainian government for the development of ecotourism, it is necessary to develop a promotion strategy that will reflect the benefits of ecotourism for the country and promote its development in the national economy. The strategy should include a description of the target audience, a list of promising areas for ecotourism in Ukraine, and a budget for marketing activities.

In order to achieve the goal of a marketing campaign to promote ecotourism in Ukraine, it is necessary to pay attention to environmentally conscious travelers aged 25 to 45 who are interested in gaining ecological experience while travelling. This audience is characterised by an average and above average level of education and income and has a need for unique experiences that have a positive impact on the environment and local communities in the country.

Depending on the strategies and objectives of the marketing campaign, international tourists can also be identified as a target audience for promotion. If the main goal of the campaign is to attract the attention of foreign tourists to ecotourism in Ukraine, then this target audience may consist of travellers from other countries with a

high level of education and income who are looking for unique natural places to visit.

Potential ecotourism destinations in Ukraine should be characterised by a high level of biodiversity and natural resources to attract the attention of environmentally conscious tourists. Potential ecotourism destinations in Ukraine include The Carpathian Mountains, the Danube Delta, the Black Sea coast, the city of Kamianets-Podilskyi, the Shatsk National Nature Park, the Oleshky Sands and the Askania Nova Biosphere Reserve. Unfortunately, access to the latter is currently closed, but we hope that after the end of hostilities on our territory, these places will receive not only visitors, but also proper funding.

Speaking of money, a potential marketing campaign aimed at attracting a significant number of regular travellers in Ukraine to the ecotourism industry could have a proposed budget of around US\$100,000.

This is quite an impressive amount, but a marketing budget in Ukraine can include various costs for advertising channels. For example, we might need to spend about \$20,000 on social media advertising, or \$15,000 on influencer marketing. In addition, companies can spend money on content marketing, search engine optimisation (SEO), event organisation and sponsorship, as well as press releases and media relations. The approximate cost of each of these channels can range from \$15,000 to \$20,000.

The digital advertising budget will be used to develop and publish promotional material on popular online platforms such as Google and Facebook, targeting the audiences described above. Social media campaigns will involve the creation and promotion of content on various social media platforms, which may include Instagram, YouTube and Twitter. Content creation will involve the development of interesting and informative blog posts, videos and photos that showcase the beauty and benefits of ecotourism destinations in Ukraine.

There is a growing community of travel bloggers in Ukraine who aim to promote sustainable tourism in the country. They actively share their experiences and opinions on tourism, highlighting Ukraine's natural beauty and unique cultural heritage. Bloggers can engage in partnerships with local businesses and organisations that promote sustainable tourism and responsible travel practices, which will become part of influencer marketing.

Some of the well-known Ukrainian travel bloggers that we believe could be partnered with include: Anton Ptushkin (@ptuxermann) with 5.63 million subscribers on his YouTube channel (as of March 2023); Vlad Khilchenko (@OdnoyPravoy) with 180 thousand subscribers (as of March 2023); Max Uzol and Olya Manko (@uzolimanko) with 170 thousand subscribers (as of March 2023); and the Ukrainian-language travel project Blog 360 (@Blog360channel) with 27.1 thousand subscribers on YouTube (as of March 2023).

For the sustainable tourism initiative in Ukraine to be successful, it is still crucial to establish cooperation with stakeholders and policy makers. This cooperation can help to create a sense of ownership and responsibility for the initiative, which in turn will increase commitment and dedication to achieving common goals.

Table 2 shows examples of promotional materials we have developed that can be used for posting on various social media platforms.

Table2: Examples of ecotourism promotion on different social media platforms

Social platform	Advertising material
Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, etc.	<p>"Get ready to discover the incredible beauty of Ukraine and immerse yourself in an ecotourism adventure. Visit the Carpathian Mountains and enjoy panoramic views from the tops of the mountains, or dive into the clear mountain rivers and lakes. Relax on the Black Sea coast and enjoy the crystal clear sea and incredible beaches. Visit national parks where you can connect with nature and enjoy its beauty. Join our mission to protect nature and support sustainable tourism in Ukraine!" #ecotourism #Ukraine #nature #travel</p> <p>"Escape the city and discover the hidden gems of Ukraine's natural beauty with our eco-tours. Immerse yourself in stunning landscapes, local culture and eco-friendly practices that support the environment and local communities. Whether you're looking for a quiet hike in the Carpathians, kayaking on the Dnipro River, or a relaxing holiday in an eco-friendly eco-cottage, we have something for everyone! Book your eco-tour now and join us in creating a better future for Ukraine's natural treasures. #EcotourismUkraine #EcologicalTravel #ResponsibleTourism"</p>
YouTube	<p>[Scene opens with a camera moving through a beautiful forest in Ukraine, with birds chirping in the background]</p> <p>Narrator: Are you looking for peace and quiet or do you want to escape the hustle and bustle of city life? Or do you want to experience the unsurpassed beauty of nature? Welcome to Ukraine, where the magic of ecotourism awaits you!</p>

	<p>[Scenes of various ecotourism destinations in Ukraine, including mountains, forests and rivers, flash on the screen]</p> <p>Narrator: From the majestic Carpathians to the pristine forests of the Polissia region, Ukraine has some of the most breathtaking natural landscapes in the world. And now you can explore them all through the unique lens of ecotourism.</p> <p>[Footage of a group of tourists exploring the forest with a local guide]</p> <p>Narrator: Our experienced guides will take you on an unforgettable adventure through the heart of the Ukrainian wilderness. You will discover hidden trails, breathtaking views and see first-hand the diverse flora and fauna of the region.</p> <p>[Scene showing a group of tourists enjoying a traditional Ukrainian meal in a cosy guesthouse]</p> <p>Narrator: After a long day of travelling, relax in a cosy family home and enjoy traditional Ukrainian dishes made with local produce. Interact with the locals, learn about their customs and traditions, and even learn new skills like wood carving, embroidery or pottery.</p> <p>[Camera zooms in on a group of tourists holding hands and enjoying the sunset over the mountains]</p> <p>Narrator: So, pack your bags, leave the stress behind and go discover the magic of Ukrainian ecotourism. Book your adventure today!</p> <p>[The logo, contact details or address of the tour operator offering the ecotourism tour appears].</p>
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Source: compiled by the author

With the majority of travellers now using the internet to plan their trips, the use of social media is an important part of promoting ecotourism in the modern digital age. According to research conducted by Expedia in 2019, 57% of global travellers worldwide used the Internet to research and plan their trips, and by 2026, online sales will account for 73% of all tourism revenue (Williams, 2023).

As the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the shift to digital and online travel planning, this percentage has increased. In 2022, 64% of tourists booked a trip online or made an online purchase on a computer, and 44% on a mobile device (Charlton, 2023). And it is estimated (Deane, 2022) that more than 700 million people worldwide will have made online travel bookings by 2023.

In recent years, social media advertising has become increasingly popular in Ukraine and can be an effective way to reach a younger demographic that is typically more active on social media platforms. According to a study conducted by Statista (Chevalier, 2022), around 23% of social media users in Ukraine reported making a purchase after seeing an advertisement on social media. In comparison, around 36% of social media users in Norway said they had made a purchase after seeing an advertisement on social media, while in Iceland the figure is around 26%.

The total number of social media users in Ukraine is expected to grow between 2023 and 2028. According to this forecast, after five years of growth, the number of social media users will reach 38.18 million, reaching a new peak in 2028 (Degenhard, 2023).

It is worth noting that the effectiveness of social media advertising may also depend on the specific platform used, as each social network may have different demographics and user preferences. In addition, the content and quality of the ad, as well as the overall goals of the campaign, can also affect effectiveness. Meanwhile, social media is not without its drawbacks. For example, its use can lead to over-tourism and damage delicate ecosystems if not managed responsibly. In addition, social media can create unrealistic expectations among visitors, which can lead to disappointment when they arrive on site and find that the reality does not match the expected image or description.

Conclusion

In Ukraine, ecotourism is an emerging industry, but it has been attracting more and more attention in recent years. Compared to other countries, such as Norway and Iceland, the promotion of ecotourism in Ukraine is still in its infancy. Nevertheless, efforts are being made to promote ecotourism in the country, with a particular focus on natural and cultural heritage.

Despite the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, it is important to continue to develop and promote ecotourism both in the country and internationally. The current situation of martial law in Ukraine has affected the country's tourism industry, preventing many potential visitors from travelling. However, continued efforts to promote ecotourism in Ukraine are vital as this type of tourism has significant potential to contribute to economic growth, environmental and cultural preservation. By highlighting Ukraine's unique natural and cultural heritage and developing sustainable tourism practices, ecotourism can become a key driver of Ukraine's tourism industry and

help attract visitors from around the world.

There are a number of opportunities for further research on ecotourism and its promotion in Ukraine through social media. One of the possible areas of research could be aimed at studying the effectiveness of the use of different social media and their impact on the development of ecotourism in Ukraine. In addition, research could be conducted on Ukrainian tourists' perceptions of different forms of this type of tourism and their willingness to pay for such services. It may also be important for the development of this sector in Ukraine to study the interests and needs of tourists from other countries who may be interested in ecotourism in Ukraine, and to study ways of promoting Ukrainian ecotourism services on the international market. Such research can contribute to the further development of ecotourism in Ukraine and increase its competitiveness in the global market.

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