

## DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL TOURISM IN UKRAINE IN THE CONTEXT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Zoriana SENETA, Ion DUBOVICH

Ukrainian National Forestry University, 103 Generala Chuprynky Street, 79057, Lviv, Ukraine,  
Phones: +38-099-379-81-17, +38-097-215-78-78, E-mails: zorianaseneta@i.ua,  
iondubovici@ukr.net

**Corresponding author:** zorianaseneta@i.ua

### Abstract

*The article outlines the key framework of the functioning of rural tourism in Ukraine in the context of sustainable development. It is analyzed the interpretation of the essence of sustainable tourism and sustainable development. The author's conceptual framework of sustainable rural tourism is proposed. It is given own vision of the essence of "sustainable rural tourism". Taking into account the concept of sustainable development, it was analyzed the main principles that will contribute to the development of rural tourism in Ukraine. The author's approach has been developed, which involves the provision of recreational services by the owner on the basis of a personal peasant economy (rural estate) in the field of rural tourism in Ukraine. As a result of the conducted research it was proposed the main directions of development of rural tourism for Ukraine, which would contribute to the successful development of this area in accordance with international quality standards.*

**Key words:** tourism, sustainable tourism, sustainable rural tourism, sustainable development, rural estate.

### INTRODUCTION

For the last decades, sustainable development has become a key element of the strategic policy of the world's states. The well-known Sustainable Development Goals also apply sphere of tourism, which is one of the leading and profitable branches of the world economy.

Considering the unique natural conditions, resources and potential opportunities for the development of the tourism sector, Ukraine cannot yet compete with the world's leading countries. That is why the priority directions of the development of state policy in the field of tourism should include a sustainable approach that will be supported at the local, regional and international levels. This will give an opportunity to create favorable conditions for the development of tourism in the long run in accordance with international quality standards and taking into account European values. This, in turn, will contribute to improving the quality of life, harmonious development and consolidation of society, the formation of Ukraine's image in the world.

As a result of difficulties in the relationship between man and the environment, the problem of implementing the concept of sustainable development becomes important. After all the sustainable development should focus on the process that harmoniously combines resource use, investment directions, aspects of technological development and institutional change with the needs of present and future generations.

The World Commission on Environment and Development in the report "Our Common Future" (1987) provides an interpretation of the concept of sustainable development. This concept means the development that provides the needs of the current generation, without losses for future generations for providing their own needs. It is also noted that the main direction of ensuring sustainable development are: formation of prospects for population development; preservation of the environment; solving problems related to energy, industry, human settlements and international economic relations in the aspect of environment and development [10].

Since the mid-90s of the last century, the sustainable development of tourism, which is

based on the principles of sustainability, has become a priority for most of the world's countries [7].

The main vector of the development of sustainable tourism is the minimization of any unwanted impact that tourists may have on the natural, cultural, historical or social environment. The implementation of this principle is achieved through a balanced combination of the needs of tourists with the capabilities of the destination [2].

The proclamation by the United Nations General Assembly of 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism Development drew the attention of the world community to those types of tourism that are considered relatively more sustainable than others, including rural tourism. After all, this type of tourism in the future can become one of the important tools that will contribute to the sustainable development of rural settlements [6].

It is worth noting that the development of rural tourism in Ukraine is recognized as one of the key areas of state policy. This is stated in the Tourism and Resorts Development Strategy for the period until 2026. The implementation of this Strategy provides for the creation of favorable conditions for the development of tourism in accordance with international quality standards and taking into account European values, its transformation into a highly profitable, integrated into the world market competitive sphere. It provides acceleration of the socio-economic development of regions and the state as a whole, contributes to improving the quality of life, harmonious development and consolidation of society, popularization of Ukraine in the world [18].

Ukraine, like other member states of the United Nations, has joined the global process of ensuring sustainable development set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Since 2015, a number of reforms have been launched in Ukraine aimed at implementing socio-economic transformations and strengthening the democratic system. The sustainable development goals integrated into public

policy on the basis of "leave no one behind" [9].

Today, there are many definitions of the concept of "rural tourism", each of which combines different aspects and includes a multiplicity of functions regarding the provision of recreational services in rural areas. However, today's realities require rapid adaptation to modern world trends. This means that rural tourism must necessarily take into account the concept of sustainable development and be based on a balanced combination of ecological, economic and socio-cultural aspects of tourism development.

In our opinion, sustainable rural tourism is a leisure type of tourism that takes place in rural areas and is organized by people who are in family relations on the territory of a personal peasant economy (in a rural estate) in accordance with the concept of sustainable development. The provision of recreational services by the owner of a rural estate may also be related to using tourist resources and cultural and historical values of the countryside.

The sustainable development of tourism combines two key problems. The first problem is the need to develop profitable tourism, and the second – to take into account the limitations of available natural resources and their conservation [6]. It is worth noting that the concept of rural tourism is closely linked to the approaches of "sustainable tourism", where tourism fully respects the principles of sustainable development. Within these principles, it also takes into account the UN Sustainable Development Goals [5]. The main goals of sustainable tourism development in Ukraine, which are directly related to rural tourism, are: creation of new jobs; reduction of water consumption; efficient use of energy; reduction of waste and emissions; ensuring free access to tourism for all; conservation of biological diversity; support for local business, economy and fair trade; protection of social and cultural values; environmentally friendly transport [8].

For Ukraine, the development of the field of rural tourism, in particular sustainable, should

become a priority task. This is confirmed by the results of a sociological survey (we interviewed 326 respondents living on the territory of Ukraine). As a result of the conducted research, we can see that 92% of respondents are interested in recreation in the village. Also, a large number of respondents (95%) believe that it is necessary to develop rural tourism in Ukraine. It is also important that 54% of respondents want to start their own business in the field of rural tourism [13]. That is why it is necessary to develop rural tourism in Ukraine in the context of sustainable development. After all, it will have a positive impact on the development of other industries directly related to rural tourism and improve the well-being of local communities.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

Sustainable development has some characteristics that distinguish it from other forms of development which have emerged in recent decades. The main features of sustainable development are: direct connection with the environment; anticipating the needs of future generations; maintaining and improving the quality of life; equality of rights and opportunities for all; the precautionary principle; the need to correlate all actions with the impact on the environment [20].

In recent years, basic principles have been developed to identify the concept of sustainable tourism and ways to implement it. The Tourism Concern, together with the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), had proposed ten principles for sustainable tourism:

- conservation and sustainable use of resources. It is key and forms the long-term meaning of business;
- reduction of excessive consumption and waste. In the future, it will avoid the costs of repairing long-term damage to the environment. It will help improve the quality of tourism services;
- biodiversity conservation;
- integration of tourism into planning documents. Tourism development should be

integrated into the national and local structure of strategic planning. It is also important to assess the impact of tourism on the environment;

- local economic development. Tourism should support a variety of local economic initiatives, take into account environmental costs, protect the local economy and avoid environmental damage;

- involvement of local communities. This creates benefits for communities and the environment, as well as improves the quality of the tourist experience;

- work with stakeholders and the public. It is an important component for coordinated planning and implementation of sustainable tourism projects, avoidance or resolution of conflicts around such initiatives;

- staff training. It is an important component of the success of implementation of sustainable development projects, as it improves the quality of the tourism product;

- responsible marketing. Providing tourists with complete and truthful information about leisure services. Enhancing the effectiveness of sustainable tourism projects for local communities and the environment;

- conducting research. Ongoing research and monitoring are important components in addressing the issues that arise in creating benefits for destinations, the sector and consumers [15, 16].

In the process of writing the article used general and special scientific research methods: analysis and synthesis – when choosing materials for research; generalization – for formulation the essence of the concept of “sustainable rural tourism”; comparative analysis – in the study of foreign experience in identifying the concept of sustainable tourism; retrospective analysis – to study the concept of sustainable development and to build a conceptual framework for sustainable development of rural tourism; strategic analysis – to assess the strategic directions and to build an integrated approach to the provision of rural tourism services in the context of sustainable development; framework analysis – to identify the main directions of rural tourism

development in Ukraine in the context of sustainable development; graphic method – for building figures; induction and deduction – to summarize the results of the study and formulate conclusions.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Human awareness and rethinking of the consequences of globalization processes on the environment has contributed to the formulation of the basic provisions of the concept of sustainable development as a paradigm of social growth in the XXI century. The concept of rural tourism is closely linked to sustainable tourism approaches, where tourism must take full account of current and future economic, social and environmental impacts.

Rural tourism is one of the perspective areas for the development of Ukrainian villages and raising the economic level of the regions of Ukraine. Today, this type of tourism activity operates exclusively at the personal initiative of the rural population, acting as one of the means of overcoming poverty in rural areas [19].

Development of rural tourism with the involvement of all the possibilities of the modern Ukrainian village (use of free living space of personal peasant economy, rich

recreational and tourist resources of the region, recreation services that can be offered by the owner of the rural estate) opens up to the peasant considerable opportunities not only to provide for his family, but also to benefit the rural community. Today in Ukraine there are many rural areas that can provide tourists with proper quality recreation [4].

There are pure and mixed types of rural tourism. Pure rural tourism involves the provision of tourist services on the basis of a rural estate. In this case, this activity is the main source of income for the owners of the estate. Rural tourism of mixed type is the provision of hospitality services with conducting personal peasant economy (farming). In this case, income from hospitality activities, as a rule, will be a supplement to the main income from agricultural or other activities [11].

It should be noted that the main service of rural tourism is the provision of temporary accommodation to tourists on the basis of personal peasant economy. Rural tourism services are divided into basic and additional (Table 1). In addition to intangible services, tourists may be provided with other goods or material services (maps of the area, folk souvenirs, tourist equipment, etc.).

Table 1. Rural tourism services

Rural tourism services	
<b>Basic services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- services for the organization of tourist accommodation;</li> <li>- services for the organization of tourist transportation;</li> <li>- catering services for tourists.</li> </ul>
<b>Additional Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- excursion services;</li> <li>- services to attract tourists to agricultural work and crafts;</li> <li>- services of guides, guides-translators;</li> <li>- services to attract tourists to participate in folk rites and cultural events, as well as village festivals, fairs and other mass events;</li> <li>- car, boat, active-tourist equipment rental services;</li> <li>- consumer services;</li> <li>- the right to use private recreational lands;</li> <li>- others.</li> </ul>

Source: [12].

The development of rural tourism has its own specifics due to the complex influence of various factors – historical, geographical, ethnographic, cultural, economic, social. At

the same time, it remains one of the perspective areas of rural development in terms of improving market relations in Ukraine. Rural tourism in Ukraine is an

integral part of the program of integrated economic and social development of the village [14].

The need to develop rural tourism in Ukraine is determined by the following factors:

- the growing demand of residents of Ukrainian cities and foreigners for recreation in rural areas;
- unique historical and ethnographic heritage of Ukrainian villages;
- rich recreational resources;
- ecological purity of the rural area;
- availability of free rural housing for tourists;
- availability of free labor resources to serve tourists;

- the traditional hospitality of the owners and affordable price for rest;
- a variety of additional excursion services to the liking of tourist [1].

Rural tourism in Ukraine can be one of the important tools for sustainable development of rural settlements. The sustainable development of rural tourism involves the balance of three main components of life: economic, ecological and social. This means that it is necessary to find the optimum in each decision-making case regarding a certain field of activity. Based on this concept, we should outline the conceptual framework for sustainable development of rural tourism (Figure 1).

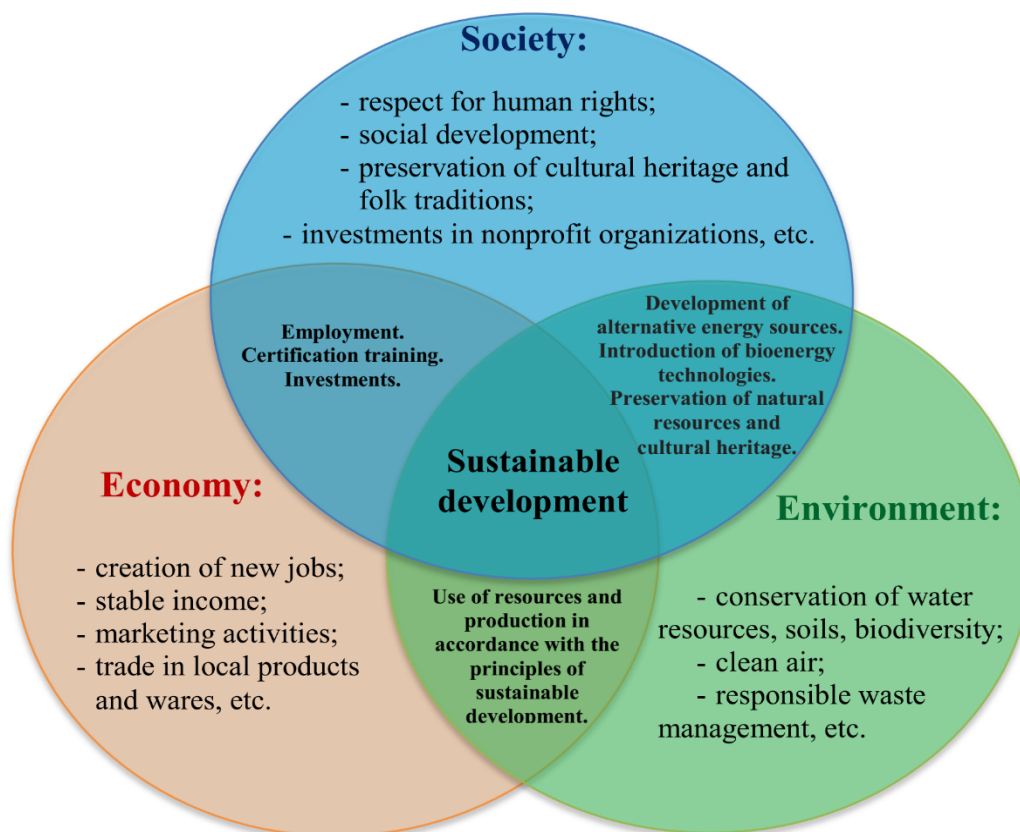


Fig. 1. Conceptual framework for sustainable development of rural tourism  
Source: Developed by the authors.

The active participation of the rural population is essential for the implementation of effective approaches and ways to develop sustainable rural tourism. Ultimately, it will help improve the standard and quality of life of the rural population, preserve natural resources, cultural heritage, the local economy growth and maintain ecological balance.

In order to meet the criteria of sustainable development, rural tourism must be based not only on environmental protection. It should also combine other key principles of development that relate to the economy, environment, population and institutional environment (public institutions) (Figure 2) [6].

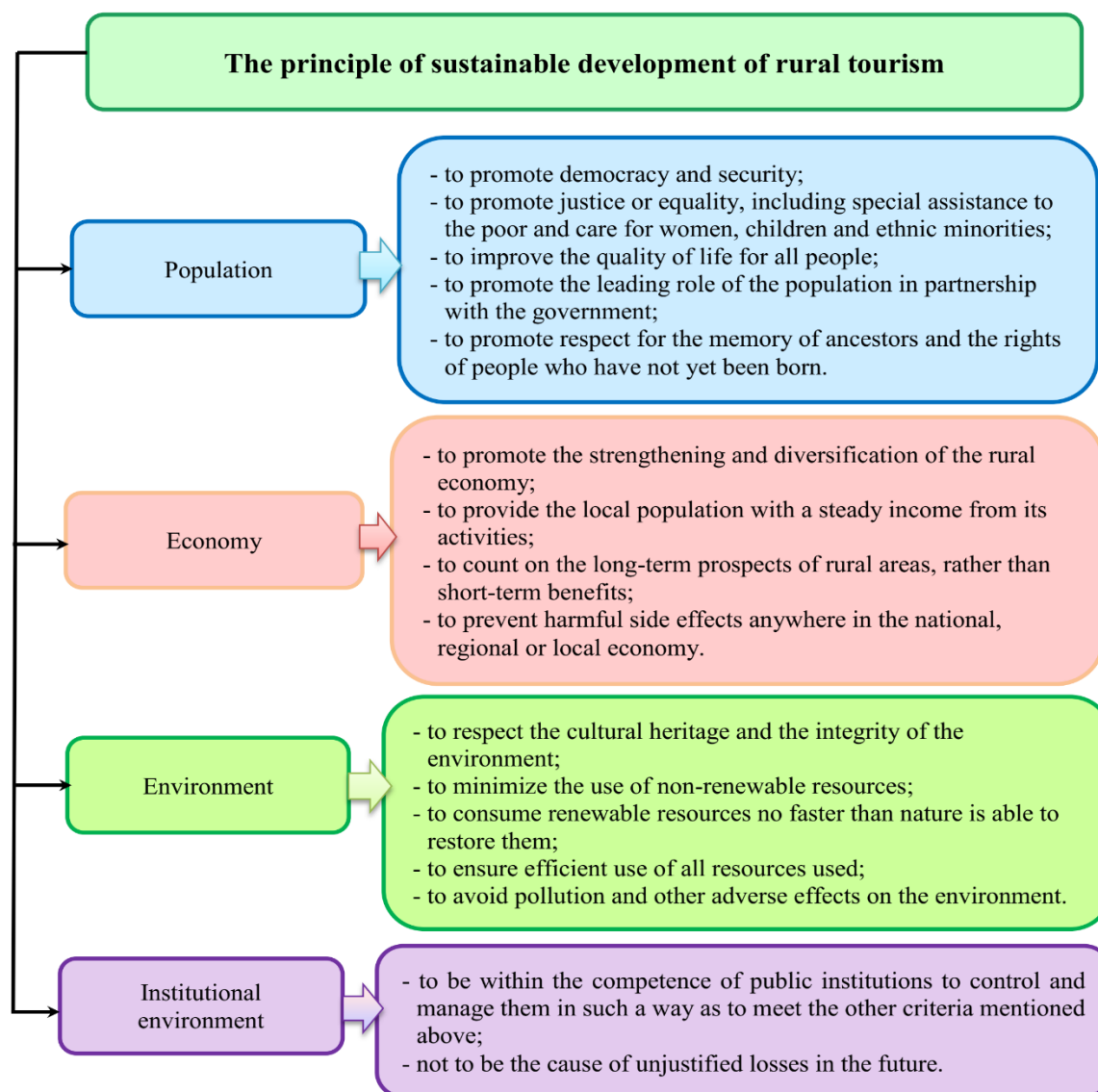


Fig. 2. The principle of sustainable development of rural tourism  
Source: Developed by the author on the basis of [6].

It should be noted that the development of rural tourism in Ukraine today is not based on the principles of sustainability, because it clearly does not take into account such conditions:

- responsible waste management;
- taking measures to adapt to climate change;
- development of plans and implementation of measures to find alternative energy sources;
- clear norms and rules for providing quality food (encouragement of organic food production);
- support for sustainable land management which traditionally processed by humans;

- advanced training of the local population;
- compliance with sustainable development goals, etc.

The provision of recreational services by the owner (owner of a rural estate) must take into account the concept of sustainable development, which is based on the preservation of natural resources and cultural values of rural areas and reduction of unwanted impact on the environment. A comprehensive approach to the host's provision of holiday services to the tourist in the field of rural tourism, taking into account a sustainable approach, is shown in Figure 3.

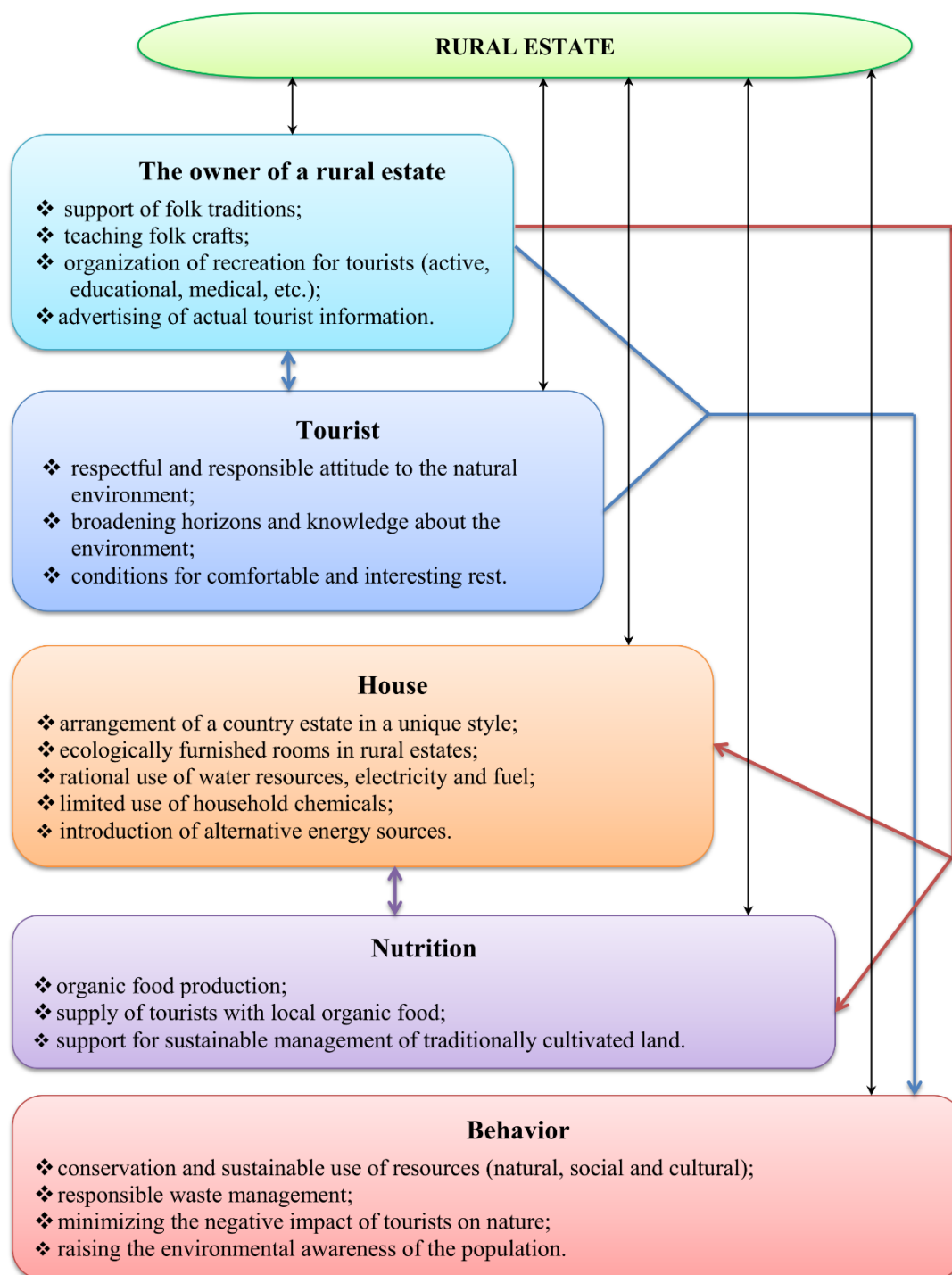


Fig. 3. Integrated approach to the provision of rural tourism services in the context of sustainable development  
Source: own representation.

Providing tourists with rural tourism services, taking into account the concept of sustainable development, means that the owner of the rural estate and the tourist must be environmentally friendly and protect all available natural resources and cultural values of the area.

Rural tourism should be developed in a purely rural environment. This type of tourism has a

positive impact on solving socio-economic problems of the village, as it expands the employment of the rural population, both in the productive and non-productive sectors, which in turn promotes rural development and stimulates the development of services and local infrastructure, raises the cultural standard of living and environmental awareness of villagers [14].



Thus, rural tourism is not a separate phenomenon, but it is a part of the complex socio-economic development of the village. Sustainable rural tourism in Ukraine can only be realized if it benefits local people, tourists, the economy and the environment of rural areas and is integrated into other areas of rural life.

The advantages of tourism development in rural areas of Ukraine are:

- ecologically oriented way of life among the population (recreation in clean natural areas, consumption of ecologically clean products, etc.);
- socio-economic development of rural areas;
- increasing sources of income and the number of jobs in rural areas;

- improvement of housing stock, communal arrangement of territories and rural infrastructure;
- formation of a stable public position on the preservation of the natural environment and rational use of nature;
- restoration of ethnic and cultural features (traditions, rituals, folk crafts);
- formation of the cultural and educational level of citizens;
- improving the scope of tourist services in rural areas: transportation, trade, utilities and household services, entertainment and leisure organization [17].

Based on our study, we can identify the following main areas of rural tourism in Ukraine (Figure 4).



Fig. 4. The main directions of rural tourism development for Ukraine  
Source: own representation.



Rural tourism is a guarantor of stability and viability of rural areas, an important alternative for agriculture, as well as a factor in the development of local communities. Today the state support the development of rural tourism is also important. It includes attracting foreign investment, preferential long-term lending to property owners, improving the activities of travel agencies to promote rural estates, etc. [3].

Thus, rural tourism in Ukraine is one of the priority areas of effective development of united territorial communities, an innovative form of entrepreneurship aimed at increasing employment and income of the rural population, creating a favorable socio-economic environment in rural areas on the basis of market relations. The provision of recreational services by the owners of rural estates to tourists should be based on the principles of sustainable development.

## CONCLUSIONS

Modern world trends in the development of the tourism sphere indicate the growing interest of tourists in recreation, which is directly related to nature. That is why, when talking about the prospects for the development of rural tourism in Ukraine, we should focus on the experience of the leading states of the European Union, where this type of tourism is successfully developing. Taking into account national traditions, various natural conditions and resources, we can say that in Ukraine there is a significant potential for the development of rural tourism, as well as opportunities for its successful implementation.

The development of sustainable rural tourism today must take into account the key criteria that are require the formation and promotion of a tourism product aimed at a specific consumer, who today is more informed about the principles of sustainable development, determining the priorities of human civilization. The formation of a tourist product in accordance with the consumer needs requires the introduction of an effective

system of advertising and marketing at the regional, national and international levels.

Sustainable rural tourism must be based on sustainability criteria, which means that it must be environmentally friendly in the long run, economically viable and socially equal for local communities.

The growing popularity of tourism (in particular rural) in Ukraine and the world can have a positive impact on solving problems of socio-economic development of territories by using the significant tourist potential of the region. In particular, it can be an incentive to build tourism infrastructure that fully meets the needs of tourists, to start a business activity in the field of tourism and expand the activities of existing tourism businesses, as well as it can be partially contribute to the development of community infrastructure.

## REFERENCES

- [1]Alekseeva, Y.V., 2009, State regulation of social tourism in Ukraine, Collection of scientific works of NAPA, 1: 182-191.
- [2]Defining Sustainable Tourism. <https://www.gdrc.org/uem/eco-tour/sustour-define.html>, Accessed on February 8, 2022.
- [3]Dubovich, I., Seneta, Z., 2021, Current state and prospects of the development of cross-border cooperation between Ukraine and the European Union countries in the field of rural tourism, Romanian-Ukrainian relations: history and contemporaneity. Edition VIII, Bucharest: RCR Editorial Publishing House, 263-277.
- [4]Gavrillo, P.P., Kolodiyuk, A.V., Vazhynsky, F.A., 2018, Rural green tourism as a factor in activating the economic activity of the rural population, Scientific Bulletin of Uzhgorod University. Series: Economics, 1: 137-141.
- [5]Khartishvili, L., Muhar, A., Dax, T., Khelashvili, I., 2019, Rural Tourism in Georgia in Transition: Challenges for Regional Sustainability, Sustainability, MDPI, 11(2): 1-20.
- [6]Matvienko, N.M., Matvienko, V.M., Okolovich, I.I., 2018, Rural tourism in the context of sustainable development, Proceedings of the I International scientific-practical conference "Sustainable development of tourism on the basis of partnership: education, science, practice" (Lviv, October 31 - November 1, 2018), Lviv: LTEU, 288-291.
- [7]Nepeina, G.V., Serbulova, N.A., Smirnov, V.M., Smirnova, S.M., 2018, Features of the mechanisms of sustainable tourism management, indicators and indices of its development, Scientific and Practical Journal. Ecological Sciences Series, 4 (23): 78-82.

[8]NTOU, Principles of sustainable tourism development.

[https://www.ntoukraine.org/sustainabletourism\\_ua.htm](https://www.ntoukraine.org/sustainabletourism_ua.htm), Accessed on February 11, 2022.

[9]NTOU, Voluntary National Review of the Sustainable Development Goals in Ukraine. <https://www.ntoukraine.org/assets/files/ntou-book-unwto-sdg-5.pdf>, Accessed on February 11, 2022.

[10]Our Common Future, 1987, Lecture of the International Commission on Environment and Development.

[http://www.channelingreality.com/Documents/Brundtland\\_Searchable.pdf](http://www.channelingreality.com/Documents/Brundtland_Searchable.pdf), Accessed on February 10, 2022.

[11]Rural tourism and sustainable tourism. <https://www.uacarpathians.org/%D0%B3%D0%BE%D0%BB%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%BD%D0%B0>, Accessed on February 5, 2022.

[12]School of Sustainable Green Tourism, 2020, Transcarpathian Regional Development Agency, Center for Sustainable Tourism of the Ukrainian Carpathians, Uzhhorod. 143 p.

[13]Seneta, Z., Dubovich, I., 2021, Socio-economic analysis of rural tourism development: case study in Ukraine, Scientific Papers. Series "Management, Economic Engineering in Agriculture and rural development", 21(4): 503-512.

[14] Seneta, Z.Ya., Dubovich, I.A., 2020, Rural tourism in Ukraine: prospects for development, Prospects for development of territories: theory and practice: materials of the All-Ukrainian scientific-practical conference of applicants for higher education and young scientists, Kharkiv: KhNUMG O.M. Beketova, 245-248.

[15]Sustainable Rural Tourism Development: Thematic Handbook, 2007, Published by the Euroacademy Association and the Carpathian Foundation in Ukraine under the Sustainable Rural Tourism Development – Strengthening the Capacity of Rural Development Leaders project with the support of the European Commission, EuropeAid, TACIS, Institutional Partnership Building Program, Uzhhorod. 88 p.

[16]Sustainable tourism. <https://tourismnotes.com/sustainable-tourism/>, Accessed on February 17, 2022.

[17]Tsymbalyuk, S. Ya., Morozova, I.V., 2019, Rural tourism as a promising area of domestic tourism, Environmental Sciences, 5 (24): 41-45.

[18]Verkhovna Rada Ukrainy, 2017, Stratehiia rozvytku turyzmu ta kurortiv na period do 2026 roku (In Ukrainian: Stratehiia rozvytku turyzmu ta kurortiv na period do 2026 roku). <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/168-2017-%D1%80#n9>, Accessed on February 20, 2022.

[19]Zhybak, M.M., Khristenko, G.M., 2021, Rural green tourism as an innovative form of entrepreneurship, Agrosvit, 3: 3-8.

[20]Zinko, Y., Rutynskyi, M., Kudla, N. ets., 2009, Conservation and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians: A Manual for Sustainable Tourism, Kyiv. 60 p.