

ECOTOURISM – POSSIBILITY OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE WESTERN AREA OF ROMANIA

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In the last period, we become increasingly aware of the complexity, fragility, and priceless value of our planet. Sustainable tourism develops the idea of meeting the needs of current tourists and the tourism industry and, at the same time, protecting the environment and opportunities for the future. It is taken in consideration the satisfaction of all needs of the “actors” from tourism activity. The place of tourism in sustainable development is logically given by its role as an industry that sells the physical and human environment as its product. Tourism is one of the industries that must be involved in sustainable development, as a resource industry, dependent on the endowment of nature and the cultural heritage of each society.

On the territory of the Western Area of Romania there are ecotourism resources represented by the 138 natural reservations of national interest, distributed as follows: 53 in Caras-Severin County, 42 in Hunedoara County, 20 in Arad County, 23 in Timis County. The development of the western area has been influenced and continues to be supported by the important natural resources existing in this region with diverse relief, which includes the particularly fertile plains from the west of Timis and Arad counties, hilly areas with important mineral resources, and an important segment of the Southern and Western Carpathians, which includes one of the most important natural parks from Europe, the Retezat National Park.

So therefore ecotourism can be an alternative to traditional, classic tourism, as well as to the standard tourist offer.