

# Principles of Formation of Territorial-Planning Placement of Recreation and Tourism Complexes

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*Abstract:* - In the article on the analysis of the region, we concluded that tourist and recreational complexes combine all possible forms of territorial organization of tourism and recreation. In the development of projects and programs, should conduct a comprehensive analysis of the development of the territory, which was conducted in the article for the Sheki-Zagatala district of Azerbaijan.

*Key-Words:* - Tourist- recreational complex, territory, planning, district, population, transport, tourist routes.

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## 1 Introduction

The main object of tourism development in the regions is tourist and recreational complexes. Projects and programs are created for their development. Therefore, analysis and research are needed to determine the principles for planning tourist and recreational complexes in the regions.

An important issue is the planned placement of tourism facilities and their formation in connection with the natural and social conditions of the area, district, or region where they will be located. Otherwise, such an object does not correspond to the status of recreation.

The location of tourist complexes is formed as part of urban planning. One of the important conditions for the location is a favorable landscape, infrastructure connection, and transport accessibility.

The Sheki-Zagatala economic region is located in northwest Azerbaijan, on the southern slope of the Greater Caucasus Mountains. This region covers Sheki, Gabala, Oguz, Gakh, Zagatala and Balakan administrative regions with ancient history and great tourism potential.

The location of the region on the Great Silk Road, and the presence of direct borders with other neighboring countries also led to the arrival of more tourists and gave a great impetus to the further development of tourism in the region.

Tourist complexes, as separate buildings or objects, perform certain specialized functions. It is important to specialize complexes by the functions of specialization and the climate and infrastructure of the environment in which they are located. From

this point of view, it is important to form the placement of tourist complexes according to spatial planning.

The article discusses the principles of the formation of the Sheki-Zagatala zone of the Republic of Azerbaijan from the point of view of spatial planning of recreational and tourist complexes.

## 2 The population of the region

The area of the Sheki-Zagatala economic region is 8.84 thousand km<sup>2</sup> (10.2% of the republic's territory), and the population of the region is 599.9 thousand people (6.2% of the republic's population) [1]. The economic and geographical position of the region is favorable. The Baku-Balakan tourist route passes through its territory.

Tourism specialization is divided into recreation, sports, and cognition. The development of tourism and recreation activities in the Sheki-Zagatala region depends on its location, natural resources, labor resources, economy, infrastructure, etc. has a great impact.

Due to its geographical position, the Sheki - Zagatala economic region, located on the southern slopes of the Greater Caucasus Mountains, includes 6 cities, 8 settlements, 336 rural settlements, and 181 municipalities [1]. The population of the area is 6.23% of the country's population (Table 1). One of the important conditions for the formation of tourist complexes is the settlement of the population, its geographical distribution, and the availability of infrastructure in the area. In this regard, the rational

use of the existing natural resource potential of the area is of economic importance.

Sheki-Zagatala tourist region is located in the far north-western part of the country and is distinguished by its unique economic and political-geographical position. The distance between the administrative centers in the region is 30-50 km. The distance from Baku, the capital of the republic, varies from 225 to 394 km by region. The Sheki-Zagatala region borders the Russian Federation (Republic of Dagestan) at a distance of 185 km through high mountainous areas, which is of great spatial and strategic importance for the republic [3].

The border with Georgia, which stretches from the Alazan River to the watershed of the Main Caucasus Mountains, about 150 km, is also of great political and economic importance. The inclusion of the Yevlakh-Balakan and Balakan-Logodekhi international highways in the TRACECA transport system, as well as the operation of the Balakan customs point here, create new opportunities for the promising development of the economic region.

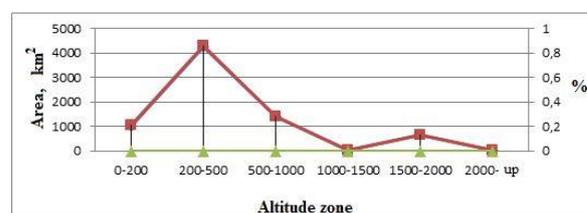
Its population and labor resources play a leading role in the development of the region's economy and services. After the Absheron economic region, the Sheki-Zagatala region ranks second in the country in terms of the diversity of the national composition of the population, 76.38% of the total population of the region are Azerbaijanis, 9.53% are Avars, 5.23% are Lezgins and 3% are Sakhars, 1.7% are Georgians and the rest are other nationalities. The Avars in Zagatala and Balakan, the Georgians in Gakh, and the Lezghins in Gabala are second only to the Azerbaijanis. The Udine, an ancient nation, settled in Gabala. The diversity of the national composition is seen in their way of life and adherence to their traditions, which is of interest to tourists visiting the region. The urban population is 27.7% and the rural population is 72.3% of the region. The density per km<sup>2</sup> is 71 people [1]. The relief of the economic region is divided into high mountainous and foothill parts that have limited land resources in terms of economic development, rich aesthetic natural mountain landscapes in terms of recreation, historical and ethnographic monuments in terms of tourism, mineral, and thermal springs. The landscape of the region was assessed by investors coming to the republic and it was shown that it is promising in terms of tourism and recreation. The city of Sheki, which was a large trade center in ancient times and where crafts are developed, is located in the region. Historical and architectural monuments, Zagatala Nature Reserve attract tourists to this region, where various traditions are lived. The ancient fortresses,

caravanserais, and traces of the Yalovlu hill culture (Gabala) belonging to the ancient tribes of Caucasian Albania, Zagatala reserve are interesting tourist objects.

### 3 Tourism and Recreation Resources of the Region.

The role of natural recreational resources in the development of tourism in the region is great. The territory of the Sheki-Zagatala economic region differs from other regions of the republic of its natural conditions and relief features. Due to the fragmentation of the topography over a short distance (20-30 km), the territory is divided into three areas according to its natural conditions: the southern slope of the Greater Caucasus; Alazan-Haftaran valley; Middle Kura foothills (Acinohur and Turudstija plains and mountainous part of Sheki). The territory of the region is generally located at an altitude of 100 meters to 4466 meters above sea level. Mainly mountain-steppe, mountain-forest, subalpine and alpine meadows are represented by altitude belts as nival areas [4]. As can be seen from Table 2, the percentage of land used decreases as it rises to 2,000 m above sea level.

Table: 2 Distribution of the area used according to the altitude zone



The features of the terrain allow the efficient use of the area for various economic purposes. As a result, conditions are created for the development of such areas as ecotourism and rural tourism.

The climate of the region is mainly moderately humid. The amount of sunny days in the area is abundant throughout the year, 2200-2300 hours and the total solar radiation varies between 120-148 kcal/cm<sup>2</sup> [4]. The areas above 500-700 meters above sea level are mainly subtropical. Favorable climatic conditions create ample opportunities for the development of resort and recreation systems in the region.

Sheki-Zagatala region is one of the regions in the country rich in water resources. The location of the world's largest and most flooded rivers, such as the Katekh, Kish, Shin, Damiraparan, Gurmuk, Mazim, Mukhakh, and Balakanchay, and the Gamkh-Ayrichay artesian basin in the economic

region are more efficient in economic areas, including tourism and recreation.

Sheki-Zagatala region is rich in mineral waters and springs. Except for the Chimchimax mineral water spring, cold water springs predominate. Two large and more than 20 small mineral water deposits have been discovered only in Zagatala [4]. Water from Oglanbulag, Gizilbulag, Moscow, Hamambulag (Gakh region), Bum (Gabala), Khalkhal, Bugusshor, and Agbulag (Oguz), and other springs are important in the treatment of nervous, skin, cardiovascular and muscular diseases. Gakh water is produced using a spring near the village of Susken in the Gakh region. There is a sanatorium in Suskan village for this purpose. There are many low-flow mineral springs in Balakan and Sheki regions. The area where these springs are located in one of the places where the locals organize picnics.

The importance of nature reserves and recreation parks is undeniable. The first Zagatala State Reserve was established in the region in 1929 by Polish scientist Ludwik Mlokosevic. The reserve is located at an altitude of 650-3646 m above sea level. It covers the territory of the Zagatala and Balakan districts with an area of 47,349 hectares. There are suitable places for the construction of tourist recreation complexes in the territory of the reserve.

"Heydar Park" in Zagatala, Dada-Gorgud Square, Katekh waterfall, Heydar Aliyev Culture and Recreation Park in Balakan, cable car, Marxal recreation area in Sheki, "Ilisu" waterfall in Gakh, Ilisu State Reserve, "Seven beauties" waterfall in Gabala are considered favorite places of recreation.

Due to its nature, the Oguz region is called the "Switzerland" of Azerbaijan. About half of the region's territory is covered by forests. There are many waterfalls, sulfur, and tenmal springs. The beautiful nature creates favorable conditions for tourism and recreational activities (hunting, fishing).

#### **4 Historical and Cultural Tourism Resources**

Many monuments indicated the ancient history of the Sheki-Zagatala economic region. About 300 state-protected monuments have been registered in the region. Two of them in the Sheki economic region and one in the Gakh region are monuments of world importance. Other monuments are grouped by national and local significance. Monuments of local importance include the Peri (5th century), Armatay, Cingoz (14th century), Shaytan, and Zagatala fortresses. Albanian towers have been

preserved in Akhakh dara villages (XII century), Pashan village (XIII century), and Kebeloba village (XIV century) [5,6].

Isfahan, Tabriz, Lezgi caravanserais, "Gelersen-Gorersen" fortress, "Yukhari Bash" historical-architectural reserve, etc. (Sheki), ancient fortresses (Gakh, Zagatala), traces of Yaloylutepe culture (Gabala) belonging to the ancient tribes of Caucasian Albania and other historical and architectural monuments are important factors for the development of cognitive tourism [5,6].

The ancient history of each region, which is part of the Sheki-Zagatala region, has a positive impact on the tourism potential of the region as a whole. The villages of the region rich in historical monuments are mainly Kish, Tsar, Gabizdere, Yukari Tala, Mamrikh, Lakit, and others.

#### **5 The Current State of Tourism Services**

The number of tourists visiting the Sheki-Zagatala region of Azerbaijan, which is rich in ancient natural and historical-cultural tourism-recreation potential, is growing every year. As the areas serving tourism in the region (accommodation, catering, transport, excursions) expand, there is an opportunity to develop different types of tourism. Recent statistics and marketing research suggest that the number of foreign and local visitors who want to spend their holidays in Gabala and get acquainted with the region is growing every year. Many of them try to come to this beautiful place to get acquainted with our culture, others to get in touch with the exotic nature of Gabala, as well as to witness the oriental hospitality. According to the number of visitors to the economic region for recreation and entertainment, Sheki, Gabala, and Gakh regions belong to the top three, Sheki, Zagatala, and Balakan regions are selected for business trips (Table 3). There is an increase in the number of tourists visiting the existing hotels in the region [7,8].

#### **6 Transport Infrastructure**

Transport infrastructure and services are being developed in the Sheki-Zagatala economic region. Road, rail, and air transport services are provided in the region. Roads are being improved and infrastructure is being reconstructed within the Regional Socio-Economic Development Program. In general, this area is located on the Yevlakh-Balakan railway and highway. The length of the road is 162 km, of which 132 km (81.5%) falls on the territory of the Sheki-Zagatala economic region.

The railway line mainly passes through four administrative districts (Sheki, Zagatala, Gakh, and Balakan). The Baku-Balakan tourist route also passes through the economic region. Although the railway line is located 10-12 km from the center of the Sheki administrative region, 5-6 km from Gakh, 3-4 km from Zagatala, 26-30 km from Oguz, 55-60 km from Gabala, it plays an important role in regulating passenger traffic. The length of public roads in the region is 1804 km. During the years of independence, the international significance of the Balakan-Logodekhi line has increased as a continuation of the Yevlakh-Balakan highway. The region is connected to the South Caucasus and TRACECA networks by this highway. Despite the expansion of the transport network and the important role of the Baku-Yevlakh-Balakan and parallel Baku-Ismayilli-Gabala-Balakan highways in the internal and external economic relations of the region, their use in the field of tourist services is still unsatisfactory. There is a need to improve vehicles for tourist trips by car and train.

Air transport plays an important role in the socio-economic development of the Sheki-Zagatala economic region. There is an airport for international and domestic flights in Gabala (2011). The airport in Zagatala (2007), along with the increase in passenger traffic, is of great importance in solving the problems of tourist movement in the region.

## 6 Conclusion

The article analyzes the tourism and recreational opportunities of the Sheki-Zagatala region of Azerbaijan. It can be concluded that tourist and recreational complexes combine all possible forms of territorial organization of tourism and recreation. In this regard, when developing plans and projects, a comprehensive analysis of the development of the territory should be carried out.

The planning of tourist and recreational complexes should contribute to the implementation of tourism development programs in the region. The

paper gives grounds for the necessity of planning new territorial tourist recreation complexes in the Sheki-Zagatala region. The requirements for the incorporation of an enterprise into a tourist recreation complex are suggested.

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Table 1 Population, density, and area of the Sheki-Zagatala economic region by regions (according to the Statistics Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2021 [2])

Names of economic and administrative cities and districts	Territory, 1000 km <sup>2</sup>	Population (1000 people)		Population density, km <sup>2</sup> /people, 2021
		2009	2021	
Azerbaijan Republic	86.6	8922.4	10119.1	117
Sheki-Zagatala economic region	8.84	566.0	630.4	71
Balakan district	0.94	89.8	99.6	106
Gakh district	1.49	53.3	57.5	39
Gabala district	1.55	93.7	108.7	70
Oguz district	1.08	40.3	45.0	42
Sheki region	2.43	170.7	189.1	78
Zaqatala district	1.35	118.2	130.5	97

Table 3. Statistics of tourist use of hotels in the Sheki-Zagatala region (the table is based on 2021 statistics)

Hotels and hotel-type establishments	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Number	55	60	63	65	66
Number of rooms in them	1997	1900	1948	1999	2037
Disposable capacity space	4469	4308	4432	4561	4701
Number of placed men, people	186564	165499	229500	238085	74364
Number of nights, man/night	334704	247793	368205	372402	118540
Income, 1000 manats	11291.7	19688.7	35450.9	34885.9	11380.0
Expenses, 1000 manats	11450.4	18360.4	34614.2	34227.4	18372.8