



SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY AND PLAN FOR THE OSH REGION

Osh Region - Feel Diverse Cultures!



SHORT VERSION

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INTRODUCTION

The history of Kyrgyzstan's tourism industry has more than one decade. Starting from the second half of the 20th century, Lake Issyk-Kul in the north of the republic has firmly cemented its reputation as one of the flagships of domestic tourism in the Soviet Union. It was here that capacious boarding houses, children's health camps and sanatoriums of all-Union significance were built. The southern region of Kyrgyzstan with its center in Osh was mostly left out of these large-scale processes. And even today, when increased attention is paid to the catching-up development of the southern regions of the country,

The strategy development process was based on interaction with a wide range of stakeholders, including local and republican authorities, tourism associations and operators, potential investors, representatives of local communities, industry experts and enthusiasts. The paper builds on the processing of data from field studies, diagnostic interviews, expert assessments, as well as statistical materials.

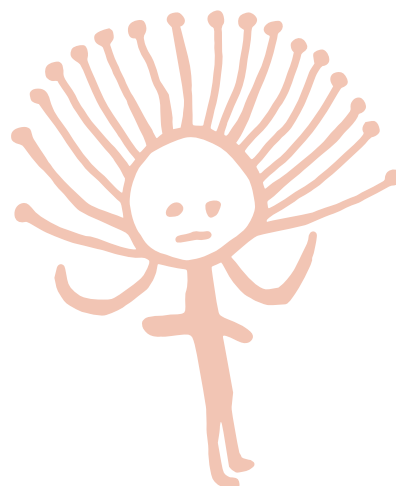
Structurally, the STDSP consists of three chapters divided into paragraphs: "Situational Analysis of the Regional Tourism Sector", "Strategic Vision for the Sector Development" and "Package of Measures for the Sector's Sustainable Development".

the tourism industry of the Osh Region continues to be financed by a leftover principle.

The Regional Economic Development Project, launched by the ARIS with financial support from the World Bank Group, aims to reduce imbalances in the development of the Osh Region by increasing the contribution of tourism to the local economic development. One of the subcomponents of this project is the programming of a regional Sustainable Tourism Development Strategy and Plan (STDSP) under the component "Catalyzing Investment for Tourism and Urban Development".

The assessment of the current state of the regional sector and the recommended actions presented in the STDSP correlate with the main provisions of the draft Program for Sustainable Tourism Development of the Kyrgyz Republic for 2023-2027.

The **complete version of the STDSP** is available at the following link:



- 6 **The purpose** of this strategic document is to develop a comprehensive action plan and expert recommendations to ensure the progressive development of the tourism sector in the Osh Region (comprising Osh province and Osh city) until 2028. The STDSP developers set the task to study the regional tourism sector through an analysis of its problems and undiscovered opportunities, focusing on the search for sustainable forms of tourism development. The three questions had to be answered in detail.

What is the current state of the tourism sector?

Analysis of the current state of the industry through an assessment of its overall potential and consideration of its subsectors (public administration, transport, museums, marketing, human resources) and problem fields (regulatory legal acts, ecology and safety).

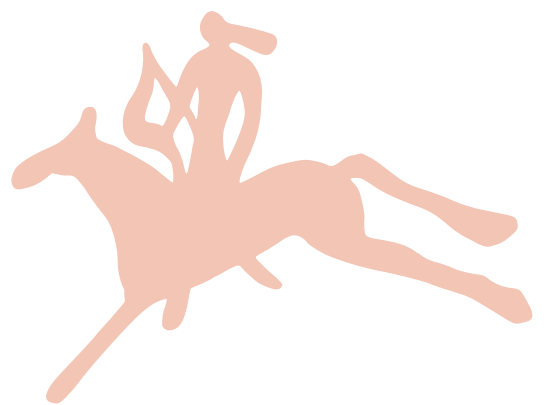
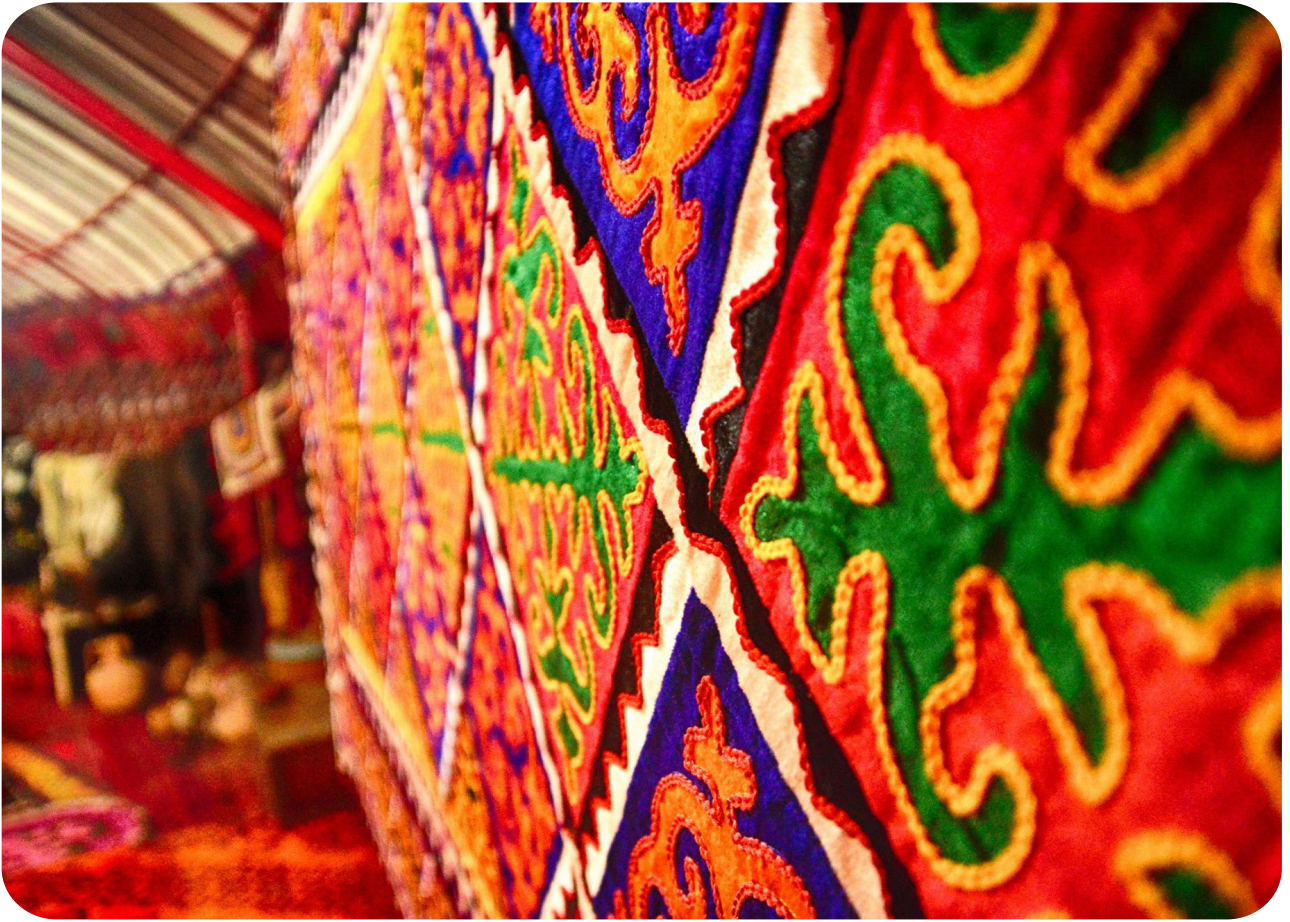
What should it be like in 2028?

Defining a vision for the sector development by assessing the role and place of the Osh Region in the context of global and Central Asian trends and identifying promising directions for its sustainable development.

How to achieve these goals?

Programming of specific investments, marketing and communication activities aimed at improving the regional tourism sector, giving it sustainable forms of functioning and growth.





A young girl with dark hair is smiling, wearing a traditional Central Asian headpiece. The headpiece is silver with a large white flower and a tuft of colorful feathers in red, blue, and purple. She is wearing a patterned shawl with yellow, blue, and black designs over a white top. The background is blurred, suggesting an outdoor event.

**CURRENT STATE
OF THE TOURISM
SECTOR**






- The recognition of Kyrgyzstan in the global tourism market is gradually growing. According to the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index, Kyrgyzstan rose from 116th to 90th place between 2015 to 2021.
- According to the National Statistical Committee, the contribution of tourism to the republic's GDP increased from 4.7 to 5.1% between 2015 to 2019. At the same time, the achievement of the forecast indicators of 7% by 2023 was prevented by the COVID-19 pandemic, due to which this indicator decreased to 3.3% in 2020 and slightly increased to 3.6% in 2021.
- The decrease in inbound tourism was even more noticeable. As reported by the Kyrgyz Border Guard Service, the number of people indicating the purpose of "tourism" when crossing the state border decreased by almost 25 times.

Number of foreign arrivals, in thousand people



- The geographical structure of tourist visits has also changed. If previously it was mostly citizens of Kazakhstan, then in recent years Uzbekistan has become a leader.

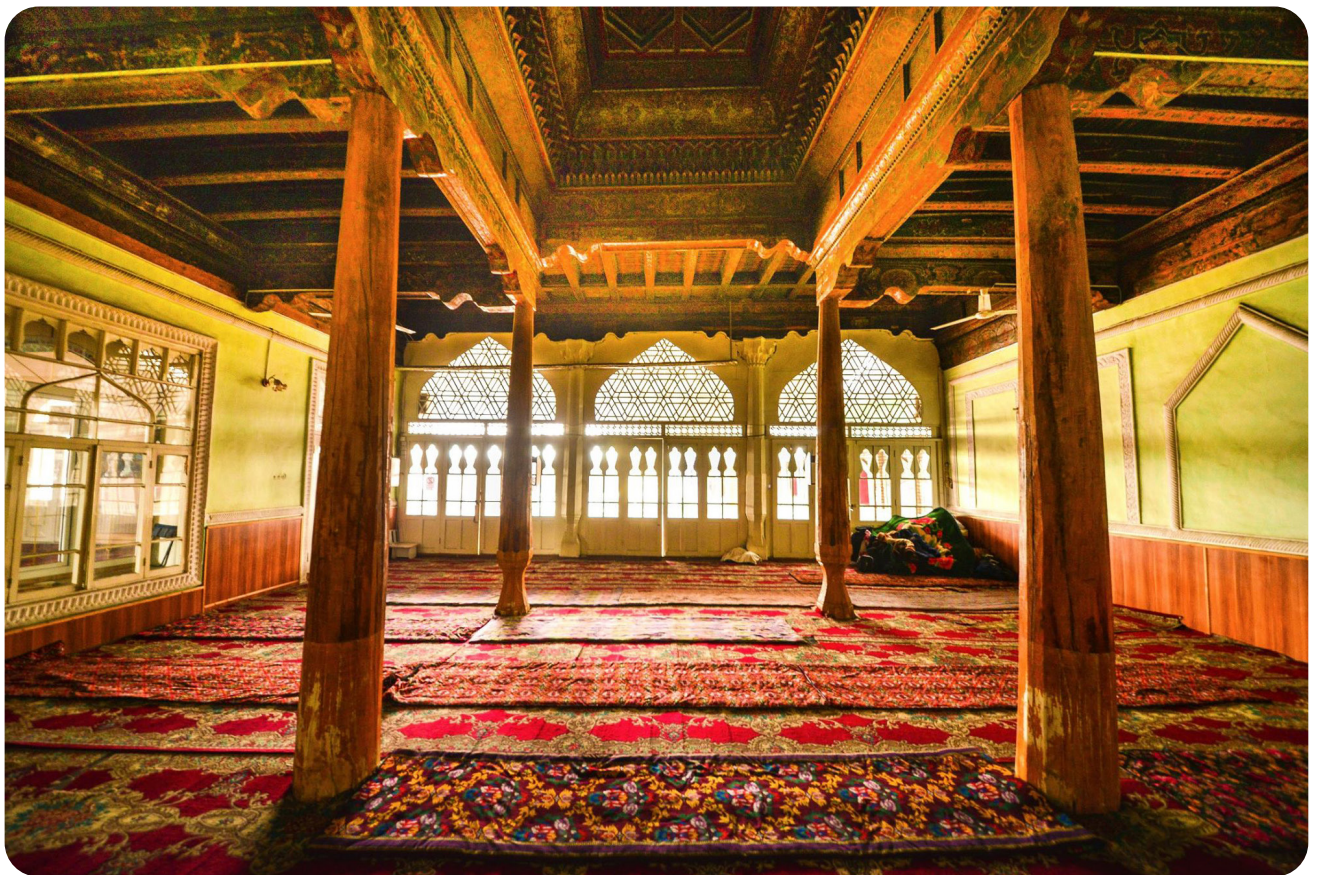
Geography of international arrivals, in thousand people

	2016	2019	2020
 Uzbekistan	374.4	4,662.3	1,425.3
 Kazakhstan	2,769.1	2,915.6	553.7
 Russia	467.9	546.7	147.0
 Tajikistan	262.9	181.4	50.3
 Türkiye	61.8	65.2	27.6

- 10 • However, the contribution of tourism to the gross regional product of the Osh Region in the period from 2018 to 2020, despite a two-fold reduction in the number of tourist visits, remained at the same level and amounted to 2.6%, which is explained by the growth of domestic tourism.

Number of visits to tourism enterprises

	2016	2019	2020
Kyrgyz Republic	627,555	809,589	256,251
Osh Region	49,021	64,862	33,763



- At the same time, the infrastructural development of the regional tourism sector is on the rise. The number of new hotels, restaurants, tourism enterprises, specialized agencies and tour operators is growing.

Number of business entities operating in the field of tourism in the Osh Region, in units

	2016	2019	2020	2021
Hotels	133	150	158	165
Tourism and recreation enterprises	44	60	60	62
Restaurants	815	885	916	928
Travel agencies and tour operators	401	582	660	692

- According to the Tourism Development Support Fund of the Kyrgyz Republic, in recent years, tourists in Kyrgyzstan on average spent about USD 70 per day.
- As said by regional tour operators:
 In Osh city, 70% of tourists stay 2 days on average.
 In Osh province, 70% of tourists stay for 1 night. About a third of tourists (mostly climbers) stay in the region for 8-28 days.
- Geography of tourists (the Osh Region):
 60% - from Western countries.
 25% - from CIS countries (Russia, Kazakhstan).
 10% - Kyrgyzstanis.
 5% - from Uzbekistan.



Tourism potential of the Osh Region

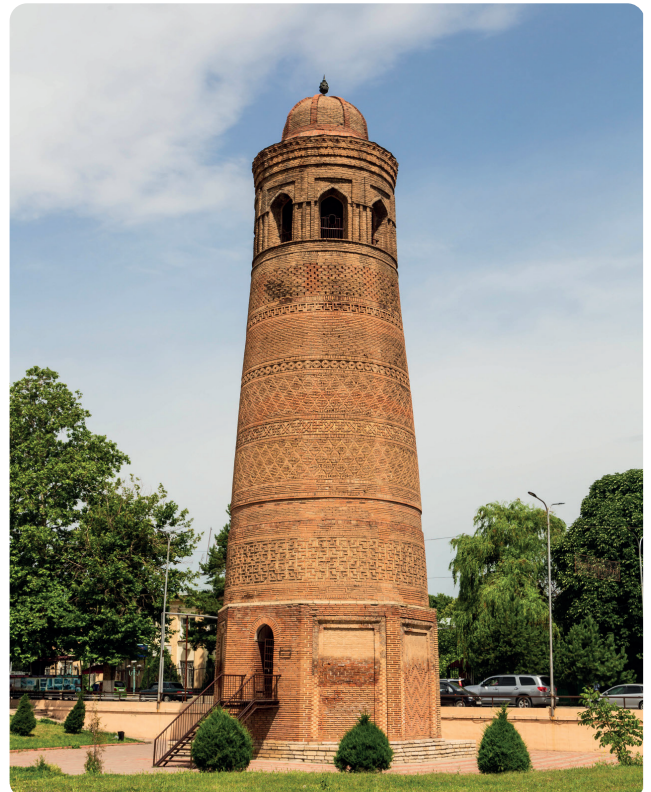
- The region has a **favourable geographical location**:

- It is located at the junction of Central Asia and East Turkestan (Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region of the PRC), close to the main centres and historical cities of the Fergana Valley (Kokand, Khujand, Fergana).
- The Pamir Highway passes through its territory.



- The Osh Region has a **rich cultural and historical heritage**:

- The region is a unique combination of nomadic and sedentary cultures.
- One of the routes of the Silk Road passed through its territory, which is increasingly popular with tourists.
- The capital of the region is the 3,000-year-old city of Osh, today a major pilgrimage centre promoting itself as the "Silk Road Provider".
- Another large city in the region Uzgen was the capital of a large medieval state of the Karakhanids. Architectural monuments have been preserved in the city.



- The Osh Region is characterized by a **variety of natural landforms** suitable for the development of various types of tourism:

- The region has excellent but not yet fully exploited opportunities for the development of adventure tourism. Here are the legendary Lenin Peak, many alpine meadows and lakes.
- There are opportunities for the development of agro-, eco-, and geotourism.



- The zest of the Osh Region is its **glorious gastronomic traditions:**

- The region absorbed the culinary traditions of the Kyrgyz, Uzbek and Uighur peoples. Osh is considered the “gastro-nomic mecca” of Kyrgyzstan.
- The culture of chaykana, the oriental tea-drinking, has been preserved here.
- The region is renowned for its varieties of relict “devzira” rice, the main ingredient of the famous Osh pilaf.



Problems and challenges faced by the regional tourism sector

The situational analysis of the tourism sector in the Osh Region identified 69 major problems. Their absolute majority can be attributed to the so-called problems-symptoms,

i.e., side effects or consequences of the presence of really big structural challenges - root cause problems, which are presented below.

I

- **Human resourcing** in the tourism industry remains at a low level:
 - In many sub-sectors (guides, management, catering, hospitality) there is a significant shortage of personnel;
 - There is a weak managerial level, accompanied by a low corporate culture and a weak level of professional and language training of employees;
 - The sector suffers from high staff turnover, which harms the preservation of institutional memory and leads to a deterioration in the quality of services provided.

II

- The tourism promotion process has weak **institutional support**:
 - Tourism issues at all levels of government are handled by 1 employee who is given this direction "in addition" to the main activity;
 - Government agencies practice the top-down approach to development issues with little regard for feedback from the tourism industry and the population involved;
 - There is no comprehensive vision for the sector development that takes into account the need for intersectoral promotion of the industry.

III

- The current **regulatory legal environment** is not sufficiently favorable for tourism development as a priority sector of the national economy:
 - In the catering segment, there is an onerous tax rate of 8% on turnover;
 - There are no standards covering the activities of guides, security issues;
 - Low level of the collection of statistical information, especially at the regional level, modern standards of tourism statistics are not implemented.

- Low level of the popularity of **green economy principles**, and their poor implementation in practice:

IV

- Environmental problems are exacerbated in the region caused by consumer attitudes towards nature (problems of garbage, sewerage, etc.);
 - Low level of environmental awareness in society as a whole, and poor awareness of the principles and technologies of green economy.
-

- The Osh Region is poorly promoted in terms of **marketing**:

V

- The region does not have a well-established image and recognition in the global market, there is no single marketing package for its promotion;
 - There is low customer orientation, weak digitalization.
-

- **Financing** of the regional tourism sector, despite the declared priority, continues to be carried out on a leftover principle:

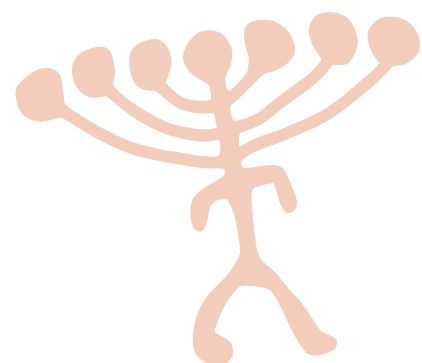
VI

- There is a chronic underfunding of budgetary organizations;
 - Financial literacy of potential businessmen is still at a low level.
-

- Issues of **comprehensive planning and integrated infrastructure management** in the Osh Region are poorly developed:

VII

- Ongoing projects still lack a holistic vision, quality of execution, customer focus and inclusiveness;
- Insufficient attention is paid to information and navigation support for the tourism industry, incl. in foreign languages.





**WHAT SHOULD IT BE
LIKE IN 2028**

The **vision** for the future of the tourism sector of the Osh Region:

- By 2028, the Osh Region will become the leading provider of tourist services in the Ferghana Valley and the Pamir-Alay Highway.

With this vision in mind, the **main goal** is defined as:

- Increasing the recognition of the Osh Region in the global tourism market by promoting a regional brand and creating a unique experience for tourists from visiting the region.

Target indicators for the regional sector development:

	2017	2021	2025*	2028*
Tourism enterprises, units	36	38	52	68
Income of travel agencies, mln KGS	18.5	3.7	57.3	144.8
Domestic tourists, thousand people	41	107	155	473
Foreign tourists, thousand people	4.2	3.5	8.5	16.3
Length of stay, days (with climbers)	4	3.2	4.2	4.5
Average expenses, USD	50	70	105	125

Main mechanisms for achieving the targets:

Increase in the number of tourism enterprises and those employed in them

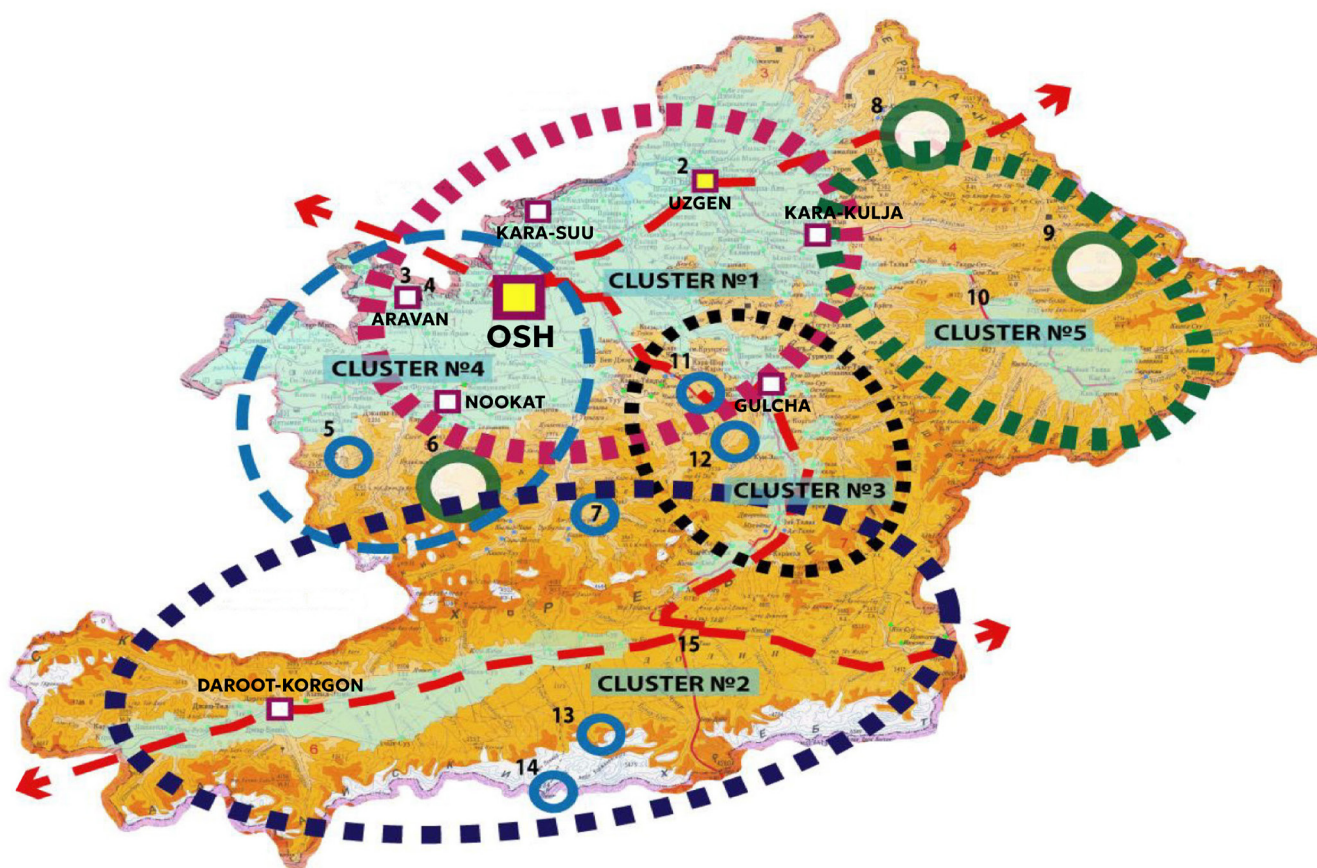
- Increasing financial literacy of entrepreneurs who want to develop the tourism business through training, seminars.
- Programming a set of measures to encourage the best workers in the industry.

Income growth for travel agencies

- Improving the regulatory legal framework.
- Development of tourism infrastructure.
- Diversification of tourism products through the introduction of winter and demi-season tourism directions (for example, geoparks).

• For the sustainable development of tourism, taking into account the SMG Model, it is proposed to divide the territory of the Osh Region into 5 territorial **tourism clusters**:

1. Silk Road cities
2. Pamir-Alay mountains
3. Ethnotourism in Alay
4. Sacred places of Osh province
5. Alaykuu Sky Valley



- CITIES ON SILK ROAD
- DISTRICT CENTERS
- NATURAL PARKS AND RESERVES
- CLUSTERS
- SILK ROAD PATHS

TOURIST DESTINATIONS:

1. SULAIMAN-TOO
2. UZGEN COMPLEX
3. CHIL-USTUN
4. DULDUL-ATA
5. ABSHYR-ATA
6. KYRGYZ-ATA
7. ALAYKUU
8. CHYIYRCHYK
9. SARY-OY
10. TULPAR-KOL
11. LENIN PEAK
12. ALAY VALLEY
13. KULDATKA FORTRESS
14. KURMANJAN-DATKA MUSEUM

Improving tourism statistics

The analysis of the tourism sector in the Osh Region shows that it is difficult to make systematic decisions on its sustainable development based on the statistical data currently being collected. Recent trends in the development of the global tourism industry (the search for sustainable forms of development, total digitalization, in-depth analysis of tourist preferences) require a significant transformation of domestic tourism statistics.

One of the effective tools of work with statistics is the introduction of the *Tourism Satellite Account*. Other important directions are the emphasis on the study of *behavioural patterns of travellers*, as well as the statistical *accounting of "hidden" tourists*, based on the collection of additional data on accommodation facilities.

Promoting the principles of green economy

The study of the main tourist destinations in the region has revealed a number of systemic problems that hinder the development of environmentally sustainable forms of tourism. These are the unfavourable situation with household waste and sewerage, as well as the low level of environmental awareness and, as a consequence, interagency cooperation on environmental protection.

Among the necessary measures, it should be noted the introduction of a system of environmental audit of destinations, state/municipal regulation of the separate waste collection, and seeking assistance from specialized organizations (for example, "WasteNet.kg").

Addressing issues related to environmental awareness can be helped by: *industry commitments* to promote "green" certification (for instance, within the PERETO project), development of new more flexible mechanisms of "green" financing, raising awareness of officials and representatives of the tourism business about environmental issues and possibilities of green economy (including through regular training on the topics "Environmental situation in Kyrgyzstan and Central Asia", "Sustainable Development and Renewable Energy", etc.).



One of the global trends in tourism that has emerged during COVID-19 is the trend of visiting sparsely populated and remote places. This opens up new tourism opportunities for the mountainous regions of the Osh Region. Another thing is that the mountainous areas of the region face the same development problems as large cities. At the same time, in terms of infrastructure, they are less developed, and their human resources potential is noticeably lower.

Therefore, at the initial stage, for the development of mountain tourism in the Osh Region, it is necessary to focus on an *accelerated transition to digital technologies*, which means the

transfer of all information of interest to tourists into electronic form with its placement on social media, as well as on raising the level of *awareness of tourism business entities about market trends and demand factors*. Given the small number of destinations in the region with “wow-products”, *various thematic events* (festivals of nomadism, hunting, water, sacred tours, etc., see below) can be an important start in the development of sustainable tourism in the region.

Winter tourism as a factor in ensuring year-round tourism

In recent decades, summer types of adventure tourism have been actively developed in the region. The same cannot be said about winter tourism, which is largely in its infancy in the Osh Region. At the same time, the territory of the region is literally full of high-mountainous slopes that retain snow cover for up to 7-8 months. Currently, only rare fans of Heliski and Skimo tours use their services. These destinations are not designed for a stable reception of tourists - there are practically no guest houses near the ski routes.

There are several locations in the Osh Region suitable for the development of winter tourism. First of all, this is the Pamir-Alay ski complex, which is under construction on the Taldyk pass and designed for mass segment. According to the results of expert surveys, certain slopes on the territory of the Kyrgyz-Ata National Park and northern slopes of the Chong-Alay Range are ideal for the development ski tours and freeride skiing.



Development of geoparks

One of the global trends in tourism, which is increasingly understood as the development of its sustainable forms, is the promotion of the concept of geological tourism. A network of Global Geoparks - special territories demonstrating the geological history of the Earth - is being formed under the auspices of UNESCO. These geoparks promote sustainable development of territories through the development of responsible tourism and support of local communities. This contributes to unlocking the economic potential of the territories and creating innovative enterprises and new jobs around them.

In recent years, the idea of connecting Kyrgyzstan to the global movement of geoparks has gained momentum. In the south of Kyrgyzstan, the process was initiated by Batken province, where the Madygen Geopark was established.

Geologists estimate that Osh province also possesses considerable geodiversity resources well suited to create at least one geopark. A site at the junction of Nookat, Kara-Suu, Alay and Chong-Alay districts of the region is proposed for a future geopark.

Investments in the infrastructure of tourist destinations

One of the central problems of the sector is the underdevelopment of its urban infrastructure. In many destinations, it was built back in Soviet times and by now has noticeably dilapidated.

Within the framework of the "Regional Economic Development" project (component "Catalyzing Investments for Tourism and Urban Development"), launched by ARIS KR with the support from the World Bank, it is planned to implement a set of measures totalling USD 16.7 mln to reconstruct key tourist destinations of the region,

including Sulaiman-Too, the Uzgen complex, public spaces in the cities of Osh and Uzgen, as well as the improvement of the territories of the Kyrgyz-Ata and Kara-Shoro national parks, and the location of "Abshyr-Ata".

As a result of interaction with stakeholders of the regional tourism sector, the consultants prepared a "Bank of Investment Priorities", which contains information on the investment needs of smaller tourist destinations ("Pamir-Alay" ski resort, "Duldul-At", "Kojo-Kelen", etc.) (see the complete version of the STDSP).



An important direction in the development of the Osh Region's tourism sector should be the opening of tourist service centers that provide information on local tourist products, attractions, sightseeing and transport routes. These centers can also sell tickets for public transport, souvenirs and products of local artisans.

Currently, only one such center operates in the region, managed by the "Destination Osh" Public Association. The Tourism Development Support Fund of the Kyrgyz Republic plans to build 11 new centers - rest points - in crowded tourist places in Osh and Uzgen cities and Gulcha village, as well as at all border crossings of Osh province.

According to the consultant, in order to promote domestic tourism, the priority is the additional construction of three such centers in the following areas:

- 1) at the turn of the Osh-Batken highway towards Kyrgyz-Ata National Park (Zulpuev aiyl aimak, Nookat district);
- 2) on the Chiyirchyk pass (Kara-Suu district);
- 3) on the Osh-Erkeshtam highway near Sary-Tash village (Alay district).



A tall, cylindrical brick tower with intricate geometric patterns and a base with an arched entrance. The tower is constructed from reddish-brown bricks and features several distinct decorative bands. The top section has a series of arched openings. The overall structure is a classic example of Islamic architecture, possibly a minaret or a watchtower. The sky is a pale, overcast blue.

**HOW TO ACHIEVE
THESE GOALS**

Taking into account the fact that the tourism sector of the Osh Region is at an early stage of its development even in comparison with other regions of Kyrgyzstan, as well as the markedly limited state resources for its development, measures to support it should be well thought-out and aimed at achieving concrete results. Therefore, the following **guiding principles** should be followed at all stages of the implementation of the STDSP:

- **An integrated approach to the development and management of the region's tourism sector**

The tourism sector of the Osh Region should be developed within a well-coordinated and integrated approach to management based on the interests of all stakeholders, close interaction between public authorities, local communities, private and civil sectors.

- **Sustainability as a cross-cutting element of all aspects of tourism industry development**

According to UNWTO, sustainable tourism is defined as "tourism that takes into account its present and future economic, social and environmental impacts while meeting the needs of today's tourists, the tourism industry, the environment and the host communities".

- **Developing human capital and promoting inclusiveness**

Investing in human development is the key to the sustainable development of the sector in the interests of all parties: tourists as recipients of better services, businessmen as recipients of higher profits, and the state as a collector of increasing taxes and fees.

The widespread introduction and promotion of the principle of inclusiveness through the participation of a variety of people, including the socially vulnerable, in the functioning of the sector, makes society more equitable, and living in it - comfortable and safe for everyone.

- **Orientation to the standards of creative, green and digitalized tourism**

Green economy aims to increase people's well-being while reducing environmental risks through the introduction of modern technologies in land and water use, energy, transportation, construction and waste management.

Tourism as an experience industry is focused on freedom of entrepreneurial freedom, and creative thinking, which creates intangible values with high added value and stable global demand. Modern digital technology permeates all parts of the tourism industry, making them accessible and usable by an unlimited number of customers.

- **Tourism as a cross-sectoral industry and a basis for community development**

Establishing direct links between tourism and the sectors of agriculture, trade, crafts and handicrafts creates value chains with economic benefits for more producers of goods and services in the region.

Support for private initiatives, bringing to local communities the understanding of tourism as an independent highly profitable business and a means of development provides better economic results for households involved in the tourism industry.

- **Prioritizing quality over quantity**

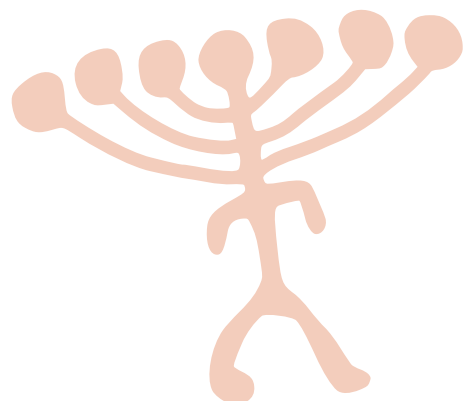
Focusing on the quality and content of visits rather than the number of visits. Priority of quality over quantity reduces the risk of pressure on natural resources, avoids the cost of compensation for environmental damage, and provides a balance between the development of tourist destinations and the preservation of socio-cultural and natural values of the Osh Region.

The roadmap to achieving the goals is a system of logical hierarchical **strategic objectives**, built with the systematization of the identified problems.

- 1 Improve the quality and efficiency of work with human resources
- 2 Increase the level of institutional support for the sector, focusing on improving the quality of services
- 3 Enhance the regulatory environment for sustainable tourism development
- 4 Spread a nature-friendly culture through the promotion of green economy and sustainable tourism
- 5 Contribute to the growth of the region's recognition in the global tourism market through the introduction of modern marketing tools
- 6 Create favorable financial and economic conditions for the development of tourism business
- 7 Adjust the work on the integrated development of the regional infrastructure taking into account the needs of the tourism sector



- 1.1** Train guides, cooks, and hotel workers, primarily the residents of remote Alay, Chong-Alay, and Kara-Kulja districts of Osh province.
- 1.2** Organize regular language courses for employees of state and regional administrations, managers of travel companies, etc.
- 1.3** Train local communities in mine rescue skills at their place of actual residence.
- 1.4** Launch the educational process in the speciality “Museum Affairs” on the basis of the faculties of tourism as well as regular refresher courses for museum staff.
- 1.5** Develop a set of incentives for the best employees of the industry through the organization of competitions, raffle tickets, valuable prizes, etc.
- 1.6** Form a digital archive of documents and knowledge on tourism when creating a unified tourism portal of the Osh Region.



Increase the level of institutional support for the sector, focusing on improving the quality of services

- 2.1** Consolidate the existing Tourism Development Councils under the Plenipotentiary Representative of the President of the Kyrgyz Republic in Osh province and under the Osh Mayor's Office into the Osh Joint Tourism Development Council, OJTDC, with the inclusion of representatives of regional environmental, urban planning and transport associations, as well as giving it a number of executive functions.
- 2.2** Create territorial groups to ensure security at tourist sites.
- 2.3** Introduce regulations for the process of strategic planning for tourism development in the Osh Region, assigning coordinating functions to OJTDC.
- 2.4** Conduct a series of training for representatives of the tourism sector and LSG bodies on such courses as "Tourism as a Locomotive of the Economy", "Corporate Culture", etc.
- 2.5** The National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic together with local state administrations shall introduce a list and methodology for collecting and calculating additional indicators in the field of tourism in accordance with the methods used by international organizations - UNWTO, World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC).



3.1 Make amendments to the Law of KR “On Tourism” taking into account the world’s best rulemaking practices in the field of tourism.

3.2 Amend the laws and by-laws to change the terms of granting pastures for other purposes (for tourism and recreation of citizens) up to 49 years. Identify pasture areas to be used for tourism purposes in the annual plans for pasture management of local councils.

3.3 Make changes to the Tax Code of the Kyrgyz Republic in order to reduce the tax burden on business. It is advisable to reduce the single tax rate for public catering entities from 8% to:

In the cities of Bishkek and Osh:

a) 6% - in cash; b) 4% - in non-cash form.

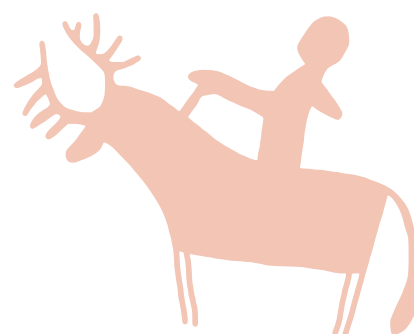
In the rest of the country:

a) 5% - in cash. b) 3% - in non-cash form.

3.4 Introduce norms and professional standards regulating guides and instructors of adventure tourism.

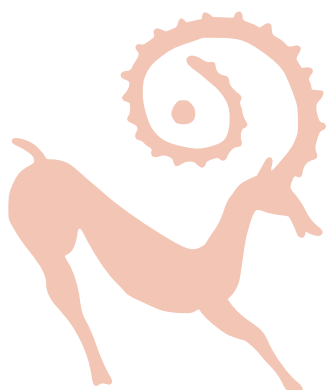
3.5 Develop safety standards for tourists, indicating the areas of responsibility of state bodies and tour operators.

3.6 Expand the tourist nomenclature of the State Classifier of the Kyrgyz Republic “Types of economic activity”.



Spread a nature-friendly culture through the promotion of green economy and sustainable tourism

- 4.1** Carry out long-term planning of destinations, taking into account their recreational capacity and throughput of the ecological potential.
- 4.2** Conduct a systematic environmental audit of tourist destinations.
- 4.3** Make separate collection and subsequent removal of non-organic waste mandatory by signing contracts with garbage collection companies, with the introduction of appropriate penalties for destinations, and launching municipal programs for separate garbage collection.
- 4.4** Regulate and implement the technology for the disposal of organic waste on-site, including through the installation of mini-treatment plants, sewage drains, Euro-septic, eco-toilets, etc.
- 4.5** Conduct information campaigns about respect for the environment through the media, TV and social networks.
- 4.6** Organize regular courses (for example, on the topics “Fundamentals of a Green Economy”, “Environmental Situation in Kyrgyzstan and Central Asia”, “Sustainable Energy and Renewable Energy”) for employees of LSA and LSG, managers of tourist destinations.
- 4.7** Encourage the planting of forests on mountain slopes and other drought- and salt-tolerant crops that slow the melting of glaciers, as well as the introduction of biogas technologies, drip and discrete irrigation, sprinkling, and use of organic fertilizers in the agricultural sector.



Contribute to the growth of the region's recognition in the global tourism market through the introduction of modern marketing tools

- 5.1** Implement a unified marketing development program in the Osh Region under the auspices of the Osh - Silk Road Provider brand (the whole range of measures is proposed in the STDSP).
- 5.2** Create a tourist portal of the Osh Region.
- 5.3** Conduct regular courses (for example, on the topics "Tourism as a Locomotive of Sustainable Economic Development", "What the Client Wants", "Why Marketing is Important", "SMM -management") for employees of travel companies and HORECA entities.
- 5.4** Conduct a pilot marketing-oriented interpretation of the historical and cultural significance of Sulaiman-Too and the Uzgen complex to increase interest among tourists.
- 5.5** Introduce an interactive approach to the work of museums in the Osh Region.



Create favorable financial and economic conditions for the development of tourism business

- 6.1** Provide funding for the authorized state body in the sphere of culture on the basis of program budget financing, in order to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of its work.
- 6.2** When forming and distributing the local budget, LSG bodies should prioritize issues of local importance that have a direct or indirect impact on tourism development.
- 6.3** Conduct a series of trainings to improve financial and economic literacy, business plan development for potential newcomers to the tourism business, with a special focus on rural residents, youth, and women.
- 6.4** Extend public-private partnership mechanisms to the tourism sector.



Adjust the work on the integrated development of the regional infrastructure taking into account the needs of the tourism sector

7.1 Attract investments in the urban infrastructure of the regional tourism sector within the framework of various programs, for example, the project of ARIS KR “Regional Economic Development”.

7.2 Bring to a logical conclusion the project to create rest points (tourism service centers).

7.3 Provide navigation support for destinations (installation of billboards, signs of travel to tourist sites in Kyrgyz, English and Russian).

7.4 Organize educational programs for senior and middle-level employees of municipalities and transport companies on the courses “Sustainable and Inclusive Environment”, “Urban Planning”, “Fundamentals of Urban Studies”, etc.

7.5 When developing Action Plans for the development of road and transport infrastructure, it is mandatory to involve representatives of the private and civil sectors, including from the tourism sector.

7.6 Prioritize pedestrian infrastructure, which includes the reconstruction and construction of inclusive sidewalks, pedestrian bridges, public transport stops, and the choice of high-quality and sustainable types of paving, lighting and landscaping along sidewalks.

7.7 Create paid organized parking systems, encourage the use of public transport in large cities of the Osh Region.

7.8 In cooperation with the district state administrations, encourage OJSC “Oshelectro” to electrify, and mobile operators to expand the coverage of mobile communications in tourist destinations, including in remote mountainous areas of the Osh Region.

7.9 Carry out a comprehensive modernization of the Osh International Airport, which should include, but not be limited to:

- construction of a new passenger terminal with a capacity of 1000-1500 passenger traffic per hour;
- bringing the terminal infrastructure in line with the standards of passenger inclusiveness and comfort;
- integration of the airport with public transport in Osh city, creation of a multi-modal transport complex on its basis.

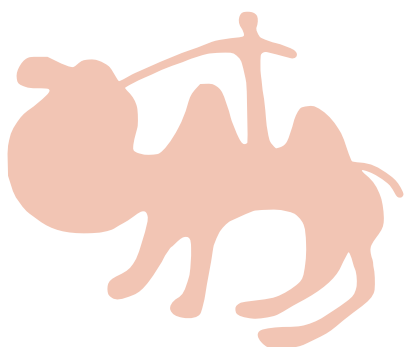
New marketing strategy for the Osh Region

The Osh Region today is not represented in the global tourism market. It does not have its positioning platform - a single tourist image, brand and a set of competitive tourism products. In the world market, few people know about the tourism features of the region, which are distinguishable, for example, from tourism products of other Central Asia countries who close to the region geographically, culturally, and historically.

A serious attempt to move the situation from the "dead point" was made in 2021, when, by order of the Osh Mayor's Office, the tourist brand "Osh - Silk Road Provider" was developed and adopted.

Taking into account the goals of the STDSP, it is **proposed**:

- Accept the brand "Osh - the Silk Road Provider" as a single marketing platform for positioning the entire Osh Region in the global tourism market.
- Develop tourism brands of the districts of Osh province under the auspices and within the same style as the meta-brand of the Osh Region. At the same time, brands should be built around the most famous tourist destination.
- Fill the new branding of the region with event content - the organization of an annual festival under the umbrella name SILK ROAD FEST.





Tourism brands & events





Photos are courtesy of Zafer Dincher, Almaz Ismanov, Nastaaf, Dastan Suiunbekov, Dellbone, and Nihongarden.

Sustainable tourism development
Strategy and Plan
for the Osh Region

Short version
Bishkek - 2023

