

THE ANALYSIS OF AN UNESCO TOURIST ATTRACTION

Andreea Bianca ENE

The Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Bucharest, Romania

ABSTRACT

Under the current circumstances, people lose contact with nature and origins of human society and feel the need to escape in nature, to recover and to recuperate strength. Tourists from economically developed countries want various tourist products, developed under special conditions, in different geographic areas from those of origin, for meeting unique culture and having a holiday in nature.

This paper has the title „The analysis of an UNESCO tourist attraction”, showing – The Buffalo National Park, a natural tourist attraction classified in UNESCO, which is located in Canada. I chose Canada because I wanted to present one of the beauties that this country has, being very important to promote also other places than the most common, to stimulate the desire to make tourism.

Regarding the methodology that underlies this project, I used data supplied by World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), about International Tourist Arrivals and International Tourism Receipts in 2010-2013.

The purpose of this paper is to present with interest a major tourist attraction by identifying the criteria underlying the classification of UNESCO.

Keywords - tourism, tourist attraction

JEL Classification – L830

Paper type – Research paper

Introduction

International tourism has, in this situation, the most important growth due willingness of people to visit other countries, to still know other civilizations, habits, but also by technical progress in transport, progress that allows a faster and more comfortable travel.

The evolution of international tourism can be judged by the appearance of two indicators: international tourists arrivals and international tourism receipts. (Nistoreanu, P., 2005)

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As specified by World Tourism Organization „an UNESCO World Heritage Site is a place (such as a forest, mountain, lake, island, desert, monument, building, complex, or city) that is listed by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as of special cultural or physical significance”.

The international World Heritage Programme has a list administered by the UNESCO World Heritage Committee, composed of 21 UNESCO member states which are elected by the General Assembly.

UNESCO encourage all the countries to sign the World Heritage Convention and to ensure the protection of their natural and cultural heritage. It is very important that it provides assistance for World Heritage sites in immediate danger.

Also, it encourages participation of the local population in the preservation of their cultural and natural heritage and the international cooperation in the conservation of our world's cultural and natural heritage.

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Relating to the structure of paper, the first chapter presents an analysis in terms of tourism for the country that matched the presented tourist attraction and highlights its evolution over the period 2010-2013 according to the number of tourists arrivals and tourism revenues volume. In the next chapter is analyzed the tourist attraction selected for the study, focusing on the criteria that include it in UNESCO.

I consider this research paper a work suitable for students who want to gather information to study more the tourism field and become familiar with the specialized language.

1. The touristic analysis of Canada

In this chapter I will talk about the Canada and the evolution of number of tourists and revenue in 2010-2013 to have an image of tourism in this area.

1.1. Canada – short description

Few countries in the world offer so many possibilities like Canada. Western Canada is famous for its magnificent view, the East combines the flavor and the charm

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of Europe with the exuberance of New York and the North is famous for its wildlife. Despite the enormous size of Canada, the country is sparsely populated, most people being around urban centers.

As it is shown in turistik.ro, in Canada is one of the natural wonders - Niagara Falls. Often tourists are opting for South Ontario - Toronto, Niagara Falls and Niagara wine region. Few know that the halfway between Toronto and Niagara Falls is "City Cascades" - Hamilton. Here are 97 waterfalls and at many of these waterfalls we can go on Bruce Trail route through Hamilton.

1.2. The evolution of number of tourists and revenue in 2010-2013

Table no.1- Tourist Arrivals in 2010-2013

Destinations	International Tourist Arrivals				
	(1000)				Share (%)
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2013
Americas	150,578	155,964	162,721	167,940	100
North America	99,517	102,130	106,404	110,091	65.6
- Canada	16,219	16,016	16,344	16,588	9.9
Caribbean	19,539	20,117	20,730	21,229	12.6
Central America	7,908	8,256	8,860	9,192	5.5
South America	23,614	25,460	26,727	27,429	16.3

Source: World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)

In Table no. 1 we can see that in America areas, in 2010, the tourist arrivals was about 150,578 million tourist, having grown until 2013 to 167,940 million tourist, so the Americas received 5 million additional international arrivals in 2013 reaching a total of 168 million tourists.

It seems that from Americas, Central America had the lowest number of tourists over the years.

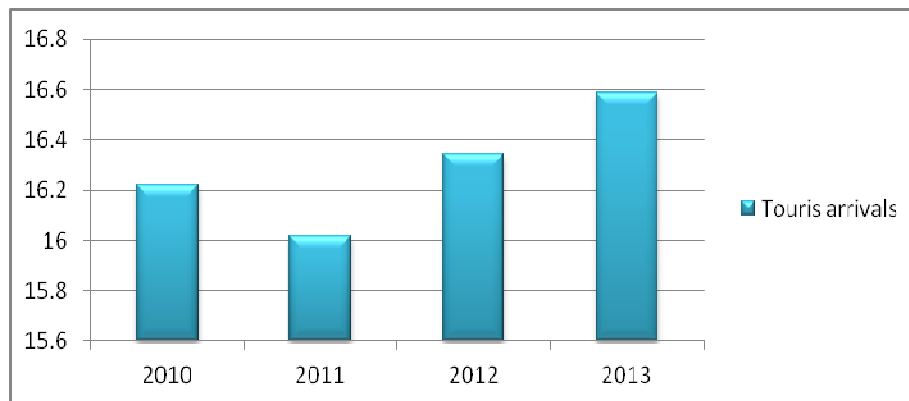
As can be seen from the Table no. 1, Canada belongs to the North America region, and in 2013, it received 9.9% of the total tourists arrivals in the region. North America 2013 owned a share of 65.6% of arrivals, being superior to other regions, because owns more than half of all tourists arrivals in America.

Table no.2 – The change of tourist arrivals 2010-2013

Destination	International Tourist Arrivals		
	Change (%)		
	11/10	12/11	13/12
North America	2.6	4.2	3.5
- Canada	-1.3	2.0	1.5
Carribbean	3.0	3.0	2.4
Central America	4.4	7.3	3.7
South America	7.8	5.0	2.6

Source: World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)

Figure 1 – Tourist arrivals in 2010 – 2013 in Canada



As can be seen in Table no. 2 and in Figure 1, the number of tourists arriving in Canada decreased by 1.3% in 2011 compared to 2010. In 2012 compared to 2011 and 2013 compared to 2012 the number of tourists has increased by 2, respectively 1.5%.

Surely, the decrease from 2011 due to the influence of the economic crisis, but over time there is a slight increase, which again shows that tourists choose Canada as a holiday destination. North America, the largest subregion accounting for some two-thirds of international arrivals in the region, saw ~ 3.5% growth in 2013/2012.

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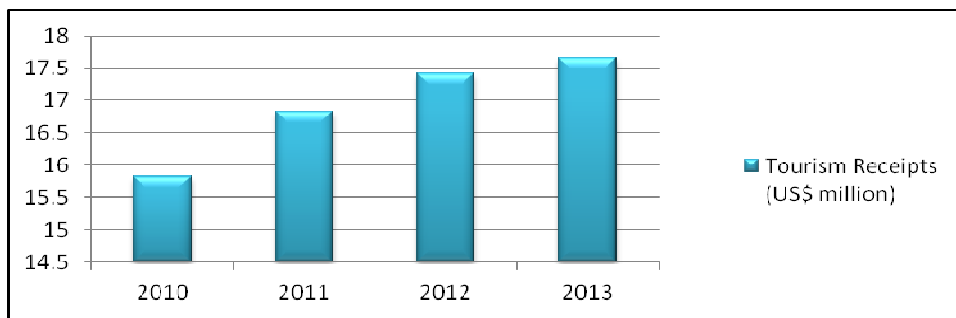
About Carribean, we can observe a modest 2.4% growth in 2013 from 2012, Central America registered ~ 3.4 % consistent grow and South America, with 2.6% was in line with the region’s average.

Table no.3 – Tourism Receipts

Destination	International Tourism Receipts				
	(US\$ million)				Share(%)
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2013
Canada	15,829	16,834	17,407	17,656	7.7

Source: World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)

Figure 2 – Tourism Receipts



In Table no. 3 and Figure 2 are showed tourism revenues during 2010 - 2013. It is noted that revenue increased from \$ 17,656,000 in 2013 to \$ 15,829,000 in 2010, this showing that tourists spent more, despite the fact that there were certain drops on arrivals. As can be seen in Table no. 2, 7.7% of revenue recorded in 2013 in America belong to Canada.

2. The analysis of UNESCO turist attraction - Wood Buffalo National Park

In this chapter, I will offer details about Wood Buffalo National Park, such as location and the influence of the tourist flow, about classification criteria in UNESCO and how Romanians can go to visit that place.

2.1. Location and the influence of the tourists flow

Karl Johnston says that Wood Buffalo National Park is the largest national park in Canada (44,807 km²) and it is located in northeastern Alberta and

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southern Northwest Territories. It was established in 1922 in order to protect forest bisons, and it received the name even after these animals.

Wood Buffalo National Park is the second-largest national park in the world, and thirteenth-largest protected area in the world. The park is one of the most visited in Canada, and especially because it is affordable. Tourists can come by plane or with their cars on the Mackenzie Highway. Even if Canadian winters are not gentle, tourists have cleaned roads. Those responsible for managing the park are always ready to offer help to tourists, through the abundance of information that are available to them.

The area is part of the UNESCO World Heritage Site list, was designated in 1983 home to a diverse ecosystem consisting of hundreds of different species of wildlife. It contains Peace-Athabasca Delta, one of the world's largest freshwater deltas, as well as the population of wild bison. The park has a varied landscape: a glacial plateau eroded; glaciated plains; a freshwater delta and alluvial river lowlands. The salt plains are unique in Canada, because during dry periods the mudflats are dominated by mineral salt. Vegetation of park is specific to boreal forest zone with spruce, black spruce, jack pine and tamarack predominant.

The park contains the highest unperturbed grass meadows in North America. The park was created in order to protect the buffalo in North America. It seems that were registered around 227 species of birds including great gray owl and snowy owl, willow ptarmigan, boreal chickadee and redpoll crossbill. (UNESCO, World Heritage)

Classification criteria in UNESCO

Wood Buffalo National Park is a natural touristic objective and has been classified in UNESCO World Heritage since 1983. As presented on World Heritage Site, „the most important criteria that were the basis for its inclusion are:

Criterion (vii): The great concentrations of migratory wildlife are of world importance and the rare and superlative natural phenomena include a large inland delta, salt plains and gypsum karst that are equally internationally significant.

Criterion (ix): Wood Buffalo is the most ecologically complete and largest example of the entire Great Plains-Boreal grassland ecosystem of North America, the only place where the predator-prey relationship between wolves and wood bison has continued, unbroken, over time.

Criterion (x): Wood Buffalo contains the only breeding habitat in the world for the whooping crane, an endangered species brought back from the brink of extinction through careful management of the small number of breeding pairs in the park. The park's size (4.5 million ha), complete ecosystems and protection are essential for in-situ conservation of the whooping crane.”

This natural tourist attraction is an outstanding example of ecological and biological processes in progress and maintains the largest herd wood bison in the world, an endangered species.

2.2. *The best way for Romanian tourist to visit the Wood Buffalo National Park*

Thinking that upon reading this study, there will be people interested to go to visit the park, I outlined the way in which a Romanian can go in Canada. So, I summarized (with the help of esky.ro) the stages of a flight to Canada, if the vacation is intended to be in May, 2015.

- Check from Romania
 - Date: 11 May 2015
 - Check out at 11:15, Monday from Bucharest, Otopeni, Henri Coandă International Airport
 - Check in at 18:21 Tuesday in Calgary, Canada, Calgary Intl Airport
 - Flight length: 40 h and 6 min (includes 2 stops: Vienna, Schwechat and Toronto, Lester B.Pearson)
- Airline company: Austrian, Air Canada
 - Price: 929 euro
- Travel by bus from Calgary to Banff, in spacious and comfortable reclining seats: (check out from Calgary at: 20:00 and check in - Banff at: 22:00; Length: ~ 2 h)

Conclusions

I can conclude through the fact that the tourist destination previously presented and analyzed deserves its place in the UNESCO because of the uniqueness and beauty it possesses and I think that it has an huge touristic potential that must be exploited.

Wood Buffalo National Park was selected to be a part of UNESCO because it has fulfilled certain criteria and it is a visited tourist destination, whereas the flow of tourists intensifies in that area.

I believe that, based on tourists' preferences and interests that they have in deciding when, how and where to travel are motivation of knowing and visiting new places.

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