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State and prospects of geotourism potential of Uzbekistan

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The Republic of Uzbekistan has great geotourism potential due to its location and rich geological history. From the standpoint of modern geology, the territory of Uzbekistan is an area that had been evolving over 1 billion years, as a result of the manifestations of all known geological processes, including cosmogenic.

Uzbekistan preserved evidence of the key milestones of the Earth. Also, here were discovered indications that in some periods of the planet this area was a birth place of new forms of organisms. In addition, the country's territory is rich with historical, architectural and other objects, some of which is protected by UNESCO.

The duration and multistage of geological evolution of the territory determined the availability of a wide variety of both geological cross-sections, showing the complex processes of our planet, and related attractions, which with creation of appropriate infrastructure will enable the development of certain complex of geoparks and geotourism. The monitoring and analysis of more than 3,500 objects of various categories (tectonics, petrology, stratigraphy, mineralogy, paleoecology, and others.) allow to select more than 100 sites (Figure 1) representing the scientific and practical interest.

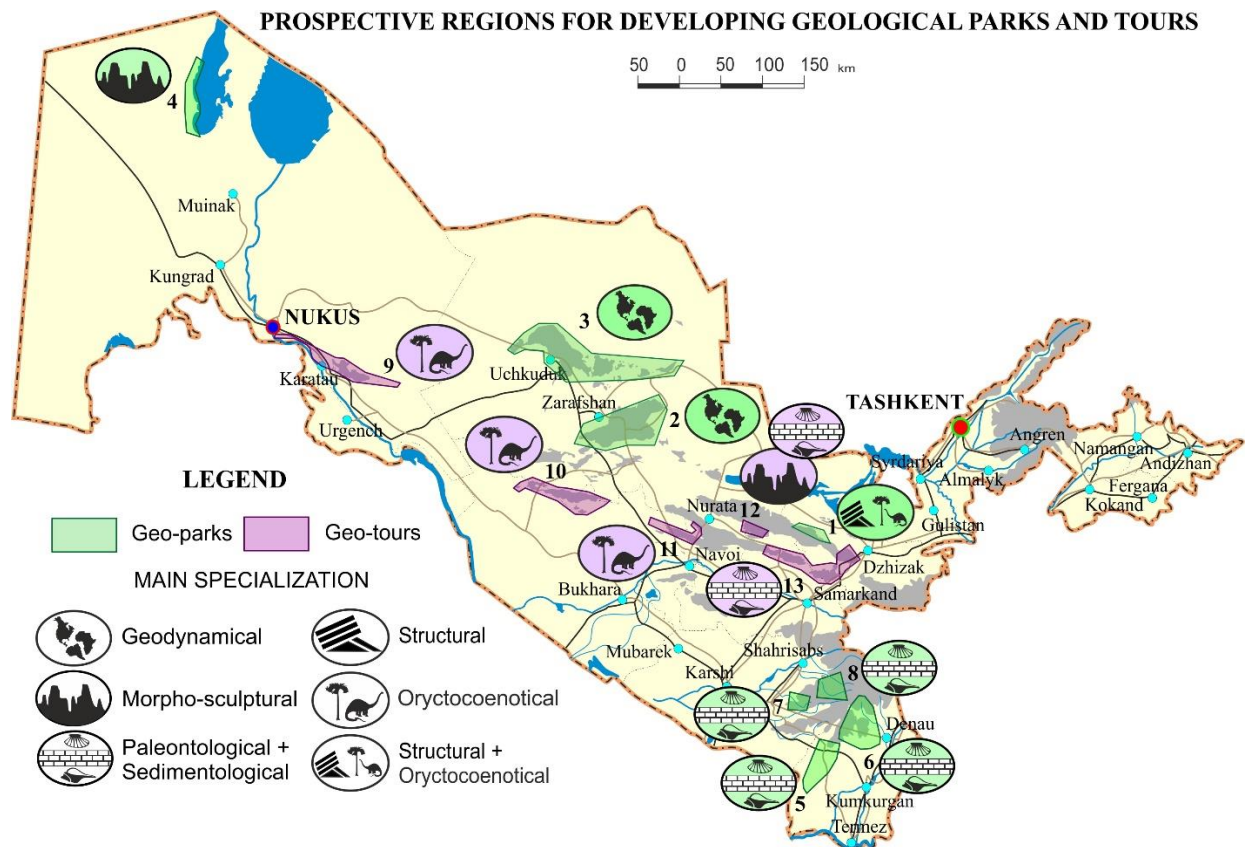


Figure 1: Map of prospective regions for geotourism

As a result, we can say that within Uzbekistan there is a sufficient number of geological heritage sites with interest for both academic and education, and in general cognitive and upbringing aspects. Some of them, taking into account modern requirements for geotourism sites, can serve as the backbone elements for geopark organization in the near future.

