

# Economic Strategy for the Sustainable Development of Ice-snow Tourism in Heilongjiang Province

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**ABSTRACT.** Heilongjiang Province has unique ice-snow tourism resources, with the largest snow fall and the longest snow period in China. Its annual snow and ice period is 4 to 5 months. Hence, it is the province with the best ice-snow tourism conditions in China. Heilongjiang Province established Harbin Harbin Ice Lantern Exhibition in 1963, held the Ice and Snow Festival in 1985 and the Ice and Snow World in 1998. It has formed its own characteristics and advantages of ice-snow tourism and promoted the economic development of Heilongjiang Province. With the further development of science, technology and economy, the ice-snow tourism in Heilongjiang has entered a new stage of development. At this stage, it is an important issue worth studying that how to achieve sustainable development of ice-snow tourism in Heilongjiang Province.

**KEYWORDS:** Heilongjiang province; Ice-snow tourism; Sustainable development; Economic strategy

## 1. Introduction

Heilongjiang Province is the most northern province with the most latitude in China. The 0 °C contour of the annual average temperature passes through the middle part of the province. With the earliest snowfall and the latest snowfall in China, Heilongjiang Province has heavy snowfall and long snow period. The snow is clean and rich, with moderate hardness. It is the best province to develop ice-snow tourism in China.

Heilongjiang Province established Harbin Harbin Ice Lantern Exhibition in 1963, held the Ice and Snow Festival in 1985 and the Ice and Snow World in 1998. Combining ice sculpture with snow sculpture, and ice sports with snow sports, Heilongjiang Province has formed its own unique advantages and promoted the economic development of Heilongjiang Province. In recent years, the ice-snow tourism industry in Heilongjiang Province has entered a period of rapid development and Heilongjiang has become a typical representative of the national ice-snow tourism destinations. With year-to-year increase in the annual number of tourists and

tourism revenue, the ice-snow tourism has made great contributions to the economic development of Heilongjiang Province.

## **2. Analysis of the impact of ice-snow tourism on the economic development of Heilongjiang**

### ***2.1 Year-to-year increase in the number of tourists and tourism revenue of ice-snow tourism***

With the continuous strengthening of the ice-snow tourism publicity in Heilongjiang Province, the overall development of ice-snow tourism has been promoted, and the development of ice-snow tourism has brought huge economic benefits to Heilongjiang Province. In 2001, Harbin Ice and Snow Festival was renamed Harbin International Ice and Snow Festival in China. The annual number of tourists and revenue income has increased year by year, and the development of ice-snow tourism has brought huge economic benefits to Heilongjiang Province[1].

### ***2.2 Extension of the scope of ice-snow tourism***

Heilongjiang Province has the longest history of developing ice-snow tourism. Harbin, Qiqihar, Mudanjiang, Hailin and other places have famous ice-snow tourist attractions, which provide good resources for the development of ice-snow tourist economy in Heilongjiang Province. Harbin, the capital of Heilongjiang Province, is also the first city in China to hold ice-snow themed festival. Harbin also created a series of ice-snow activities such as the Ice Lantern Exhibition and Harbin Film Festival, which promoted the economic development of Heilongjiang Province. At present, the ice-snow tourism in Heilongjiang Province has been developed towards surrounding cities from the original core region[2]. Some remote mountainous areas also attract many tourists by virtue of the advantages of ice and snow, driving their economic development to a certain extent.

## **3. Economic strategy for the sustainable development of ice-snow tourism in Heilongjiang Province**

### ***3.1 Enhance the cultural connotation of ice-snow tourism***

The close and organic integration of the ice-snow tourism economy and the ice-snow tourism culture is an important way for the ice-snow tourism development in Heilongjiang Province. It is conducive to improving the competitiveness of the ice-snow tourism in Heilongjiang Province to create ice-snow tourism culture brands. At present, the ice-snow activities in Heilongjiang Province have been popular with the people. It is much more possible to realize the comprehensive and coordinated sustainable development of ice-snow tourism by taking a series of measures, for

example, create the advantages of ice-snow culture, and introduce management methods, marketing strategies and operation concepts through various channels to create ice-snow art brands and ice-snow competition brands[3].

The essence of ice-snow tourists' consumption in Heilongjiang is to purchase, consumer and enjoy the culture. Tourists coming to Heilongjiang hope enjoy the combination of ice-snow landscape and local characteristic culture and understand the cultural characteristics of Heilongjiang through abundant local cultural ice-snow products. Therefore, in the future, Heilongjiang should put more efforts in building local culture to promote ice-snow tourism and development. In addition, shopping is also an important issue for tourists in ice-snow tourism. The tourism products of Heilongjiang should highlight the local cultural characteristics to promote the sustainable development of the ice-snow tourism in Heilongjiang.

### ***3.2 Improve business concepts and strive for more tourist sources***

The market demand of ice-snow tourism is very high because of the huge potential of ice-snow resources. In recent years, many areas with development potential in China have been working hard to develop ice-snow resources. Many cities hold ice-snow festivals and ice-snow programs with different themes every year, which poses a serious threat to the development of the ice-snow tourism industry in Heilongjiang, and attracts some tourist sources of Heilongjiang. In addition, the competition in ice-snow tourism abroad is also fierce. For example, Korea and Japan will attract Chinese ice-snow tourists with the advantages of price and service every year. Therefore, the ice-snow tourism operators in Heilongjiang should update their concepts in a timely manner, not only focusing on the construction of hardware facilities, but also paying more attention to enhancing the service quality, beautifying the environment and improving the operating characteristics, so as to attract more ice and snow tourists, thereby increasing the economic revenue of the region[4].

### ***3.3 Protect the tourist environment***

The environment includes both natural and social environments. The natural environment protection of Heilongjiang means to keep normal winter precipitation and temperature to ensure normal operation of the ice-snow tourism. In order to achieve sustainable development of ice-snow tourism, it is necessary to control the number of tourists within the bearing capacity of the environment. Although tourism resources are inexhaustible, the sustainable development of tourism can be achieved only if the local ecological environment is not destroyed. The protection of the natural environment depends on tourists and local residents. The management departments at all levels in Heilongjiang shall raise funds from various channels to obtain adequate funds for tourism environment protection. The social environment of Heilongjiang refers to the attitudes that tourists feel when they travel in the local area, including social order and the attitude of local residents. Tourists certainly hope that Heilongjiang is a tourist attraction with stable public order and the local

residents are friendly and kind to tourists; therefore, the social security departments of Heilongjiang should maintain sound social order and public security environment, and the local government should strengthen publicity and education to improve the quality of local residents and make them treat tourists warmly and friendly.

### ***3.4 Actively develop industries related to ice-snow tourism***

#### **(1) Ice-snow tourism and food industry**

Ice-snow tourists generally consume a lot of food and need high-nutrition food. Heilongjiang Province can produce some hunger-resistant foods and beverages with high calorie, protein and fat according to the local abundant food materials. These foods not only meet the needs of ice-snow tourists, but also develop the local economy.

#### **(2) Ice-snow tourism and transportation industry**

Heilongjiang Province is located on the northeastern border of China, and the tourists from most other areas have to travel a long distance to the ice-snow tourism destination. Moreover, the scenic spots in Heilongjiang Province are scattered, and the transportation network connecting the scenic spots is not very advanced, and the transportation network connecting scenic spots is not very developed. The development of ice-snow tourism in Heilongjiang needs to continue to support the "mass transportation" from the middle and long-distance tourist sources to the tourism destinations, and also need to support the "small transportation" to the ice-snow scenic spots, as well as supporting some special transport facilities such as cableways and cable cars, so as to develop the local economy through developing transportation industry.

#### **(3) Ice-snow tourism and construction industry**

Ice and snow tourism sites, no matter outdoor skating rink and snow pack or indoor ice & snow stadiums, need to provide fixed facilities. Ice-snow tourism hotels to receive tourists, should not only make the tourists feel comfort and convenient, but also innovate some local buildings according the local traditional buildings and local topographic conditions. These buildings can serve a dual purpose, one is to receive tourists, and the other is to attract more tourists.

## **4. Conclusions**

To sum up, in order to build Heilongjiang into a famous ice-snow tourism province and promote the development of local economy, it is necessary to establish famous ice-snow tourism attractions with complete facilities, first-class services, advanced management and unique products, featuring ice-snow sceneries, ice-snow sports, ice-snow culture and ice-snow eco-tourism.

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