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CREATION OF A SPECIALLY PROTECTED NATURAL AREA AS A FACTOR
IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NORTHERN KURIL ISLANDS

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Currently, the Kuril Islands are attracting increased attention from scientists due to their unique geographic location. Moreover, the Northern part of the island arc has been studied much less than the Southern one. There are practically no inhabited islands here, and the economy has not been properly developed. The Northern Kuril Islands include 10 islands: Shumshu, Paramushir, Atlasova, Antsiferova, Makanrushi, Onkotan, Harimkotan, Chirinkotan, Ekarma, Shiashkotan, as well as Trap Rocks. Their area ranges from several to 2 thousand km^2 . The Northern Kuril Islands are also attractive for tourists. Mountains and volcanoes, fumarole fields, coarse-grained thickets, unique plant communities, unique natural monuments, including the unique Krenitsyn volcano in Russia, located in the water-filled caldera of another volcano Tao-Rusyr on the island Onkotan provides excellent opportunities for the development of active tourism. However, priority attention has been given all these years to the development of the Southern part of the Kuril Archipelago – the islands of Kunashir, Iturup, and Shikotan. At the same time, the economic potential of the Northern Kuril Islands is significant and has not been fully explored, and in addition to the fish processing industry developed here, it seems advisable to develop ecotourism in these territories. The article discusses the recreational and ecological potential of the islands under study, including promising routes developed for tourists and visitors. It also provides geographical and historical information about the islands of Onkotan and Paramushir, describes the local vegetation and plant communities. The authors consider it advisable to create a Special protected natural area in the form of a National Park on the islands and provide substantiation for their point of view.

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