

FROM "HIGH ECOLOGICAL APPEARANCE VALUE" TO "HIGH ECONOMIC VALUE": CULTURAL AND TOURISM DEVELOPMENT PATH OF LINYI CITY FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF GREEN ECONOMY

Xu Hui¹

¹ "Silk Road" International University of Tourism and Cultural Heritageon

¹ E-mail: 175579910@qq.com

DOI: 10.61587/mmit.tiue.uz.v1i1.301

Abstract. Against the dual background of the carbon peaking and carbon neutrality strategy and ecological civilization construction, the green economy has become the leading direction of high-quality regional development. Characterized by resource conservation, environmental friendliness and strong industrial driving capacity, the cultural and tourism industry serves as a vital carrier for the transformation of ecological value. Taking Linyi City, Shandong Province as a case study, this paper explores the internal logic and practical path of the integrated development of culture and tourism from the perspective of green economy. The research finds that Linyi has deeply integrated green and low-carbon transformation into the development goals of the 15th Five-Year Plan. Relying on the superior ecological endowment and red cultural resources of the Yimeng Mountain area, it adopts the strategic framework of the "1+7" cultural and tourism integrated development system, and implements strategies including protective development, coordinated development of red culture and ecology, as well as integration of transportation and tourism. In 2025, Linyi achieved a historic breakthrough of 100 million tourist arrivals and a 100-billion-yuan cultural and tourism industry, with the added value of the cultural and tourism industry accounting for 9.74% of the city's GDP. This paper further analyzes the challenges faced by this model, and puts forward optimization suggestions such as deepening regional collaboration, strengthening the application of digital technology, and improving the ecological compensation mechanism, providing a reference for old revolutionary base areas to explore a green and low-carbon development path.

Keywords: Green Economy; Integration of Culture and Tourism; Linyi City; Realization of Ecological Product Value; Sustainable Development

1. Introduction

The report to the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China clearly proposes to advance green development and promote harmonious coexistence between humanity and nature. The Opinions on Comprehensively Advancing the Construction of a Beautiful China issued in 2026 incorporates green tourism into the national major strategic framework, requiring all regions to actively build a consumption and service supply system for green cultural and tourism products. Against this backdrop, striking a balance between ecological environmental protection and economic benefits has become a key issue in regional development.

As a strategic pillar industry, the tourism industry is inherently featured by low resource consumption, strong employment driving effect and high industrial relevance. Nevertheless, global tourism carbon emissions account for approximately 8% of the total carbon emissions, exceeding its economic contribution ratio, making green transformation an inevitable path for the high-quality development of the industry. The core of green tourism lies in coordinating ecological protection and economic growth, so as to translate lucid waters and lush mountains into invaluable assets.

Located in the southeast of Shandong Province, Linyi is a renowned old revolutionary base area and the birthplace of the Yimeng Spirit, boasting high-quality ecological resources such as Mengshan Mountain and Yi River. In 2025, Linyi received 104 million domestic tourists and achieved a tourism income of 100 billion yuan, and the cultural and tourism industry has become an important engine for the city's economic growth. This paper systematically sorts out

Linyi's experience in practicing the green development philosophy in cultural and tourism industry, analyzes its exploration in the transformation of ecological product value, and provides references for similar regions.

2. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

2.1 Evolution of the Concept of Green Economy and Green Tourism

The term "green economy" first appeared in the Blueprint for a Green Economy co-authored by British economist Pearce and others in 1989, which advocates that economic growth must be coordinated with ecological environmental sustainability. The 2012 UN Sustainable Development Conference (Rio+20) established the green economy as an important path to realize sustainable development. In tourism research, green tourism generally refers to tourism activities premised on not damaging the natural environment and maintaining ecological balance, including low-carbon travel, eco-accommodation, nature education and other forms.

2.2 Theoretical Basis for the Realization of Ecological Product Value

The realization of ecological product value is a key link for the green economy to move from concept to practice. Economic theories indicate that ecosystem services have the attributes of externalities and public goods, and it is necessary to adopt market-oriented means such as ecological compensation, carbon sink trading and ecological labeling to visualize their implicit value. In recent years, the Ministry of Natural Resources has continuously collected typical cases of ecological product value realization, promoting relevant exploration to extend from the theoretical level to the practical level.

2.3 Coordination Mechanism Between Cultural-Tourism Integration and Regional Green Development

The cultural and tourism industry undertakes the dual functions of ecological conservation and economic growth. On the one hand, a sound ecological environment is the prerequisite for the sustainable development of tourism; on the other hand, tourism income can provide stable funds for ecological protection, forming a virtuous cycle of "protection-development-re-protection". This coordination mechanism is particularly critical for the green transformation of old revolutionary base areas and ecologically vulnerable areas.

2.4 Analytical Framework

Based on the above theories, this paper constructs a four-dimensional analytical framework of ecological endowment → protective development → value transformation → sustainable development to systematically analyze the green development practice of cultural and tourism industry in Linyi.

3. Practical Foundation for the Green Development of Cultural and Tourism Industry in Linyi

3.1 Ecological Endowment

Linyi is situated in the hinterland of the Yimeng Mountain area, owning high-quality ecological resources including Mengshan Mountain Global Geopark and Daigu Landform National Geopark. The forest coverage rate of Mengshan Mountain exceeds 95%, reputed as a natural oxygen bar; the stretching Yimeng landscape spanning 800 li forms a grand ecological pattern. In 2025, Linyi completed afforestation of 14,500 mu on barren hills and wasteland, and 12,000 mu of rural greening and beautification. A total of 65,000 mu of afforestation was

accomplished in the three-year tough campaign, with 374 mountain tops covered by green vegetation.

3.2 Policy Support

Linyi has listed green and low-carbon transformation as one of the development goals of the 15th Five-Year Plan, issued the Implementation Opinions on Comprehensively Advancing the Construction of Beautiful Linyi, and clarified that major progress will be made in building a beautiful Linyi by 2027. The 2026 government work report proposed to further develop water-related cultural and tourism, revitalize and develop Yi River resources, and accelerate the construction of characteristic cultural and tourism projects such as the second phase of Langya Ancient City, implementing the green development philosophy throughout the whole industrial chain of culture and tourism. In addition, Linyi has built a "1+7" cultural and tourism integrated development system, which takes red cultural tourism as the leader to drive the coordinated development of seven business forms including urban, industrial, health, rural, exhibition, sports and commerce, providing an institutional framework for the transformation of ecological value.

3.3 Industrial Foundation

In 2025, Linyi's cultural and tourism industry achieved a historic breakthrough of 100 million tourist arrivals and a 100-billion-yuan industrial scale, with the added value of the tourism industry growing by 7.7% year-on-year. Among them, red tourism received 56 million tourists and rural tourism received 45 million tourists, and the "1+7" integration mechanism was fully implemented. As an important pillar of Linyi's economic growth, the added value of cultural and tourism industry accounts for 9.74% of the city's GDP.

4. Practical Path and Case Analysis of Green Cultural and Tourism Development in Linyi

4.1 Protective Development: Innovative Practice of Daigu Geopark

Taking protective development as the core concept, Mengyin Daigu Provincial Geopark transforms industrial relics into cultural and tourism projects, creates the integrated IP of "geology + military industry", and has been selected as one of the first national typical cases of characteristic eco-tourism, the only selected project in Shandong Province.

In terms of resource protection, the park has divided 17 tertiary protected areas, set up a three-level inspection team, and adopted a big data platform to implement dynamic supervision on 7 key geological relics. At present, the integrity rate of 23 important geological relics reaches 100%, and the forest coverage rate is as high as 82.6%. The Daigu landform has also been featured on the Beautiful China stamp series. In terms of value transformation, the former production workshop of Minfeng Factory has been renovated into a geological museum, receiving more than 50 research and study tour groups annually with an annual research income of 8.9 million yuan. The "Daigu Landform Research Tour" has been listed as a high-quality research route in Shandong Province. By introducing social capital, the local area has built the brand of "Picturesque Gorge, Paradise on Earth", and the number of tourists increased to 900,000 from 2023 to 2024. The millet of "Guxiang Laonong" has obtained green food certification, with the price rising from 6 yuan to 8 yuan per jin.

4.2 Coordinated Development of Red Culture and Ecology: Synergy Between Ecology and Red Culture Under the "1+7" Framework

Guided by the "1+7" system, Linyi bases itself on the heritage of red cultural tourism, drives seven business forms with red cultural tourism, connects 60 red scenic spots and venues,

renovates and upgrades the 396-kilometer thematic corridor of "Red Yimeng", and arranges 32 service stations, promoting the transformation of Mengshan cultural tourism from the single advantage of ecology to the integrated development of sports, transportation and tourism.

Specific measures include: implementing the "Mengshan Red Belt" project to organically connect the former site of the Shandong Provincial Party Committee, Guimeng Scenic Area and the Geological Museum; promoting the model of "Red Scenic Area + Green Power", realizing full coverage of clean energy in 4A-level and above red scenic spots, and releasing energy efficiency optimization reports monthly to reduce energy consumption costs; further exploring red resources and developing red IP projects such as the marching performance of Yimeng Mountain Minor. In 2025, red tourism achieved an income of about 54.8 billion yuan, a year-on-year increase of 9.6%.

4.3 Ecological Restoration Driven Cultural and Tourism Revitalization: Cases of Baima River and Lijiayu

Linyi deeply integrates ecological restoration with cultural and tourism development to release both ecological and economic benefits. The comprehensive ecological restoration project of Baima River in Tancheng County lasted for 3 years with a total investment of 82.66 million yuan, selected as a typical case of the national integrated protection and restoration project of mountains, rivers, forests, farmlands, lakes, grasslands and deserts. The river, once suffering from seasonal cutoff and messy coastal environment, has now become a "happy river" for villagers' leisure and entertainment, and rural eco-tourism has boomed accordingly.

The small watershed of Lijiayu in Yishui County implemented comprehensive soil and water conservation management with an investment of 7 million yuan, governing 14 square kilometers of soil erosion area. The forest and grass coverage rate increased by 5.4%, reducing annual soil loss by 12,000 tons, meeting the national standard of ecologically clean small watershed. After the governance, Linyi's first soil and water conservation ecological product value transformation transaction was completed in 2025 with a transaction volume of 2.13 million yuan. The once barren terraces have turned into peony flower seas, and the farm received an average of over 10,000 tourists daily during the 2026 spring vacation, thriving catering, agricultural product sales and other business forms.

4.4 Integration of Transportation and Tourism: An Important Carrier for Ecological Value Transformation

Linyi issued the Development Plan for the "800-li Yimeng" Highway Corridor, integrating tourism elements into the whole industrial chain of transportation, building a slow travel road network of "four vertical and two horizontal", and creating tourist highways integrating red education, ecological sightseeing and industrial revitalization, driving more than 20 villages along the route to develop homestays, fruit picking and other industries.

After the reconstruction of Poxian Road in Daigu Town, Mengyin County, the sales of agricultural products such as honey peaches and millet along the route have been significantly expanded. Combined with activities such as the Peach Blossom Cultural Tourism Festival, an integrated development model of "highway + tourism + agriculture" has taken shape. Tongxin Road connects three core red scenic spots with greatly improved traffic efficiency, realizing "fast travel and slow sightseeing".

4.5 Diversified Practices

Relying on the ecological advantages of Mengshan Mountain, Bailin Town in Pingyi County implemented the "Head Goose Project" to promote common prosperity. In 2025, Fuquanshanju Homestay was rated as a national first-class tourist homestay, driving local employment and agricultural product sales. Zhuxian Village in Yinan County and the landscape

project case in Mengyin County were selected as typical cases of ecological product value realization in Shandong Province, and the transformation experience from ecological advantages to economic strengths has been promoted across the province.

5. Achievements, Problems and Optimization Path of Linyi Model

5.1 Main Achievements

Linyi's green development practice has formed core experience as follows: first, protective development has effectively balanced ecological protection and economic benefits, with the Daigu Model serving as a typical example; second, the coordinated development of red culture and ecology has released the multiplier effect under the "1+7" framework, promoting the collaborative transformation of red cultural resources and ecological resources; third, the integrated management of mountains, rivers, forests, farmlands, lakes, grasslands and deserts has built a global ecological restoration system; fourth, the ecological value transformation mechanism has been innovated, and the soil and water conservation transaction in Lijiayu takes the lead in Shandong Province; fifth, the "1+7" integration mechanism has broken industrial barriers, providing institutional guarantee for resource integration and green coordination.

5.2 Problems and Challenges

Nevertheless, the green cultural and tourism development in Linyi still faces practical difficulties. First, the standardization system of green tourism is not yet perfect, and quantitative standards for low-carbon operation and resource consumption remain to be improved. Second, the ecological compensation mechanism is still government-led, with insufficient participation of market-oriented and diversified entities. Third, the external publicity and promotion efforts are inadequate, the proportion of international tourists is low, and the international influence of green tourism brands needs to be enhanced. Fourth, the green transformation of tourism infrastructure is still in the initial stage.

5.3 Optimization Path

In view of the above problems, optimization can be carried out from the following aspects:

1. Deepen regional collaboration: Take the initiative to align with the integrated development of the Yangtze River Delta, rely on the construction of Ji-Lin Economic Cooperation Zone, promote the cross-regional connection of green tourism routes, and build the "South Shandong and North Jiangsu Green Tourism Belt".
2. Strengthen digital empowerment: Improve the ecological big data platform, further expand the coverage of one-click dynamic supervision, and explore the construction of scenic spot carbon footprint accounting and carbon inclusive system.
3. Improve ecological compensation and market-oriented mechanism: Promote the accounting and transaction model of ecological product value, and attract more social capital to participate in ecological restoration and green tourism investment.
4. Enhance international influence: Tap characteristic IPs such as Langya Culture and Dongyi Culture, create green cultural and tourism products with international appeal, and expand overseas tourist markets.

6. Conclusion and Prospect

Taking Linyi City as a case, this paper systematically analyzes the internal logic, practical path and optimization strategy of the green development of cultural and tourism industry from the perspective of green economy. The research shows that relying on the high-quality ecological and red cultural resources of the Yimeng Mountain area, Linyi takes the "1+7"

integrated development system as the institutional framework, and has successfully explored the "Linyi Model" transforming ecological advantages into economic advantages through multiple paths including protective development, coordinated development of red culture and ecology, ecological restoration as well as integration of transportation and tourism. The historic breakthrough of 100 million tourist arrivals and a 100-billion-yuan industry in 2025 has verified the feasibility of this path.

References

Journal Article

1. Zhong, L. S., & Wang, Q. (2026). Developing green tourism to promote harmonious coexistence between human and nature. *China Tourism News*, April 22.

Report

2. Wu, M. L., & Ren, G. Z. (2026). Positive turning and policy path of cultural and tourism consumption in China. International Institute of Green Finance, Central University of Finance and Economics, March.
3. Linyi Municipal Bureau of Culture and Tourism. (2025). Work summary of 2025. December.
4. People's Government of Linyi City. (2026). 2026 government work report of Linyi City. February.

Newspaper Article

1. Anonymous. (2026). From "problem river" to "happy river"—Record of ecological restoration of Baima River in Tancheng County, Linyi City, Shandong Province. *China Natural Resources News*, April 30.

Electronic Online Resource

2. Linyi Forestry Bureau. (2026). The only case in Shandong! One case of Linyi selected into the first batch of national typical cases of characteristic eco-tourism destinations. May 7.
3. Anonymous. (2026). From beautiful villages to beautiful economy, cultural tourism empowers Berlin Town to draw an "Yimeng Model" for rural revitalization. *Qilu Evening News & Qilu Yidian*, May 19.
4. Anonymous. (2026). "Red Corridor" links green mountains and clear waters, transportation-tourism integration in Linyi outlines a new picture of all-for-one tourism. *Qilu Evening News & Qilu Yidian*, April 15.
5. Anonymous. (2026). Linyi achieved a historic breakthrough of 100 million tourist arrivals and 100 billion industrial scale in cultural and tourism in 2025. *Economic Herald*, April 30.
6. Anonymous. (2026). Cultural and tourism integration "1+7" tells a new "Yimeng Story". *Langya News Network*, April 30.

7. Linyi Forestry Bureau. (2026). Remarkable achievements of ecological protection and restoration in Linyi in 2025. January.
8. Linyi Water Conservancy Bureau. (2026). Breaking the path of ecological product value realization and building a benchmark for soil and water conservation governance——Lijiayu small watershed in Yishui County opens a new practice path of "Lucid Waters and Lush Mountains are Invaluable Assets". April.
9. Anonymous. (2024). Linyi, Shandong continuously improves the realization path of ecological product value. China Forestry Network, October.

Official Document

1. CPC Central Committee & State Council of China. (2023). Opinions on comprehensively promoting the construction of a beautiful China.