TRUE MOUNTAINS
~ MOUNTAINEERING AS A SPORT AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION~

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Mountaineering

• as a sport activity based on experiencing the mountains;
• foundation of the environmental protection movement;
• strengthens health;
• improves a sense of wellbeing;
• establishes a sense of social responsibility;
• significant contributes to the sustainable development of mountain areas.

*We didn’t get the nature from our grandparents, we borrow it from our grandchildren.*
Slovenia – the Alpine country.

Alpine area:
• 42 % of Slovenia;
• 924,174 inhabitant in 2218 settlements.

Forest in Slovenia: 64 %. 

Slovenia – the Alpine country.
Long tradition.

• 1778 - the highest Slovenian peak, Triglav (2864 m) was first climbed,
• 1893 - establishment of Slovenian Alpine Association,
• 1895 - first issue of Planinski vestnik (Alpine Journal).
PZS, the Alpine Association of Slovenia.

- 262 alpine clubs,
- 57,637 members (among them 18,243 young members from kindergartens till 26 years),
- 1477 voluntary guides of PZS,
- 121 mountaineering instructors,
- 150 coaches and trainers of sports climbing,
- 600 mountain groups mentors,
- 836 markers for mountain paths,
- 100 mountain guardians of nature,
- ...
- publishing Planinski vestnik, maps, hiking, climbing guides, educational literature and mountain belletristic.
Alps - one of the most important tourist destinations.
Experiencing the nature.
Mountain paths

• 1442 mountain paths of total length 8240 km (1307 easy paths, 89 demanding and 46 very demanding paths),

• from 1922 marked with markers Alojzij Knafelc,

• more than 70 connective paths, the most famous and popular it is the Slovenian mountain path from Maribor to Ankaran,

• through Slovenia go parts of E6, E7 and Via Alpina
Mountaineering.

- involving 15.7% of population,
- very popular: on the 5th place among activities in Slo,
- annually Slovenian mountains are visited between 1.5 and 2 million visitors.
Problems

- the financing of maintenance of the paths,
- lack of markers,
- marking the paths by 'their' own,
- over-concentration of the use of certain areas (Triglav mountain range, Bohinj and Bovec areas),
- shortcuts,
- new sports like mountain running, mountain triathlons, mountain biking impact to the paths to congestion and erosion,
- the appearance of four-wheelers,
- the desire for adrenaline polygons and new, very demanding and extreme ferrates,
- sport climbing impact significant,
- poor preventive activity in the alpine clubs,
- mountaineering only in summer (over-crowded mountains),
- still insufficient awareness and education of mountaineers.
Solutions and challenges

- analysis in the alpine clubs - where do they guide the groups,
- long-term plan of dispersal of mountaineers to the widest possible mountain area,
- the Ombudsman for the mountains,
- good financing system,
- informing public and mountaineers through the media, deliberately, persistently and consistently (make a plan),
- to educate alpine club workers,
- to prohibit motorised adrenaline sports in the mountains,
- to encourage people for voluntary work (markers ...) as the fundamental value of mountaineering,
- to educate young and adult mountaineers about safe walking, equipment, risk, protection of nature etc.
- to encourage mountaineering through all year round.
- in sport climbing during the nestling birds in the walls close that part of the wall,
- no new ferrates.
Winter walking.

Technical knowledge.
Mountain huts become a part of mountain landscape.

- 174 mountain huts and bivouacs all over Slovenia
- 3 categories (depends of altitude of hut and access),
- altogether 6000 beds,
Slika 1: Obiskanost planinskih postojank na območju slovenskega alpskega sveta

Map 1: Number of visitors in mountain huts in Slovenian Alpine areas
Problems

- age of buildings,
- financing the preservation and maintenance,
- some huts still use diesel aggregates,
- supplying high mountain huts by helicopter (noise!);
- problem of water and discharging wastewater directly into the subsoil,
- washing bedding in washing machines,
- huts are not targeted, equipped for specific population (for examples for children, families ...),
- not having huts policy;
- some huts are over-crowded,
- not having the marketing products.

Should we expand the supply of a wide varied dishes in the desire to approach visitors, or to care for the environment to offer less variety, but a nutritious rich meals?
Solutions and challenges

- reducing waste and rational supply of water,
- where the huts do not have water waste system, building them,
- dry toilets at the huts (the best in terms of water use),
- to prevent noise and to adapt supply of the huts to the nature ->
supplying mountain huts in the Triglav National Park with the horses again,
- to adjust the comfort and the management of mountain nuts,
- simple selection of dishes,
- to offer a healthy, energy-rich food,
- to use cardboard plate,
- no-smoking in mountain huts and in the nature,
- bringing to the huts our own sheets,
- offering local products of mountain villages and surroundings,
- family-friendly huts,
- to settle the mountain huts suitable for educational purposes,
- food for children in children's portions,
- education of hut-keepers and alpine club workers,
- the staff in the huts should be friendly and a source of useful information for mountaineers,
- connecting huts in the networks
Children in mountains.
Transport in the Alpine valleys – till when?
Problems - pollution, noise, destruction of vegetation, higher starting points;

Solutions and challenges
- to close the valleys of mass access to motor vehicles and make the possibility of public transport in the valley (by bus ...),
- to encourage (by education and planned work) mountaineers to travel to the mountains using eco-driving,
- to encourage sharing transport system,
- to use public transport where possible,
- to establish timetables for public transport to mountaineering interesting starting points,
- informing public through the media, deliberately, persistently and consistently about using the public transport as well as lower starting points and experience in the mountains fully.
Prohibited interventions in nature

Mountain pasture Svečica at 1700 m in Karawanken.
Habitat of threatened plant species.
Problems

- agricultural subsidies, which do not consider Natura 2000, and are working against the protection of the environment,
- expansion and modernization of supply forest roads,
- destruction of undergrowth and protected plants (such as. Zois violets habitat on the mountain Svečica).

Solutions and challenges

- to establish the mechanism of PZS for notification about prohibited interventions,
- education in various societies to wider audiences, not just mountaineers, on the protection of nature, the meaning of it, sustainable security and protection of mountain environment,
- to education of children, young people,
- being active in warnings through the media,
- consultations with experts and relevant government departments and ministries.
It is important to work hand in hand towards a common goal, be aware of the value of this area and managed in a sustainable manner: the authorities, the Alpine association, alpine clubs with mountaineers and mountain huts, researchers and experts, the Slovenian Tourist Board, local tourist organizations, tourist agencies, and especially local residents, who live in the Alpine area.
High Carst.
To educate about the environment.
Alpine visitors.
Kingdom of unlimited freedom?
Mountaineering as the way of living.
Thank you!