

Workshop 16 : Sports in Nature - is it fit for purpose?

14 participants from 9 countries

1. Main successes and Challenges raised by the participants during the workshop

- Protected area managers recognise that nature sports have a lot of benefits for people, and it is necessary to manage the problems that this activities can create:

<i>Benefits</i>	<i>Problems</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discovering nature > relax and take a breath ! - Improve health (investment in the society) - Improve social links (social activity, intergeneration, different social levels) - Access to nature for everyone - Quality of environment to practice a nature sport (nature = surrounding needed) - Contribute to the attractivity of a region > a plus for local development (business opportunity) - People doing sports to mobilize for nature protection and biodiversity - Working on nature sports > more “sexy” subject to talk to politicians about protected areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Destructive impacts on fauna and flora as well (animals,...) - Erosion - Massification of events and people doing nature sports (pressure) > over frequentation - Accidents and safety/rescue issues - Different type of conflicts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * with other users (fishing, canoeing / hunter, hikers/...) in between different sport activities * nature impacts * number of visitors - Non-respect of the law

- Some management tools exist but not always very known
- Target: not to forbid sports but to find management solutions

Challenges:

- Protected areas and sport organizations (public / private) have to cooperate to work together;
- Necessary to train to change behavior
- Explain the issue of protected areas
- Transform a sport event in natural heritage event
- Define the number of event and a calendar to know which dates are better to avoid or reduce the impacts
- How to manage individuals : Sometimes event are more controlled than smalls groups of friends that do sport activity without permission?

2. What new voices, new visions are needed to be brought in and heard on this topic?

- Connect protected are managers and sports stakeholders : empathies is needed to understand needs and other point of views to build up common tools that are shared by protected are mangers and sports organizations / participants (try to understand)
- Participation of protected area managers in training of sports and sport “teachers” to train about impacts of sports and solutions to avoid impacts (information towards organizations, trainers, ...)

- Link nature sports and environmental education!
- Problem: how to reach individuals to inform and train? Working with outdoor sport equipment sellers like DECATHLON?

3. How can EUROPARC enable this “new voices” to be included?

- Collaboration of EUROPARC with European networks and stakeholders working about nature sports, example ENOS (European network of nature sports)
- Promote and communicate about management tools (share success stories and exchange good practices): data base of good experiences, links to special internet resources like Pole Resource des sports de nature, ENOS,....
- Organize trainings about management tools, exchange,...
- A common work to do : what is the limit of capacity ? How to choose the right number of events and frequentation of protected areas? This is a big issue, a common work is needed to find answers!