

# Majors Effects Of Tourism Environment Issues In Mountain Of Romania

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## ***Abstract***

The quality of the environment, both natural and man-made, is essential to tourism. However, tourism's relationship with the environment is complex. It involves many activities that can have adverse environmental effects. Many of these impacts are linked with the construction of general infrastructure such as roads and airports, and of tourism facilities, including resorts, hotels, restaurants, shops, golf courses and marinas.

The negative impacts of tourism development can gradually destroy the environmental resources on which it depends. In the present article I wanted to highlight the fact that, unfortunately, not all the types of tourism, even though they are newer and appreciated by some tourists, respect the principles of development of sustainable tourism. The activity that has led to the rise of sports tourism and its variants is sports.

*Key words:* diversification, sports tourism, enduro-tourism, pollution, sustainable development.

## **1. Introduction**

Tourism is the activity that has continuously evolved, has succeeded in diversifying itself and in adapting to the potential tourists needs. One of its definitions, accepted at international level refers to the action of travelling, discovering, visiting various places and sights only for one's own pleasure.

We can consider the following characteristic elements for defining tourism:

- the travelling of the persons from their permanent residence (journey);
- the sojourn in a chosen place, other than the residential one (destination);
- the limited duration of the sojourn (time);
- the persons should not perform paid activities during the sojourn.

The first element is a dynamic one, the second one is static, the next one transient and the last one income free for the person in question.

The development of tourism has been relatively rapid along time, being influenced

by a series of factors. The main exogenous factors are the demographic growth and the mutations within the structure of the population, free time, the variation of income, the urbanization process, the political factors and liberalization. The endogenous factors are the launch of new tourist products, the diversification of the services provided and the quantity and quality of human resources. [1]

An important role in the development of the types of tourism is played by the motivations of the potential tourists. Motivation is the one that drives the decision to buy a tourist product and its consumption, since it is personal, subjective, caused by endogenous and exogenous impulses, the first one being psychological, and the latter influenced by the environment. Generally, tourist motivations come from extra-professional activities such as: aspirations for the physical and intellectual relaxation, health care, participation in manifestations and cultural or sports events that are gratifying.

The main types of tourism are:

- leisure;
- curative or health care;
- cultural;
- polyvalent.

Currently, none of the types of tourism are practiced in a genuine manner, but they interfere with each other.

Considering the motivation that generates the journey, tourism is:

- recreational;
- leisure;
- cultural;
- sportive (active amateur sports people or spectators);
- religious;
- ethnic;
- business;
- technical;
- scientific.

Tourism is an element that favours communication, the exchange of ideas, information, stimulating the enlargement of the cultural horizon, with effects on the intellectual formation. [2]

The world tourism forum, UNWTO, considers that “tourism comprises the activities of a person who travels outside his or

her usual environment for a short period, specified in time and whose purpose is other than carrying out a paid activity at the visited place.” [3]

The explanatory dictionary of the Romanian language (1984) defines sport as being the entire recreational, leisure, diversity activity, as well as physical exercises carried out in open air.

We can state that there is a close connection between sports and tourism, generally both activities relying on the environment.

At present, humans’ life has become more dependent on technology, the result being the replacement of physical effort almost entirely. Inactivity appeared at adults, children and youngsters is one of the negative effects.

Inactivity led to the need for movement, active recreation which then led to the development of sport tourism. Sport tourism is becoming a form of co-participant active recreation, caused by the aggressiveness of the urban environment and inactivity. It takes place all along the year in the open or inside covered sport bases located in the surroundings of cities, pre-town areas, but also farther areas.

The advantages of practising a sport are:

- body relaxation;
- metabolism adjustment;
- energy recovery;
- efficiency increase at the workplace;
- optimism maintenance;
- determination in decision-making;
- courage;
- closeness to fellow people;
- respect towards partners;
- generosity.

We find here all categories of sports, from the nautical ones to the winter sports, climbing, hunting and fishing to the extreme sports. Generally, this type of tourism integrates large masses of people as the circulation is connected with the existence of sport competitions spread around the year.

The tourist categories that practice this type of tourism are:

- active amateur sport people who practice swimming, canoeing, skiing, yachting, skating, fishing, hunting, horse riding,

golfing, miniature golfing, cycling, enduro, etc.;spectator „sportsmen” who watch sport competitions of different levels.

Both categories make up important tourist fluxes that combine rest with active recreation, with leisure and cultural tourism.

The range of sport activities is extremely varied and therefore, the service offer is targeted according to the local natural conditions that favour such activities (water sports, climbing, winter sports, golf, extreme sports, etc.).

A large number of sport activities can be practiced almost all along the year, but this requires the existence of specific equipment and constructions (e.g. sport fields, swimming pools, artificial skating rinks, sport rooms, stadiums).

Extreme tourism supposes the practice of extreme sports, sports that have the „danger” element in a bigger degree than the traditional ones. These sports go to the extreme in what regards speed, height, danger, physical fatigue or stunts.

Extreme sports include activities of canyoning, kayaking, kyodo, mountain-bike, rafting, paintball, zip line, climbing, paragliding, bungee jumping, off-road, enduro-tourism and complex trails. Canyoning is a type of extreme tourism that consists of covering an accidental couloir (rocks, waterfalls, basins) and with level difference carved by the water in the rock. Kayaking is divided into touring and white-water, the first being river kayak and sea kayak, and the kayaks are made of glass fibre and polymers. Kyodo originates in Japan and is based on using the Japanese bow. Crossing on a chord tied between two separate fix points through a natural obstacle (valley, water bed) with different bending degrees, with a certain speed and helped by specific equipment and skills is called zip line. Off-road is practiced with the help of an off-road cross-country vehicle that can cover the most difficult mountain trails. Climbing has as purpose the ascension on mountains, on difficult trails that require skills, equipment and experience. These have various variants like: classical rock climbing, escalade, bouldering, climbing on artificial structures,

ice climbing, rock climbing, ‘big-wall’ climbing, climbing on huge rock walls, high altitude climbing.

Generally, by the practice of extreme sports tourism it is intended: adaptability to the new unknown environment; eliminating the stress due to the unknown; analysing and sharing equitably the existent resources (food, water);

- group decisions for problem solving;
- collaboration within the group for mutual help;
- eliminating conflicts.

Sports tourism is very attractive to more and more people, regardless of age, sex and professional status.

## 2. The formulated problem

Enduro-tourism is a form of extreme sport tourism that addresses those who want to experience strong sensations and have a special motorcycle. In order to practice it, one needs to have very good physical and psychological training.

Enduro is defined as the sport that best combines the driving skills in off-road conditions with the characteristic elements of competitions taking place on a circuit. It represents the category of limitless motorcycles. They can run on asphalt, off-road land, but are used especially by the off-road lovers, that is why their slogan is: “Fun begins where the asphalt ends.”

Enduro-tourism has been attracting an increasingly growing interest due to its specificity and the sensations of power and freedom it has to offer.

The fact that tourism pollutes the environment has been demonstrated and, thus, the need to protect the environment has arisen.

The development of durable tourism may reduce the effects of pollution, as durable tourism is part of the global development policy based on respect and concern for the environment.

In order to practice enduro one needs motorcycles and special equipment. The enduro motorcycles are of 2 types, two-stroke and four-stroke motorcycles, being manufactured by well-known companies such as Yamaha, KTM, Kawasaki, Beta, Honda,

Suzuki, Cagiva, Husqvarna. The two-stroke motorcycles have a bigger rotative speed than the four-stroke ones and develop a much greater power at the same cylinder capacity. According to the cylinder capacity motorcycles are categorized into:

- 100 to 125 cc 2-stroke or 175 - 250 cc 4-stroke
- 175 to 250 cc 2-stroke or 290 - 450 cc 4-stroke
- 290 to 500 cc 2-stroke or 475 - 650 cc 4-stroke

The auxiliary equipment is made of off-road helmet, off-road glasses, breastplate, gear and boots.

The differences between the motocross bike and the enduro motorcycle refer to:

- the size of the rear wheel (it is bigger for the motocross bike than for the enduro bike);
- the changing gear – number of gears (4 for the motocross and 5 for the enduro);
- the ignition (big rotative speed driving torque for the motocross, small rotative speed driving torque for the enduro);
- the lighting (no headlight for the motocross, headlight for the enduro).

They can be easily recognized after their tall figure, big ground clearance, bigger front wheel and bolt hooked tires.

The categories for the enduro competitors are formed taking into consideration the above mentioned.

An enduro event is divided into 2 days in which the trail, whose length varies between 40 and 70 km, is covered by 3-4/day. The Sections are Xtreme Test (in this area obstacles are built for the public to see the pilots' abilities), Cross Test (a trail similar to a motocross circuit), Enduro Test (trial located in the forest where the pilots have to run through natural obstacles in the shortest time possible).

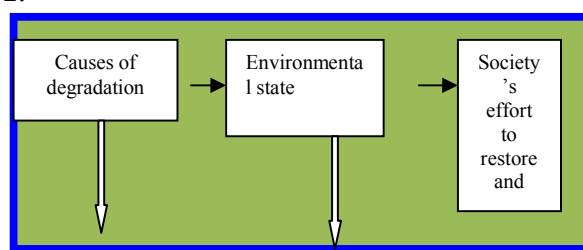
There are no competition trials for enduro-tourism. The tourists in search for strong sensations can address specialized travel agencies that offer complete services of transport, accommodation, food, renting equipment, and guides on well-defined trails.

Globally, enduro-tourism has found more and more sympathizers.

Knowing the fact that this type of sport tourism uses motorcycles, the pollution issues arise.

Pollution represents the contamination of the environment with materials that interfere with human health, quality of life or natural function of ecosystems, most of the times because of human activities.

A general pattern of the environmental indicators system is the one presented in figure 2.



“The pressure indicators present the causes of the environmental issues. The state ones highlight the changes or the evolution of the physical state of the environment, the response ones highlight society's or authorized institutions' efforts for the improvement of the environment or the diminution of the degradation.

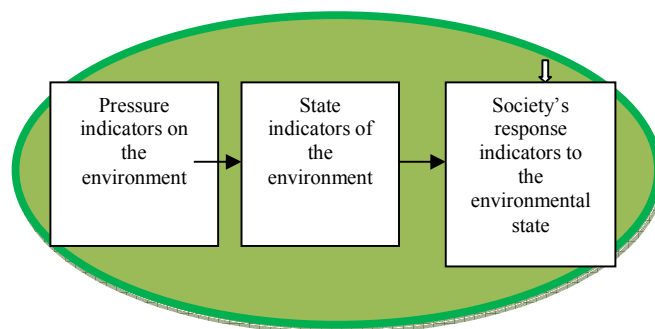


Figure 2 The environmental indicators system pattern (Source: Gogonea Manuela, Rodica, Andrei, Ruxandra, *The comparison of tourism within the framework of sustainable development*)

The pressure indicators are:

- $\text{NO}_2$ ,  $\text{SO}_2$  ( $\text{mg}/\text{Nm}^3$ ) gas emissions;
- dust emissions;
- $\text{CO}_2$  emissions in the atmosphere (ktons of equivalent  $\text{CO}_2$ );
- percentage of endangered species;

- number of projects – new investments (millions of Euros);
- energetic consumption;
- intensity in the use of water;
- water eutrophication and combustion.

The state indicators are:

- global temperature;
- the thickness of the ozone layer;
- the number of endangered species;
- the quality of marine ecosystems;
- the concentration of nitrates and phosphates in water.

Regardless of the type of indicators, their analysis provides an image over the tourist activity in an area and the impact on development.”[4]

The impact of tourism on the environment manifests at the level of relief, soil, climate, hydrography, vegetation and fauna.

On a long term basis, the most important effects are observed in the air, water and soil quality, sound pollution, alteration of landscapes and biodiversity.

When practicing tourism, the relief is an attractive resource, and the interventions upon it can undermine its physical structure, destroy some detail elements, and alter the beauty and uniqueness of the landscape.

The chemical pollution of the soil is a possible consequence of the use of enduro motorcycles. The air quality can also alter as a consequence of this tourist activity.

Through the practice of enduro-tourism unwanted qualitative changes can be made to the hydrographical network.

At the same time there is a destruction of the soil through mechanic action, the appearance of ditches, the alteration and even destruction of the vegetation, flora and rare species. The fauna in the area is also affected due to the change of the habitat and leads to its migration. The pollution in the case of enduro-tourism is made through: evacuation gases; engine vibrations and noises; resonances through reflections; losses of fuels and lubricants; mechanical destruction.

The limitation and even the elimination of all these negative impacts are considered to be accomplished through the development of sustainable tourism.

### 3. Problem Solution

The sustainable development of tourism supposes a responsible exploitation of the tourist resources, so that even after many years, they could draw the attention of the tourists. This development concept has appeared from the need to reduce or even eliminate the negative effects of intensive development.

Ever since 1972, once with the creation of the World Commission for Environment and Development, also known as the Brundtland Commission, the actions regarding sustainable development have intensified and diversified.

Its implementation is meant to be accomplished in the major areas: social, economic, environmental and institutional.

The spatial sustainable development must provide the solutions to the contradictions regarding the social-economic development, the use of lands and the ecological protection.

In the case of sustainable tourism, people are trying to practice types and forms of tourism that should not have a negative impact on the environment, the social and cultural environment.

The properties of sustainable tourism could be organized containing the properties like [5]: being informative, supporting integrity of place, benefitting residents, conserving resources and respecting local culture and tradition. The term sustainable tourism development implies implementation of all resource management in a way that economic, social, institutional and aesthetic needs are satisfied without losing cultural integrity, the basic ecological processes and life support systems.[6].

The relationship between environment and tourism can be developed so that the environment support long-term tourism activity, tourism, in turn, being “forced” to avoid causing environmental damage by running it.[7]

At international level organizations activating in the tourist sector such as WTO and WTTC involve in activities to preserve and protect the natural resources through various policies.

In order to limit the pollution and the environmental degradation, in many states of

the world the law restricts the access with motorcycles or other motor vehicles in forests and protected areas. An example is California USA that, since 2008 has forbidden the access of all motorized means of transport in wild areas, natural reserves and limited it to special designated spaces in parks, leisure areas, and beaches.

The Environment Protection Agency (EPA) established the noise emission standard for motorbikes discharge system at 80 dB (a), while Motorcycle Technical Steering Committee SAE, through standard SAE J2825 accepts between 92 and 100 dB (a). The first limit is compulsory in busy areas, on the streets, and the SAE accepted interval in other areas, on public roads.

The European countries have included in the forestry legislation a series of general interdictions regarding the access and circulation with vehicles for recreation in the forests, including on forest roads, the access being admitted only for the vehicles that are necessary for the legal exploitation, administration and protection of the forests.

In Romania, unfortunately, in the Forest Code, article 54 includes two paragraphs that do not forbid the access in the forests with motorized means of transport.

„The public access in the forests is allowed only in arranged areas and on trails marked for this purpose. The public access in the forests with vehicles, motorcycles, ATVs or mopeds is forbidden, except for sports, recreation and tourist activities, which can be practiced only with the agreement of the owner or administrator of the forests public property of the state.”[8]

Even if the sustainable development is wanted also in the case of forests, this article leaves room for pollution and destruction of the forest area. For example, in the Țarcu Mountains area in the Caraș-Severin County enduro-tourism has been performed since 2006, starting with the signing of a protocol between the Romanian Federation of Motoring, the Romanian Car Club and the National Direction of Forests Romsilva.

Maps with possible trails were printed for the participants in the enduro activities.

Foreigners consider Romania, in general, and the Țarcu Mountains area, in particular, as “the heaven” of enduro lovers

The Țarcu Mountains that are part of the protected areas, category “Sit Natura 2000” should not be included in the tourist trails for the practice of activities with motorcycles or other motor vehicles.

The practice of enduro, regardless of the financial benefits it brings to the organizers, pollutes the environment and cannot be compatible with the sustainable tourism. The damages resulted from the practice of enduro are much greater, even irreversible.

#### 4. Conclusions

The development of tourism in the mountain areas must be done sustainably.

More and more tourists prefer to practice an active tourism, even extreme sports. Enduro-tourism is preferred by stressed people who love adventure and motorcycles.

Unfortunately, the motorcycles pollute phonically, chemically and physically. In Romania, the legislation is more permissive than in other European countries, the USA, and thus the enduro-tourism has evolved after 1995.

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The price we have to pay for some people’s fun is much too great to be accepted.

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