

9. Se debe apostar por el aumento de los programas de formación continua que desarrollan las federaciones para el profesorado (docentes, técnicos, guías, guardas, monitores de clubes, etc.) con relación a materias de educación y sensibilización ambiental, a través de acuerdos entre las federaciones y administraciones públicas competentes en medio ambiente, educación y deportes. En el mismo sentido, se seguirá apoyando la colaboración de las federaciones con instituciones de enseñanza superior e investigación, facilitando el acceso, estudio y evaluación ambiental de ENP, acentuando su función social.

10. Los programas y planes de Uso Público y Educación Ambiental en los ENP, deberían potenciar la participación activa de las federaciones y clubes en todo lo relacionado con la divulgación de normas de uso público, fomentando la buena ordenación de las actividades deportivas en la naturaleza y la formación de los responsables y asociados en materia ambiental.

11. Las instalaciones de acogida de los ENP, así como los refugios de montaña deben integrarse en los programas educativos, divulgativos e interpretativos, y servir de soporte para la difusión de mensajes que induzcan a actitudes de mayor respeto al medio ambiente, fomentando la participación activa de los visitantes, en general, y de los montañeros, en particular.

12. En este contexto, se propone la implantación de encuentros o reuniones periódicas específicas entre gestores de espacios naturales y federaciones de montañismo (a modo de plataforma de comunicación socio-ambiental), para fomentar mutuamente programas y acciones de sensibilización ambiental, que promuevan en estos espacios actitudes y valores respetuosos con la naturaleza y compatibles con la práctica de los deportes de montaña.





EPÍLOGO

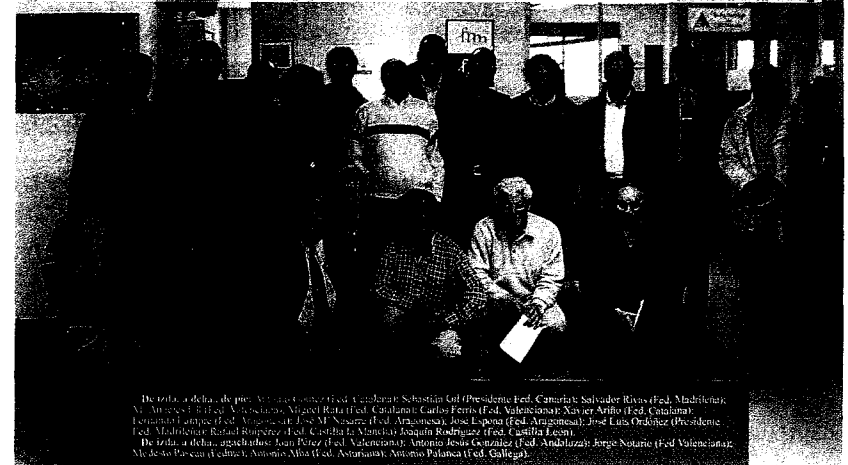
En los últimos diez años, la Federación Española de Deportes de Montaña y Escalada ha creado espacios de debate y reflexión para dar cauces de solución a la importante reducción que por motivos ambientales venía sufriendo el "terreno de juego" deportivo en el que se desarrollan los deportes de montaña. La FEDME ha hecho un gran esfuerzo para abordar esta situación mediante personas que voluntariamente han dedicado su tiempo al estudio, la propuesta, el diálogo y la búsqueda de acuerdos.

Hoy día cuenta en su Junta Directiva con un responsable del Área de Accesos y Naturaleza. La Comisión de Accesos y Naturaleza de la FEDME diseña la estrategia anual mediante el trabajo de los responsables de naturaleza de todas las federaciones autonómicas, que se reúnen dos veces al año y mantienen vivo el contacto permanentemente. El Comité Técnico de Accesos y Naturaleza, compuesto por cinco representantes de diferentes comunidades autónomas, pone en marcha los diferentes proyectos aprobados. Desde enero del año 2009, el Área de Accesos y Naturaleza dispone de un profesional que trabaja a tiempo parcial y hace posible la gestión del día a día.

Por su parte, las federaciones autonómicas cuentan con vocales de naturaleza en sus juntas directivas y tienen presencia en patronatos o juntas de más de sesenta espacios naturales protegidos, fundamentalmente parques nacionales y parques

Reunión del Comité de Accesos y Naturaleza de la FEDME y Consejo Asesor Científico de las Montañas. Madrid, 2004

Reunión del Comité de Accesos y Naturaleza de la FEDME y Constitución del Consejo Asesor Científico de las Montañas, 8 de mayo, 2004



De izda. a dcha.: de pie: Vicente Gómez (Fed. Castellón), Sebastián Gil (Presidente Fed. Cantabria), Salvador Rivas (Fed. Madrid),
Vicente Ferrer (Fed. Aragón), Miguel Riera (Fed. Cataluña), Carlos Ferrer (Fed. Valencia), Xavier Arribas (Fed. Canarias),
Fernando Fontana (Fed. Aragón), José M. Navarro (Fed. Aragón), José Llopón (Fed. Aragón), José Luis Ordóñez (Presidente
Fed. Madrid), Rafael Rodríguez (Fed. Castilla-La Mancha), Joaquín Rodríguez (Fed. Castilla-La Mancha),
De izda. a dcha. agachados: Juan Pérez (Fed. Valencia), Antonio Jesús González (Fed. Andalucía), Jorge Notario (Fed. Valencia),
Miguel Ángel Pascual (Fed. Galicia), Antonio Alba (Fed. Asturias), Antonio Palanca (Fed. Galicia).



Encuentro de representantes de federaciones en espacios naturales protegidos. Zaragoza, 2007

naturales o regionales. La FEDME organiza anualmente un encuentro de representantes federativos en espacios naturales protegidos que está llamado a convertirse en un nuevo foro permanente de diálogo en los próximos años.

Vinculado al Área de Accesos y Naturaleza se constituyó en 2003, el Consejo Asesor Científico de las Montañas de la FEDME,

formado por montañeros que son investigadores, doctores o licenciados en biología, geografía, sociología, derecho, etc. Sus puntos de vista permiten conocer mejor la realidad de las montañas y apoyar con estudios e investigación la práctica del montañismo en el medio natural. Sus reuniones anuales han consolidado su formato en las dos últimas ediciones. En 2008 tuvo lugar en Benasque la I Jornada, "Los glaciares como indicadores del calentamiento global: el montañismo ante el cambio climático", que finalizó con una propuesta de "Recomendaciones de la FEDME ante el cambio climático" y en 2009 se ha celebrado en Valencia la II Jornada, "El montañismo en el marco de la red natura 2.000".

Junto a estos foros de encuentro periódicos, se han impulsado otros de carácter temático como, por ejemplo, la Jornada técnica sobre escalada y actividades deportivas en espacios protegidos, en el Parque Natural del Castell de Montesquiu o el Encuentro de Profesionales de la Montaña en Espacios Naturales Protegidos, en el Parque Regional de la Sierra de Gredos.

Como consecuencia del Año Internacional de las Montañas de 2002, el 3 de febrero de 2003 se celebró una histórica comparecencia del Presidente de la Federación Española de Deportes de Montaña y Escalada, Joan Garrigós, en la Comisión de Medio Ambiente del Senado para exponer los problemas ocasionados por las restricciones impuestas a la práctica de los deportes de montaña en las regulaciones de los espacios naturales protegidos sin base científica que las justificase, reclamando atención para una actividad deportiva que genera bienestar social, salud y desarrollo rural en las zonas de montaña.

Reunión del Comité de Accesos y Naturaleza de la FEDME y representantes en espacios naturales protegidos. Madrid, 2008



Jornada "Los glaciares como indicadores del calentamiento global" del Consejo Asesor Científico de las Montañas. Frente al glaciar del Aneto, 2008

Al cumplirse 10 años del I Seminario de Espacios Naturales Protegidos y Deportes de Montaña, miramos hacia atrás y vemos que las cosas han cambiado y que vamos por buen camino. Seguiremos trabajando para consolidar una gestión ambiental que cada vez más apueste por la comunicación, la participación, la confianza mutua y el consenso entre las administraciones públicas y las federaciones deportivas.

Comité Técnico de Accesos y Naturaleza de la FEDME:

José María Nasarre Sarmiento (Aragón)

Carlos Ferrís Gil (Comunidad Valenciana)

Juan Jesús Ibáñez Martín (Principado de Asturias)

Pedro Millán del Rosario (Canarias)

Antonio Joaquín Sánchez Sánchez (Andalucía)

Jornada "El montañismo en el marco de la red natura 2.000" del Consejo Asesor Científico de las Montañas. Pico Espadán, 2009



10 YEARS SEMINARS ON PROTECTED NATURAL AREAS AND MOUNTAIN SPORTS

The Spanish Federation for Mountain and Climbing Sports (FEDME, *Federación Española de Deportes de Montaña y Escalada*) is a sports federation that was set up in accordance with the Sports Law as a private, non-profit-making legal entity, but with the remit to perform public functions relating to the practice of mountain and climbing sports. In accordance with its Statutes, the Spanish Federation has been allocated the powers to oversee excursions and treks through the lower, middle and upper reaches of mountain areas, including the pursuits of mountaineering, rambling, rock climbing, canyoning, Nordic skiing, snowshoeing, camping for mountaineering purposes and competitions relating to such sports, including mountain races.

FEDME is made up of 17 federations, each coinciding with the territorial extension of an autonomous region (Andalusia, Aragon, Asturias, The Balearic Islands, The Basque Country, The Canary Islands, Cantabria, Castilla y Leon, Castilla-La Mancha, Catalonia, Extremadura, Galicia, La Rioja, Madrid, Murcia, Navarre, and Valencia) and a further two federations corresponding to the autonomous cities of Ceuta and Melilla.

FEDME has a person responsible for the Nature Access Committee on its Board of Directors. The Nature Access Committee designs the annual strategy and is composed of the people in charge of wildlife issues for all the regional federations, with meetings being held twice a year. The Technical Branch of the Nature Access Committee is responsible for setting up various projects that have been approved, and is composed of six representatives with special qualifications in this area. In order to carry out its activities it currently has a professional member of staff working on a part-time basis.

Traditionally speaking, the relations enjoyed by FEDME with the various administrative bodies responsible for sports management, both at state and regional level, have proved to be satisfactory. Nevertheless, the "playing field" for mountain sports is not regulated by the sports bodies but by the environmental authorities, with whom there never used to be any regular or satisfactory form of contact.

Between 1978 and 1998, Spain went from having around thirty Protected Natural Areas to more than 1000 such areas. This means that many Spanish mountains -our "playing field"- have started to see regulation in various aspects such as access, public use and the practice of mountain and climbing sports, without the people that practise such sports being consulted by environmental managers. The federations integrated in FEDME have 64 representatives serving on governing boards and trustees for Protected Natural Areas.

In 1995, the General Assembly of FEDME adopted the so-called "Declaration of Caceres", drawing initial attention to the progressive restriction of access to the areas in which mountaineering is practised.

With the aim of mitigating the lack of dialogue between the different parties involved in the practice of mountain sports in protected areas, FEDME, together with The Canary Islands Mountaineering Federation, The Canary Islands Government and the Ministry of the Environment organised the 1st Seminar on Protected Natural Areas and Mountaineering Sports on the island of Tenerife in December 1999. This brought together representatives from the Regional Organisation for National Parks (Ministry of the Environment), the Spanish Federation for Mountain and Climbing Sports (leading a delegation of 14 regional federations), the Civil Guard and Ecologists in Action, for the basic purpose of opening up initial lines of communication between sportsmen and environmental managers. These had hitherto been non-existent with the exception of - precisely - the Teide National Park in Tenerife.

With all parties eager to work towards achieving an initial agreement, FEDME was the only party to set out an address in writing, focusing the debate of the Seminar, in which it invited people to reflect on the issue of practising sports activities in Protected Natural Areas from the point

of view of the sportsmen involved. After the initial address, discussion moved to the five workgroups, who approved a total of forty-four conclusions. The points on which there was agreement between the mountaineers and the environmental managers seemed to be clear: there was a need to regulate sports activities, rather than banning them, and to do so with good robust arguments whenever these were based on the results of existing studies.

As a result of the 1st edition of the Seminar, talks commenced with the aim of reflecting the conclusions drawn from the conference in specific agreements. One of the lines of work that opened up was that of negotiations concerning mountain refuges to make accommodation facilities in the mountains compatible with the conservation of the environment. It is thought that whilst providing a service for sportsmen, these should also play a key role in conservation and in disseminating the objectives for conserving protected areas.

Representatives from mountaineering federations and managers of national mountain parks signed the Picos de Europa Declaration on "Mountain Refuges and National Parks" on 12 May 2001 in Cangas de Onís (Asturias). The first stone was laid to promote a new type of mountain refuge for the 21st century.

The Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations declared 2002 to be the International Year of the Mountain, numbering amongst its objectives the conservation of mountain ecosystems, protection of mountain cultures and the promotion of sustainable development in the towns and villages in these areas. FEDME participated in the commemorative acts and study events by approving the creation of the Scientific Mountain Advisory Board at the first Assembly in 2003, formed by mountaineers specialising in biology, sociology, law, etc., to find out more about the reality of the mountains and to support mountaineering activities in natural areas in a sustainable fashion by organising studies and research work.

One result of the International Year of the Mountains was the historic appearance on 3 February 2003 of the Chairman of the Spanish Federation for Mountain and Climbing Sports before the Senate Environmental Committee to examine mountaineering problems after the year dedicated to this sector had come to a close. FEDME's Chairman suggested the great problem affecting mountaineering in Spain was the lack of debate concerning the restrictions and limitations imposed on the practice of mountain sports in regulating Protected Natural Areas without any scientific grounds as justification.

The positive results from the Seminar held in Tenerife led to the 2nd Seminar on Protected Natural Areas and Mountain Sports from 17 to 19 October at the Residencia Universitaria de Jaca (University Halls of Residence in Jaca, Aragon) organised by the Club Alpino Universitario (University Alpine Club), Aragon Mountaineering Federation, Organismo Autónomo Parques Nacionales (Regional Organisation of National Parks) and the Regional Government of Aragon, which also enjoyed the financial support of the Provincial Council of Huesca and the Spanish Federation for Mountain and Climbing Sports (FEDME). Ninety people attended the seminar, half of whom represented Mountaineering Federations, with the other half being managers of Protected Natural Areas from the Autonomous Communities and the Regional Organisation of National Parks. Also invited to the seminar were representatives from the Civil Guard's Mountain and Nature Conservation departments and environmental organisations.

The organisation of this 2nd Seminar was based on previous experience and set up with two workgroups who discussed the issues presented in a paper produced by environmental experts and federation members. The aim was to reach an agreement that would actually signal a consensus and commitment between sportsmen and environmental managers. The scope of the seminar would be derived from the future actions of the representatives of the federation and administrative bodies involved.

In the technical group working on "Terminology in the Regulations governing Protected Natural Areas" an agreement was reached between those practising mountain sports and the managers of Protected Natural Areas to define the meaning of the terms and promote standardisation in their use. Amongst other issues, a resolution was adopted on the following terms: Mountain Sports, Mountaineering, Canyoning, Rambling, Waymarked Trails, Approved Trails, Classic Climbing, Sport Climbing, Via Ferratas, Nordic Skiing, Freeride Snowboarding, Overnight Stopovers, Camping, Bivouacking, Overnight Camping, Mountain Huts, Wardened Huts or Hostel Refuges.

In the technical group working on "Rambling in Protected Natural Areas" an agreement was reached to ensure that the design of the basic network of trails through Protected Natural Areas reconciled the potential corporate identity, the standardisation of trails and the regulations governing waymarking procedures, endeavouring to make the restrictions of use for the trails conform to a scientifically valid reason, along with the promotion of agreements and other mechanisms for joint action.

Continuing with a biannual tradition, the 3rd Seminar on Protected Natural Areas and Mountain Sports was held in the city of Granada on 5 November 2005. The seminar was organised by the Regional Organisation of National Parks, the Regional Government of Andalusia, FEDME and the Andalusian Federation of Mountain Sports. Of the one hundred people meeting at the Conference Centre in Granada, 40 were representatives from the state and regional mountaineering federations, and 40 were environmental managers for Protected Natural Areas, from both the Regional Organisation of National Parks and also the autonomous environmental authorities. These were joined by government specialists, academics and other guests, who played a very active role in the conference. Once again, two topics were selected for discussion in each workgroup culminating in a set of written conclusions that had been arrived at through the consensus of opinion.

"Rock climbing in protected natural areas" attempts to encourage respect for the environment on the part of the climbers, while at the same time environmental managers admit that legislation should be drawn up in keeping with scientific criteria that take account of the real impact of climbing.

"The contribution of mountaineering to sustainable development in Natural Areas" focuses on the role played by mountaineers in the development of mountain areas and nature conservation and lays the foundations for continued cooperation in the future.

Two years later, from 20 to 22 April 2007 the 4th Seminar on Protected Natural Areas and Mountain Sports was held in Covadonga, and attended by over 60 representatives from the Mountaineering Federations and Managers of Protected Natural Areas, belonging to 12 Autonomous Communities. The Seminar was organised in this case by FEDME, the Mountain Federation of Asturias, the Principality of Asturias and the Regional Organisation of National Parks. As in the previous seminars, two approved texts were adopted aimed at establishing guidelines for action in the immediate future.

The technical group on "Canyoning in Protected Natural Areas" tackled a similar subject to the one raised two years earlier on rock climbing. However, this time around the focus was on finding a solution to problems located in specific places, such as Asturias and Aragon, that do not occur in other autonomous communities, or at least have not done so for the moment. The technical group working on "Mountaineering and environmental education" takes as their starting point the agreement that mountaineering has been linked, since its origins in Spain and Europe, to a wish to explore and discover the natural environment through sports activities whose very essence involves respect for nature, plus learning values and positive attitudes for the individual and society, and also extends the mountaineers' commitment to environmental awareness in the future.

With the aim of obtaining information and designing common strategies, since 2007 Meetings of Representatives from Federations have been held in Protected Natural Areas. This consists

of annual meetings that may be attended by anyone that is in contact with managers of Protected Natural Areas where mountain sports are practised.

Throughout all these years, conferences have been held on specific topics through meetings of mountaineers with managers of Protected Areas. Hence, from 8 to 18 May 2008, the 1st Meeting of Mountaineering Professionals in Protected Natural Areas was held in the Sierra de Gredos Regional Park (Castilla y Leon). It was attended by representatives from the mountaineering and climbing federations, managers of Protected Natural Areas, mountain refuge wardens, active tourism agents, and mountain guides, from various autonomous communities, which culminated in the Declaration of Gredos.

The Conference "Glaciers as indicators of global warming: mountaineering and climate change" was held in Benasque (Aragon) on 20 September 2008, organised by the Scientific Mountain Advisory Board from the Spanish Federation for Mountain and Climbing Sports, which enjoyed the cooperation of the Government of Aragon, Barcelona Provincial Council, Benasque Town Council, and the Aragon Mountaineering Federation. The Conference was attended by 60 people associated with research, science and mountaineering from various autonomous communities, who were able to learn about the studies that have been carried out on glaciers in Spain and the rest of the world by distinguished scientists, ending with a proposal for FEDME recommendations on climate change.

The Technical Branch of the Nature Access Committee

José María Nasarre Sarmiento

Carlos Ferris Gil

Juan Jesús Ibáñez Martín

Pedro Millán del Rosario

Antonio Joaquín Sánchez

1999.

1ST SEMINAR ON PROTECTED NATURAL AREAS AND MOUNTAIN SPORTS

The 1st Seminar on Protected Natural Areas and Mountain Sports was held from the 3rd to 6th September on the island of Tenerife, organised by the Canary Islands Mountaineering Federation (Federación Canaria de Montañismo), the Canary Islands local government and the Ministry of the Environment. Gathering for the event were representatives from the Regional Organisation of National Parks (Organismo Autónomo Parques Nacionales), the Spanish Federation for Mountaineering and Climbing Sports or FEDME (its Spanish acronym standing for Federación Española de Deportes de Montaña y Escalada) (comprising 14 regional federations), the Civil Guard and Ecologists in Action.

The only paper presented was by the FEDME, which ended with the following conclusions:

We reaffirm the spirit of Article 19 of the Constitution: "*Spaniards have the right to freely choose their place of residence and to move about within the national territory*".

We declare our conformity with the spirit of Article 8 of the 1984 Use and Management Master Plan (P.R.U.G.- Spanish acronym standing for "Plan Rector de Uso y Gestión") for Teide National Park: "*The regulation of the activity of mountaineering shall receive special attention since it is a sport that is traditionally practised in the park and particularly in keeping with the type of recreation aimed for*".

We reaffirm our wish for involvement and participation in the management of Protected Areas.

We reaffirm our wish for the Autonomous Communities and the State to agree on basic regulations for all Protected Areas with the participation of the Spanish and Regional Federations.

We declare our willingness to reach agreement on standards and regulations, to be drawn up in positive terms, that is to say, generally permitting the use of such areas and the practice of sports activities, with specific, reasonable exceptions, but not vice versa.

Those attending the seminar gathered in various workgroups to reach agreement on the following conclusions:

GROUP 1: Use of mountain sports infrastructure available in natural areas: trails, shelters, roads, climbing schools, etc.

1. Shelters are designed to fulfil the role of sports infrastructure. They should be located at a safe distance from roadways for motor vehicles and also from the fragile area surrounding the mountain peaks. They should be incorporated in safety plans for protected areas.

2. Regulations governing the operation of these facilities should conform to their use as a sports infrastructure and to safety requirements. In every case, the type of service provided, the provision of equipment and the activities to be promoted should be compatible with the specifications of the planning tools for Protected Natural Areas (PNAs).

3. The promotion of new infrastructure (shelters) in PNAs should conform to the specifications set out in programmes for public use. In Natural Protected Areas these facilities should be as required to preserve the level of ecological integrity set out in the principles underpinning these Areas. Where appropriate, priority will be given to the restoration of existing buildings and respect for the type of traditional architecture of the area in question.

4. Preferably, management of the shelters should be the responsibility of the Mountain Federations so as to ensure that they are used in keeping with the principles underpinning general public interest.

5. It is proposed that a working committee should be set up with the participation of the Environmental Bodies and the Mountain Federations for the purpose of examining such matters in greater depth and drawing up detailed criteria for their planning and management.

6. The PNAs should define their Trail Network within their Public Use Programme. This may include a main Network, duly signposted and publicised, along with those trails that require prior permission before they can be used.

7. The signposting of the trails forming part of the Main Network should include the signposting typical of the European Trail Network, together with the specific symbol for each Area.

8. The Mountain Federation of the appropriate Autonomous Community shall play an active role in defining the Trail Network.

9. The Trail Network should include circuits that are suitable for all kinds of visit.

10. Rather than banning any specific activities, it is proposed to regulate climbing by following the "zoning" criterion.

GROUP 2: Mountain sports and the master plan for Protected Natural Areas (PNAs).

1. Restrictions and limitations in PNAs are not due to their use for sport but for overcrowding in these areas.

2. In PNAs it is necessary to distinguish between the two kinds of user: members of sports federations and the general public.

3. As a strategy to protect such areas an effort should be made to enhance natural barriers to block entry to motor vehicles.

4. Likewise, another protection strategy should be the design of infrastructure and itineraries for tourists in less sensitive areas.

5. One way to recognise the idiosyncrasies of these sports activities would be for sports federations to sign agreements with the competent administrative bodies on the subject of use.

6. The restrictions for use should be based on and supported by objective, authoritative studies that reflect the planning of the use of the PNAs.

7. Each PNA requires its own analysis, without extrapolating the rules from one area to another.

8. In drawing up the P.O.R.N. and P.R.U.G., effective, real participation is needed on the part of the sports federations affected by the measures for public use throughout all phases of the process so as to achieve a consensus concerning regulation.

9. Provision should be made for the revision of the Plans, anticipating periodical revisions, when the situations change that gave rise to prohibitions and limitations.

10. Any trails, ravines, climbing paths, shelters, etc. forming the mountaineering area should be considered as natural sports facilities.

11. Traditional trails form part of the cultural heritage, which needs to be preserved. An attempt should be made to standardise the signposting used on the trails.

12. The composition of the Regulating Bodies and Sponsors of the PNAs should cover the specific presentation of the sports federations affected.

GROUP 3: Contributions from the Mountaineering Federation to the conservation of natural areas.

1. Considering that the history of the mountaineering federations is useful, in that it provides examples of conservation for specific places.

2. Recognising mountaineering to be one of the major allies in conserving the PNAs, due to the need to keep a mountain area in a wilder or more natural state.

3. Promoting or fostering environmental education at school level to mountaineering amateurs and young people in general.

4. Proposing that the Spanish Federation for Mountaineering and Climbing Sports should draw up a Decalogue of behaviour for treating the mountain with respect, and should be issued on an annual basis together with the federation license.

5. Collaborating and participating with the administration in all conservation tasks deemed to be of benefit for PNAs.

6. Supporting mountaineering as an environmentally friendly activity, which contributes towards the sustainable development of the surrounding towns and villages.

7. Encouraging organisations for public participation in the PNAs to carry out, through their representatives, those projects that will have effects that are considered to be suitable by the federations.

GROUP 4: The practice of mountain sports in the PNAs and their environmental impact.

1. An attempt will be made to offer environmental training courses run by the regional and national Spanish mountaineering federations.

2. The visitor to the PNAs will be informed of the impact on the environment that might be caused by their visit.

3. In most cases, this impact can be put down to ignorance.
4. To minimise the impacts on the PNAs, all action possible will be taken by the administration and the regional mountaineering federations concerning equipment on climbing routes or signposting for trails, with the possibility of heeding the advice of other groups that are more aware of the problems.
5. We accept that intense use by the general public has an impact on PNAs, leading to the need for responsible supervision of the use and enjoyment of such areas.
6. The administration will promote a study of the various levels of impact, which will enjoy the support of the mountaineering federations.
7. It is proposed that guides that carry out their activities in a professional capacity in the PNAs should be offered accreditation facilities.

GROUPE 5: Mountain sports and action taken by the Civil Guard in PNAs.

1. Requesting a clear, rational and logical set of regulations with the involvement of the environmental and mountain sports institutions.
2. Encouraging the collaboration of the Civil Guard with personnel in the various PNAs. Setting up SEPRONA offices in National Parks. Encouraging surveillance in other PNAs, in collaboration with the various administrative bodies, and being receptive to proposals put forward by the various mountaineering federations and other interested organisations.
3. Placing emphasis on prevention through publicity campaigns and public awareness-raising activities.
4. Ensuring that the Civil Guard do not use the term "mountaineer" as a general term when writing up reports.
5. Involving the regional authorities in the provision of facilities for the Civil Guard to enable them to carry out their duties to monitor the PNA and mountain sports, as well as rescue operations.
6. In telephone calls to the emergency number "112" for rescue operations, the Mountain Units of the Civil Guard should also be informed at the same time, particularly where technical difficulties are envisaged.
7. Promoting training courses at all levels.
8. Encouraging the presence of the Civil Guard attached to SEPRONA (Spanish acronym for Servicio de Protección de la Naturaleza, the Nature Conservation Department of the Spanish Civil Guard) and the Mountain Unit in well-traversed regions within the National Parks and other PNAs.

2001.

PICOS DE EUROPA DECLARATION

MOUNTAIN REFUGES AND NATIONAL PARKS

I.- INTRODUCTION

Mountain refuges have a long tradition in areas now enclosed within National Parks. Mountaineering has been involved in the preservation of many of these sites, through the Federations, hut wardens, and mountaineers, and has given more than enough evidence of its sensitivity to the conservation of mountain regions. The aim is to hold on to this precious feeling of respect for the mountains, which is compatible with the protection, use and enjoyment of the National Parks. Since their first meeting held at the National Park of El Teide in December 1999, the Regional Organisation of National Parks and the Spanish Federation for Mountaineering and Climbing Sports

(FEDME) began to work together, aware of the important role mountaineering had to play in preserving the mountain environment and its use and enjoyment. This endeavour subsequently led to the organisation of four work sessions: Sierra Nevada (March 2000), Ordesa (May 2000), Aigüestortes (November 2000) and Picos de Europa (May 2001). These contacts have blossomed into a valuable exchange of know-how and experience, along with the implementation of common objectives that bring mountaineers and the Management of National Parks closer together. As a result, a consensus document has been drawn up that aims to help establish mountain huts or refuges satisfactorily as core infrastructure for mountaineering activities and to offer an example of a harmonious relationship between nature and mankind.

II.- DECLARATION

1. Huts need to be erected as an example of the compatibility of mountaineering activities with nature conservation. There should be a propensity to extend mountain regions, by distancing refuges from the summit and promoting pedestrian access only amongst the users.
2. Huts provide a base for mountaineering activities and have sports infrastructure and public utility status. Apart from their sports functions and contribution to safety, the huts should also serve as information and dissemination points for the Park's values and ideal models of behaviour to be observed inside the Park. With this aim in mind, those responsible will work in coordination with the management teams and wardens of the Protected Area. The activities linked to the refuge should respect the relevant sector and territorial regulations at all times, in accordance with the objectives and guiding principles of the National Parks.
3. Huts located inside the grounds of National Parks should offer models of infrastructure management in the local surroundings that are capable of extension to other mountain areas. This implies being able to capture environmentally satisfactory resources, making rational use of energy, minimising the production of waste along with provision for its recycling and removal, and adequate sanitation and maintenance systems. To this end, the competent Authorities should offer the support required in each case for adaptation on a progressive scale.
4. The huts should be integrated within the countryside and respect the cultural heritage of the area. In all cases, building designs and operating plans should strive for minimum levels of noise and visual impact, and should be subjected to an evaluation of their ecological footprint.
5. Traditionally, those responsible for looking after mountain huts have been called "wardens". Their work, tinged with a healthy dose of vocation, goes way beyond any mere tourist programme to enter the realms of public service. Since wardens have been called upon to play a significant role in nature conservation, formulas should be devised to enable them to participate in training programmes, run by the competent authorities, that are relevant to the activity or that lead to increased knowledge of the values and regulations for protection of the environment.
6. The capacity of these refuges is limited, depending on the targets set concerning the protection of natural resources and quality of the visit. Mountain huts are restricted to providing accommodation for the number of places assigned to them. Only in cases of emergency can the maximum capacity of the shelter be exceeded. Active measures should be implemented to encourage users to reserve their place before setting off. Organised on the basis of self-maintenance, as a consideration for use of the services provided at the facility, a fee should be charged, from which a number of rights are derived. The users, whether lodging at the shelter or not, are required to abide by the house rules.
7. The activities of the shelter and the environmental parameters of the local surroundings should be monitored. There should be a fluid transmission of information, including data on overnight stays, origin of users, number of federation members, accidents in the area, routes frequented, and also any comments and effects observed on the natural environment.

8. The signatories to this document express their intention to continue to participate along the same lines of discussion and consensus of opinion undertaken thus far through the creation of a Permanent Working Group formed by representatives from both parties.

FINAL DECLARATION

This Declaration should serve as a framework reference for any future relationship between the Regional Organisation of National Parks and the Spanish Federation for Mountaineering and Climbing Sports and autonomous Federations.

In Cangas de Onís, on 12th May 2001

The Picos de Europa Declaration has been signed by the representatives of the National Parks of Picos de Europa, Sierra Nevada, Aigüestortes i Estany de Sant Maurici, Ordesa y Monte Perdido, Teide, Caldera de Taburiente, the Spanish Federation for Mountaineering and Climbing Sports (FEDME) and the Autonomous Federations of Andalusia, Aragon, Asturias, Catalonia and the Canary Islands.

2003

2st Seminar on Protected Natural Areas and Mountain Sports

1nd Technical Symposium

APPROVED TERMS

Mountain sports

Set of sports activities included in the Statutes of the Spanish Federation for Mountain and Climbing Sports and any others that might be incorporated in these Statutes: climbing, mountaineering, hiking, rambling, mountain trekking, rock climbing, canyoning, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, camping for mountaineering purposes, trials and races.

Mountaineering

Sports activity that involves climbing up mountains or trekking through them, the performance of which requires specific technical know-how. In some cases, technical means of progression and anchorage may be necessary depending on the circumstances and difficulty.

It is also known as climbing or mountain trekking.

Canyoning

Sports activity that involves walking or swimming through canyons or ravines, torrential rivers or mountain streams, using special techniques and one's own resources.

Rambling

Sports and recreational activity that involves walking along preferably traditional routes that may or may not be signposted.

(This is complemented by the definition for waymarked and approved trails.)

Waymarked trails

Trails marked with conventional symbols, signs, paint, milestones, marks, etc. and indications designed to facilitate their use on rambling paths.

Approved trails

Marked trails that have been approved by the autonomous mountaineering federations as meeting the precise demands regarding route and signposting.

Classic climbing

Sports activity that involves climbing up or along walls of rock and ice, steep slopes or other natural environments characterised by their verticality, using holds that are almost entirely recoverable, along with the possibility of using artificial resources to make progress.

Sport climbing

Sports activity that involves climbing up or along walls with routes equipped with fixed holds in the wall to guarantee the safety of the climber.

Via ferratas

(Italian for 'iron road') Sports and recreational activity that involves climbing up or along walls, minimising the risks and difficulties by means of artificial elements to aid progression along the route, such as ladders, cables, chains or other fixed components.

Via ferratas are not thought to be very appropriate for Protected Natural Areas.

Cross-country skiing

Sports activity that is characterised by the use of skis, and practised off piste in the mountains, traversing arêtes and valleys, and climbing up mountain tops with the aid of techniques from both mountaineering and skiing.

It is also known as XC skiing.

Freeride snowboarding

Sports activity that is characterised by the use of a snowboard and practised off piste in the mountains, traversing arêtes and valleys, and going up mountain tops with the aid of techniques from both mountaineering and snowboarding.

Overnighting

Activity of spending the night somewhere.

Camping

Stopping to spend the night in a tent in a deserted spot.

Bivouac/Bivouacking

Sleeping or resting out in the open or at the mercy of the elements all through the night, possibly but not necessarily using items providing shelter such as a sleeping bag, or bivouac sack, or using the resources provided by the environment itself without disturbing it in any way.

Overnight camping

Form of overnighting that involves pitching a lightweight tent at nightfall and taking it down again at dawn, normally one hour before the sun sets until an hour after it comes up again the next day.

Mountain hut

Sports facilities for public use designed to offer shelter to people practising mountain sports. Open most of the year, they are accessible to users arriving on foot.

Wardened hut

Mountain refuge available to provide board and lodging to mountaineers in safe, comfortable and hygienic conditions due to its location and in accordance with the infrastructures and guarantees provided for in the applicable legislation. There is a warden to tend to mountaineers, at

least during the peak season. In the absence of the warden, there is an open area with the characteristics of a Bivouac Refuge.

Hostel refuge

Building or construction that has the same features as the wardened mountain hut but is accessible to user by road, cable car or any other mechanical means of transport.

Bivouac refuge

Small unwardened mountain hut, open all year round. Accessible only on foot, it may have first aid facilities and emergency telecommunications equipment available.

Mountain shelter

Any open construction, built predominantly for farming purposes, and can be used for shelter or protection overnight in case of emergency.

2nd Technical Symposium

"Rambling in Protected Natural Areas"

Introduction

Prior to the rambling symposium, certain terms relating to the subject have been agreed upon within the framework of this seminar. These are as follows:

Rambling

A sports and recreational activity that involves walking along preferably traditional routes that may or may not be signposted.

Waymarked trails

Trails marked with conventional symbols, signs, paint, milestones, marks, etc. and indications designed to facilitate their use on rambling paths.

Approved trails

Marked trails that have been officially approved by the regional mountaineering federations as meeting precise demands regarding route and signposting.

The Spanish network of trails already incorporates over 40,000 kilometres of waymarked and officially approved trails including protected spaces and mountain areas. Like other networks, this network is one of the basic infrastructures supporting the wide range of sporting activities conducted in the natural environment, and falls within the scope of competence corresponding to FEDME, in accordance with the Statutes of the federation.

The set of international trademarks for the GR, PR and SL routes have been registered by FEDME at the Spanish Patent and Trademark Office, with their administration being entrusted to the regional federations operating in each autonomous community using official approval channels. Thus, signposting will be standardised throughout the entire state, coinciding with the system used by neighbouring countries, and therefore recognised by European ramblers and endorsed by the European Ramblers Association.

The object of the approval package is to ensure safety and quality along the trails. Every regional federation works on the procedure using their "Trail Experts" to apply the provisions set out in the "Ramblers Handbook" and existing sectoral regulation. At present only three autonomous regions (The Basque Country, La Rioja and Asturias) have passed a decree of specific regulation for walking trails. It is expected that other autonomous regions will enact similar legislation in the near future.

During the 19th and 20th Century, Spain went through a process of urban development much like the rest of Europe, which led to people from rural communities moving to the city. Most city dwellers lack the capacity to understand the natural environment and are unable to cope with living there. At the same time, there is evidence of greater awareness of nature conservation amongst the general public.

Throughout the 20th Century, a system to protect the natural environment has been put in place in parts of Spain. This has been articulated in a number of different ways. The process initiated almost one hundred years ago with the declaration of the first national parks has gained new impetus within the framework of the new territorial organisation of the state into autonomous regions.

Protected Natural Areas have been created in regions of high environmental and scenic value, which sometimes experience negative population growth. However, they have kept the network of trails used to carry out traditional activities, which form part of a historical and cultural heritage that must not be lost. Nowadays this heritage can play an important role in the understanding and enjoyment of Protected Natural Areas through rambling.

General principles

1. From the 1960's onwards there has been a demand amongst city dwellers for new leisure and free time activities. The practice of rambling, firmly rooted in tradition, has gained in importance as a way of meeting the human need for contact with nature.

2. Waymarked trails, which are preferably developed in the natural environment along traditional routes, have come to the aid of this sector of the population. The marks placed along the routes act as an element of safety and guidance. In the case of Protected Natural Areas, the fact that there is a call effect and specific regulation means that the governing authorities and the various mountaineering federations must give special consideration to the aspect of safety.

3. In general terms, rambling is an activity that is respectful of the natural environment. Waymarking trails in accordance with planning and administrative criteria for Protected Natural Areas provides a useful tool for managing their public use and enjoyment.

4. Waymarked trails enable the flow of visitors to be regulated in particularly fragile areas, given the fact that when the visitor comes across a good, well-marked path they tend to stick to it.

5. Restoring old trails enables an important part of our cultural heritage (cattle routes, roads, historical paths... etc.) to be recovered and put to new use. It is important that these paths are preserved using traditional techniques that allow for seamless integration in the environment.

Conclusions

1. The design of the basic network of public trails through Protected Natural Areas will be defined by the instruments used in their planning. In order to achieve the maximum possible consensus, the mechanisms anticipated to encourage participation will be made more robust. It is essential that the regional mountaineering federations take on the role of valuable interlocutor for such purposes. Once the network has been defined, it is advisable to incorporate it in the officially approved system.

2. Restrictions in the use of the trails should be justified on technical or scientific grounds. The disappearance of the cause of the restriction will lead to its cancellation.

3. When an officially approved trail passes through the grounds of a Protected Natural Area, its waymarking should incorporate the area's corporate identity and the international rambling regulations. It may also include other information of an interpretative or educational nature. In this

way, the waymarking procedure will contribute to the aims of nature conservation, safety and knowledge.

4. Approved trails in Protected Natural Areas will be incorporated in national and international networks.

5. Topographic guides and other publications, panels or interpretation boards are ideal and highly efficient tools for furthering environmental education.

6. Care should be taken to avoid a profusion of signposts sprouting up along the trails and to ensure that the ones displayed are in keeping with the surroundings and with the rest of the signs displayed in the Protected Natural Area.

7. The confluence of interests leads to the need to foster agreements and other joint operating mechanisms between the regional mountaineering federations and the managers of Protected Natural Areas.

8. Those present at the Jaca meeting recommend forming a working group that includes representatives from the Protected Natural Areas and the mountaineering federations to delve deeper into the subjects looked at during the Seminar, along with other related topics, to contribute towards making conservation of these areas compatible with the practice of mountain sports.

2005

3rd Seminar on Protected Natural Areas and Mountain Sports 3rd

1nd Technical Symposium

“ROCK CLIMBING IN PROTECTED NATURAL AREAS”

1978 Spanish Constitution

Spaniards have the right to travel in the national territory. (Article 19)

Everyone has the right to enjoy an environment suitable for the development of the person, as well as the duty to preserve it. (Article 45)

The public authorities shall foster physical education and sport. Likewise, they shall facilitate adequate utilisation of leisure. (Article 43)

The public authorities shall concern themselves with the rational use of all natural resources for the purpose of protecting and improving the quality of life and protecting and restoring the environment. (Article 45)

Rock climbing is a traditional sports activity, practised in a natural environment, which contributes towards a person's all-round development in close contact with nature. It develops the values of cooperation and team spirit amongst the climbers and fosters appreciation and interest for the preservation of the environment, so as to ensure that it is done in a sustainable and respectful way.

The Spanish Federation of Climbing and Mountain Sports and, through derivation, the regional federations integrated in this organisation, have powers enshrined in their Statutes with respect to climbing issues. The conservation measures adopted by order or through these federations, especially during the various formative and informative facets, will have special repercussions on climbers. Furthermore, given the fact that climbers have their own communication networks and carry out

the sport in different autonomous regions, measures designed to integrate such people in the joint responsibility of environmental conservation will obviously be much more effective.

Conservation of the natural environment must form an integral part of the objectives adopted by climbers, who can become privileged partners in implementing strategies for conservation and sustainability. Rock climbing can stimulate sustainable development processes that have a multiplier effect when harnessed to other uses and activities. For this to be the case, it will be necessary to seek consensus so as to reconcile the right to practise climbing with protection and conservation of the ecosystems.

Climbing regulation must take the principle of freedom as its starting point and then address the measures required to control this activity based on the notions of science, logic and participation. Restrictions established for the protection of animal and plant life (such as nesting), or of the rock itself, the scenery, etc. should be clear, adapted to the area and reversible – being removed when the cause that originally brought them into being has disappeared. Rock climbing has to be considered a traditional sports activity in many natural areas, as in some cases it was practised long before such places were declared to be protected areas and thus demands a different type of treatment from other more recent sporting activities it has sometimes been associated with. It is essential to strive for regulation based on collaboration so as to prevent systematic bans. Where such principles are applied, it will be possible to regulate the opening up of new routes, the provision or removal of equipment on existing ones, or stipulating the temporary use of certain routes to protect the environment. It is desirable that any legislation be based on clear zoning regulations and standards of conduct.

The impact of climbing on the natural environment must be considered in the correct proportion. While there may well be localised problems for the flora and fauna, the landscape or the rockface itself, their impact is very small when compared to other activities that have repercussions on the natural environment (housing estates, roads, etc.) and in the case of climbing, the situation is generally reversible. Specific instances of deterioration in climbing areas will basically be due to other bad practices associated with the activity (camping, parking, litter, etc).

Rock climbing has positive effects on a nearby towns' economy and, to a certain extent, encourages the growth of tourism. It is necessary to ensure that climbers get on well with the local population. In particular, climbers should show respect for the cultural identity and traditional values of the villages where they do their climbing. Respect must inevitably be extended to property.

It would seem appropriate to draw up a code of conduct in consonance with the “Tyrol Declaration on Best Practice in Mountain Sports” adopted at the “Conference on the Future of Mountain Sports” held in Innsbruck in September 2002. Climbers should respect any limitations imposed for conservation or safety reasons, with regard to the equipment, restoration or maintenance of roads, or the opening up of new routes in areas not previously used for climbing. More specifically, it seems necessary for certain basic measures to be put in place:

Avoid any deterioration of the ground in climbing areas along with their access points, respecting parking spaces for vehicles, roads and paths, avoiding the use of shortcuts and new sections on the approach routes to the rockface.

Minimise noise made by human presence. Unless justified on the grounds of safety when communicating with one another in hazardous areas, climbers should avoid making sounds that might disturb the animals or make them bolt from the area.

Collect any waste generated during the activity, and either take it home or leave it in bins provided in a nearby town.

Not only respect but also protect plant and animal life, both at the start of the climbing route and all the way to the top. It is particularly important to preserve bird nesting areas on the rockface at certain times of the year.

Use the criteria of minimum intervention when opening up new climbing routes. The leader must show maximum respect for the morphology and natural characteristics of the rock when clearing a path for climbing and should avoid chopping or adding artificial holds.

Be careful with other practices like trying not to leave painted marks or material behind, endeavouring to use mimetic material, always keeping pets under control, observing the rules for camping near climbing routes, etc.

Administrative measures should also serve to raise awareness and educate the general public. It is the responsibility of the public authorities and, where appropriate, the regional federations, to inform the public about sensitive areas that are in need of protection, along with the causes that justify regulations at visitor centres, information desks, different facilities offering accommodation or their own publications. Information must be a priority for the federations and public authorities that manage the Protected Natural Areas and this is especially important on beginners' routes and for teaching purposes. Making such information public requires formats that can be adapted to the different circumstances. The authorities and federations must ensure that the guides published include environmental information on the areas, along with recommendations for their use, and refrain from publishing routes that are located in areas where the activity is not permitted. Climbers will be informed of such regulation at the various information panels, normally located at the bottom of the route, but also near access points, mountain refuges, car parks and tourist accommodation.

Regulations concerning rock climbing should be perfectly justified by appropriate scientific reports based on arguments for the conservation or recovery of the ecosystem. Public authorities should encourage studies to be made of climbing areas so that a bank of reliable data can slowly be built up from the constant monitoring and evaluation of such areas. It is desirable that climbers should take part in all such studies, along with collaborative support from public authorities, technical experts and federations in joint programmes. Likewise, it is also advisable to establish protocols for acting in certain situations such as fixing safety devices or the use of routes for teaching purposes. Federations, clubs, associations and other entities may suggest possible courses of action to public authorities that will enable this sport and its relation with research work to become more widely known among the general public.

In order to implement the proposals mentioned above, it is necessary to have lines of communication open between the public authorities and the mountaineering federations, which can be articulated through agreements or other methods of cooperation, giving special importance to the integration of federations in the organs of all Protected Natural Areas where rock climbing is practised. It would seem reasonable that the federations and public authorities responsible for managing Protected Natural Areas in mountain regions should reach an agreement on the creation and dissemination of a "Handbook on good climbing practices".

To date there has been no general debate on the regulation of rock climbing. The only legislation that has been enacted in recent decades is specific and limited to each Protected Natural Area. It may indeed be necessary to encourage the negotiation of a general framework that can serve as a starting point when specification regulations are put forward. This document can provide that starting point.

2nd Technical Symposium

"THE CONTRIBUTION OF MOUNTAINEERING TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT"

Introduction

Mountaineers from all over the world that have traversed mountain ranges over the past two centuries for scientific, exploration or sports purposes see the mountains as the repository of landscape, cultural and biodiversity, and have helped promote certain mountainous areas as a frame-

work for harnessing the life and culture of highland peoples, conservation of the environment and the practice of mountaineering as a sport. On the other hand, human activity is clearly having adverse effects in the form of erosion, water pollution, climate change, galloping urban development or the loss of cultural values and abandoned regions, which are particularly palpable in such sensitive areas.

Throughout the whole country, as of 30th June 2005, there are officially 1 105 Protected Natural Areas, 13 of which are National Parks and another 139. Natural Parks. Over 80% of these declared areas correspond to mountain regions. Spain is one of the European countries with the greatest amount of environmental biodiversity, with three National Parks – Garajonay, Doñana, and Ordesa y Monte Perdido – that have been declared World Heritage Sites, and 27 protected areas declared by UNESCO to be "World Biosphere Reserves", meaning that the country ranks third in the world behind the USA (48) and Russia (34).

The number of active mountaineers has also increased all over Spain in these natural areas judging by the growing number of permits (71,884), affiliated clubs (1,287) and programmed activities, which are constantly on the rise.

Mountaineering is not only a sports activity but also a way of life that favours the development of social and educational values associated with people and nature. Mountaineers have to continue practising their own sport in the mountains, contributing to the development of their towns and villages and the conservation of their ecosystems; they have to remain in mountain areas pursuing their activities in accordance with the principles of best practice, since this is an inalienable right to freedom of movement and has no limitations other than those established by law for technical and scientific reasons.

Mountaineers claim their right as citizens to have free access to the mountain regions, to be able to practise sport in appropriate conditions of safety and to have a network of sports facilities capable of providing the services demanded by the general public nowadays.

Sports activity is compatible with the conservation of nature, and more specifically, with the declaration and management of Protected Natural Areas. Mountaineers express a desire to cooperate on conservation and development policies in mountain areas, and in the processes involved in drawing up their specific regulations. For these reasons, it is important to set up meeting places for the mountaineering federations, public authorities and professional sectors associated with such activities to be able to discuss and propose strategies to enable mountaineering to make an effective contribution to the sustainable development of mountain regions.

1. Sustainable Mountaineering

Taking the Brundtland Report (1987) as a reference, by *sustainability* we mean the model of human development that enables the needs of today's generations to be met without jeopardising the capacity of future generations to satisfy their own particular needs.

In purely sporting terms, we have to see sustainability as outlined in Article 10 of the European Sports Charter, of 15 May 1992, which reads as follows: "Safeguarding and enhancing the physical, social and mental well-being of the people from one generation to another requires that sports activities, conducted in urban, rural and nautical areas, adapt to the limited resources of the planet and are performed in accordance with the principles of sustained development and environmental management. These include:

Taking the values of nature and the environment into account in planning and building sports facilities.

Supporting and encouraging sports organisations in their efforts to preserve nature and the environment.

Increasing knowledge and public awareness of the relations between sport and sustained development and their understanding of nature”.

The Spanish Mountain Charter drawn up in 2002 for the International Year of Mountains recorded the need for leisure activities in mountainous regions to form an integral part of the broader strategies of local development. One of the recommendations to come out of the Seminar on Conservation and Sustainable Development in Mountain Areas (Valsaín, 2003) establishes that protected natural areas are enclaves of enormous importance not only for demonstrating the achievement of sustainable development, it being possible to use these to generate very positive experiences in environmental education and awareness.

Mountaineering can be said to be a sustainable sporting activity providing it has a positive effect on the well-being of the individuals that practise it, and respects the natural resources used during the course of the activity, thus affecting the quality of life of the mountain inhabitants in a favourable way.

Mountaineering should form part of the social policies for ordering and developing the mountain regions, contributing its vision on the way to use and profit from the cultural and natural resources. Strategies relating to public use and conservation of mountain regions should take account of the traditional practice of mountaineering wherever this exists, and channels for collaboration should be set up between the federations and managers of such areas for the rational and orderly promotion of the possibilities mountaineering has to offer individuals and society in its many facets (sports, education, leisure, etc.).

2.- Access to the mountains

Mountaineering should be compatible with the objectives of environmental conservation in mountain areas. Mountaineers should abide by the criteria of minimising their impact on the environment and respecting the regulations for protection of natural areas when carrying out their sport. In the same vein, environmental departments are responsible for providing users with adequate information on the reasons behind the protective measures in place with respect to mountaineering.

The number of visitors possible in a particular mountain area should be given careful consideration, with the various parties involved being encouraged to participate (sports federations, local corporations and socio-economic agents).

Of particular interest are the recommendations put forward by the Nature Access Committee forming part of the UIAA (the French acronym standing for “Union Internationale des Associations d’Alpinisme, the International Mountaineering and Climbing Federation), which are as follows: self-regulated diversification of mountain areas, establishing natural barriers in areas with problems involving indiscriminate access to vehicles, and a more responsible and even distribution of information on paths, mountaineering and climbing routes.

3.- Environmental indicators of sustainability

Environmental information is one of the vital elements in preventing actions that affects the environment. It is essential for these indicators to be developed further, by creating efficient tools that will make it possible to measure the evolution of the state of the environment in mountain areas on a regular basis, and with respect to our own group, to measure the impact on mountain areas caused by the practice of mountain sports and tourist and leisure activities, with a clear distinction being made between these activities when assessing such impact.

The mountaineering federations and competent authorities should look for ways to cooperate that will help meet this objective.

4.- Educating and awareness-raising

Knowledge of the natural environment where the sports activity is conducted is fundamental for guaranteeing behaviour respectful of the environment on the part of the sportsmen, based on protocols and codes of good practice.

In this context, establishing regular meetings between the managers of natural areas and mountaineering federations is proposed, along with an effort to spread the “Mountain Culture” understood to embrace a broad concept (diverse and historic) of the natural and cultural forms of life that prevail in these areas.

Environmental education should form one of the most important elements. The mechanisms required should be articulated to organise training programmes in line with the concept of “Sustainable Mountaineering” for federations, clubs, refuge wardens, guides, monitors, sports coaches and businessmen in the sector.

With this in mind, the managers of Protected Natural Areas, in conjunction with the sports federations, should organise and disseminate these training activities and refresher courses for guides, sports coaches and interpreting experts that contribute towards a better understanding of the values and problems of each natural area under protection.

5.- Participation in Environmental Management

Given the historic tradition of mountaineering in some protected natural areas and the importance currently enjoyed by mountain sports in public use strategies, it is imperative that mountaineering federations are formally represented in the environmental bodies involved in such activities.

Mountaineers have paved the way in issues concerning the defence and conservation of the environment, inasmuch as they have played an active role in protecting these regions. Mountaineers should be encouraged, through various channels of cooperation between federations and participatory bodies associated with protected natural areas, to take part in those aspects that are of relevance to both, as described above in various sections of this document.

6.-Infrastructure

Mountaineering has generated significant sports infrastructure for society to be able to gain a better understanding of nature: a network of over 50,000 kilometres of approved trails, 500 rock climbing zones with equipped routes and 30 mountain refuges with over 100,000 overnight stays per year are a sample of the work done by the federations and clubs. These facilities have been put in place with an eye to the collective needs of the group that wants to get to know the mountains using its own resources, in a responsible and active manner in keeping with conservation of the environment.

Before commencing with this type of sports installation, an assessment should be made of the environmental impact and traditional uses, guaranteeing that the activity is respectful of the environment while at the same time answering sporting, free time and leisure demands. A comparative study should be performed for each type of installation, along with a maintenance schedule, and a safety and dissemination programme for each one, in coordination with the managers of the natural areas in which it is located. Given that these facilities are for public service, these environmental findings should be implemented directly by the Public Authorities, by setting up plans for investment, research and staff training.

7.-Refuges

Refuges should be erected in such a way that mountain activities are compatible with conservation of the natural environment. There should be a tendency to "extend the mountain area", distancing shelters from the summits and generating foot access for users.

Mountain refuges are, first and foremost, sports facilities designed for mountaineering activities, although they are affected by sector regulations governing tourism, health, fire, etc. which are legally binding. Mountain refuges of the 21st century must become a model and reference for harnessing management, protection and care of the environment. In this sense, environmental managers should facilitate cooperation, and where appropriate, the means and resources required to implement sustained improvement plans through *Environmental Management Systems*.

Proper environmental management of the refuges should include activities designed to improve the environmental conditions of areas with installations for public use, waste management (removal and recycling), health and safety conditions, the rational use of energy, and adequate sanitation and maintenance systems.

Installations in the refuges should conform to environmental principles, regulations governing protected areas, and the codes of good environmental practice. Such information and activities should form the focus of cooperation between the refuge managers and those responsible for the region.

8.-Support for the local economy and creation of new job opportunities

The practice of mountaineering in the 21st century is another factor contributing to the development of mountain regions and which over the course of the two hundred years since it began has played a key role in the cultural process of attributing new meaning to the mountains. Although social and sports objectives may be fundamental, certain areas of the mountains may be conducive to economic activities such as hotel and catering, sports facilities in a natural environment, etc. thereby contributing to a certain extent to the creation of jobs and increased income for the local inhabitants. Mountain sports have helped to boost the local development of mountain regions as viewed from the perspective of ecotourism.

Work should be done at the Town Halls in the Areas of socio-economic influence of the Protected Natural Areas, Mountaineering Federations, Rural Development Groups and Protected Area Managers to stimulate and train the local population so that it can become the main beneficiary of these new economic sectors that are either linked or provide a direct service to mountaineering.

In particular, priority will be given to those activities that imply an increase in quality and added value for services such as those deriving from the application of the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in protected natural areas.

9.-Mountaineering and regional planning and development

Mountain organisations are non-profit-making sports associations that have contributed for over 125 years to creating an associative fabric that forms the bedrock of a freer and more democratic society. The commendable results of these organisations and their federations throughout their history make it imperative that the authorities should consider them in the management of sports, social and environmental projects, with this organised sector of society being favoured in plans and strategies for sustainable development of the region. Furthermore, a distinction should be made – as is the case in other European countries – in the promotion and development of schemes for public use between these non-profit-making entities and business firms, recognising and shaping the role they play in each case in the sustainable development of disadvantaged mountain regions.

2007

2nd Seminar on Protected Natural Areas and Mountain Sports 1st Technical Symposium

CANYONING IN PROTECTED NATURAL AREAS

1. Canyons and canyoning

Canyoning is a sporting activity that consists of making your way by walking and/or swimming along a series of canyons or ravines, torrential rivers or mountain streams, using specific techniques and your own resources, as defined at the 2nd Seminar on Protected Natural Areas and Mountain Sports.

Descending canyons has been included as a feature of mountain excursions since the beginning of the 20th Century. It was in this context that the sports category we now know as canyoning was formulated.

Rivers have been the focus of human attention as a linear ecosystem since prehistoric times. Throughout history we have always found them, and indeed still find them seductive for a number of reasons. They have provided a constant source of clean drinking water and nutrition and a communication route over the years. However, they have always been subjected to natural pollution.

As an element that interacts with the environment, water forms a biotope with very important characteristics. The volume of water, speed, and chemical properties are inherent elements of its own making that need to be taken into account and that endow it with the characteristic features peculiar to the specific ecosystem.

Another factor is the physical surroundings of the river, the geological materials it flows over, its disposition and topography, along with the processes of erosion and transport, carving out the canyon and/or ravine morphology, which makes it possible to traverse such terrain.

For all these reasons, a series of factors must be taken into account when canyoning down a ravine to ensure that the activity is conducted in the most sustainable way.

2. The need for regulation

It is considered that, like other types of sporting activities that are traditional in the mountains, canyoning must be regulated by legislation pertaining to sports and environmental issues, particularly when carried out in Protected Natural Areas, with due regard for technical and/or scientific provisions.

The regulations governing canyoning in Protected Natural Areas should always be based on scientific knowledge. Ensuring that this is so requires PNA technicians and canyoning experts from FEDME and other competent federations to work together at state and regional level, on the following points:

- a) Inventory and catalogue of the natural values of each canyon or ravine and its surrounding area, evaluation of its state of conservation and protection needs.
- b) Detection of threats and incompatibilities that canyoning can cause to the ecosystems and species present in this environment.
- c) Adoption of regulating measures, deriving from the above. It is considered that four potential scenarios exist:
 - canyons with free access.

- canyons with access subject to authorisation from the PNA manager.
- canyons with spatial or temporary access regulation determined by zone and/or season.
- canyons with no access whatsoever.

These factors should be taken into account when establishing zoning criteria and be inserted in the PRUG (Master Plans for Use and Management) for Protected Natural Areas.

3. The opportunity for regulation

The managers of Protected Natural Areas have the means to re-orientate sporting activity in their area towards environmental education and understanding and to become an exemplary model for reconciling sport and knowledge, and protection and mutual respect for one another.

Human beings are part and parcel of the environment and can therefore not be considered alien to it. Ignoring this fact implies a misconception of our own identity, of our deepest aspirations, which will lead us to stumble in our efforts and objectives.

By way of a logical, appropriate conclusion, it is understandable to consider it convenient for regulation to be approved for all the different uses that affect Protected Natural Areas. Such regulation must always pursue the integration of people with nature.

4. Determining factors for regulation

The need for regulation based on scientific knowledge should consider different environmental criteria such as the presence of protected or threatened species, the mating or breeding seasons of any species, and the risks of erosion or fire.

The implementation of these environmental criteria can be realised by regulating the frequency, seasonality, facilities, accessibility, information and publicity afforded to them.

Along with the criteria presented above, it should also be possible to implement various sectoral laws.

5. Criteria for regulation

It is considered convenient to establish a flexible and appropriate system of guidelines, suggesting the need for:

A) Basic preventive legislation aiming to establish "best practices" and tending towards environmentally-friendly activities, with little impact on the surroundings while at the same time being safer and more dynamic for patrons. This can be achieved by:

Limiting the number of people per group (to prevent chaotic, reckless descent).

Recommending environmentally-friendly practices.

Not supplying or re-supplying equipment, save in cases of obvious emergency or where previously existing equipment has been disabled.

Fostering unification of pedestrian access points through the use of a minimal basic system of way marking.

Taking unfavourable periods for protected species into consideration.

Establishing an information strategy, especially at signposted access points: physical and environmental conditions of the ravine, etc.

B) Specific legislation indicating when and where regulation is to be applied, this being as follows:

With respect to area - indicating the places and not necessarily the total number of ravines.

With respect to time - determining the dates when the regulation is to be applied.

6. Permits

Measures should be adopted in every Protected Natural Area that are designed to speed up the efficient processing and issue of permits without making the clerical work involved more complicated, while at the same time making it easier for users to obtain their permits.

7. Supply and Re-supply of Equipment

Any plan or project to supply and/or re-supply equipment requires specific authorisation from the Protected Natural Area if so specified in the regulations, and should be issued by the PNA manager. A proposed work plan should be submitted for such purposes.

In this respect, PNA managers are recommended to work together with FEDME and any other federations involved on matters including the supply and/or re-supply of equipment, amongst others.

8. Opening up of New Canyons

Any canyon that is to be descended for the first time after the regulation comes into effect must be given prior authorisation by the Protected Natural Areas, taking into consideration the "Study of complaints filed with the Natura 2000 Networking Programme"

9. Cooperation between the Public Authorities, FEDME and other federations

To develop the suggestions stated in the previous points it is considered to be essential for communication channels to be set up between the Public Authorities and FEDME and any other federations, which can be articulated through agreements and other cooperation mechanisms, with special importance being given to integration of the federations in the organs of all the Protected Natural Areas where canyoning is practised.

2nd Technical Symposium

MOUNTAINEERING AND ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Introduction

Since its origins in Spain and across Europe, mountaineering has been inextricably linked with a desire to explore and get to know the natural environment by engaging in a sporting activity whose very essence entails respect for nature and the acquisition of values and positive attitudes on the part of the individual, and also society as a whole.

Trailblazing in the mountaineering sector in our country has mostly been limited to geologists, botanists, geographers and specialists in knowledge of the area, who explored the mountains to become better acquainted with them, to further their studies, and enable the rest of society to gain a better understanding of them based on respect and measured contemplation. The creation of the first trekking clubs (including, amongst others, the Catalan Association of Scientific Excursions, which was founded in 1876 and is now the Centre Excursionista de Catalunya, the Sociedad de Ciencias Naturales Aranzadi, the Sociedad Excursionista Manuel Iradier or the Real Sociedad de Alpinismo Peñalara) have been closely linked to natural history and scientific societies, along with

educational movements like the Free Institute of Education. More specifically, Giner de los Ríos was one of the most outstanding promoters of this Institution and of various scientific, educational and recreational movements in the vicinity of the Guadarrama mountain range that gave education a fresh perspective, in which the mountains were seen as the ideal school for teaching about life. Thus, mountaineering clubs and educators in those days coincided not only in viewing the mountains as a playing field and source of knowledge, but also shared the feeling of the need to defend the mountains from further deterioration and the absence of a principle of environmental protection in urban society.

The origin of mountaineering is strongly linked to knowledge of the environment, this being the reason why many clubs also incorporate sections for natural history, folk culture, botany or nature photography. The function of these organisations and federations throughout the last century in non-formal education circles is unquestionable, as generations of mountaineers saw the mountains from the perspective of the values and attitudes that had been instilled in them, which have much in common with the values and attitudes nurtured by Environmental Education (EE) in general.

After the 3rd edition of the Seminar, held in Granada, focusing on mountaineering and its implications for sustainability, it seemed logical to develop a section of increasing relevance in urban society in the 21st century, and to which the confederation of mountaineers, their various bodies, climbing instructors and mountain guides have a great deal to offer and work for if greater degrees of environmental awareness are to be achieved in those people that wish to enter into contact with these landscapes under their own steam.

All educational processes, whether of an environmental nature or otherwise, involve the increase of knowledge, a change of awareness, and the promotion of new behaviours and values in relation to a specific topic or problem. With Environmental Education, the aim is for people to actively collaborate and participate in resolving environmental problems. In short, it entails developing practices that are more respectful of the natural environment – and the social environment, too, as everything is related. In the case that concerns us in this Seminar, the mountaineering world's capacity for action in this regard is very clear.

Talking about Environmental Education means talking about a continuous process in which people acquire knowledge, modify their attitudes, acquire new values, and increase their capacity for action to develop a pastime that is respectful to their natural surroundings. This process enables knowledge and positive aptitudes to be turned into attitudes and actions on the one hand, and at the same time “learn to participate by participating” which implies a greater capacity for action by the mountaineering sector towards conservation of the environment.

The spheres in which we will be involved during this process – Environmental Education – are primarily school, family and society, and the associative fabric of which organised mountaineering is a part.

Informal Environmental Education transmits knowledge, attitudes and values associated with the environment, which entails adopting positive attitudes towards the social and natural environment, and results in care and respect for biological and cultural diversity. This transmission process is the common denominator of the anonymous work of hundreds of climbing clubs, federations, sports colleges and guides responsible for taking groups out on trips in natural surroundings.

We shall now consider the situation of present-day mountaineering with respect to environmental awareness, reflecting on the activities being carried out, to propose measures and channels for enhancing the socio-educational work performed for more than 130 years by the mountaineering sector in Spain.

Mountaineering and the natural environment

1.- Mountaineering is not only a sports activity, but also a form of behaviour that fosters the holistic development of the individual and society by providing social and educational values concerning the natural environment.

2.- Knowledge of the natural environment where the sports activities are performed forms the basis for guaranteeing respectful behaviour on the part of its practitioners, further supported by protocols and codes of good environmental practice, and the knowledge and understanding of the legislation in force affecting access and enjoyment of nature.

The role of the mountaineering sector in Informal Environmental Education

3.- The work carried out by the mountaineering sector throughout its long history has served to better understand and appreciate the landscape in a sustainable way. Mountaineering offers the possibility of enjoying an intense experience of the landscape albeit individually or as part of a group. The different sports activities practised in the mountains are a good way to find out about nature, by engaging in a recreational sports activity that has a strong ingredient of exploration, curiosity and direct knowledge of nature. Federations and clubs should continue with their task of providing active and responsible publicity for the scenery, it being imperative that the needs and motivations of both environmental and sports managers are taken into consideration.

4.- The role of hikers' and ramblers' associations, climbing clubs, and federations with respect to the children's and youth sectors has been and still is the basic channel for transmitting values and serving as a social laboratory for learning. It is necessary to support these initiatives by supplying coaches and club members who organise camps, excursions, courses, hikes and so on, at club and federation level for no personal gain, with the sole aim of fostering activities that will raise these youngsters' awareness of the natural environment.

5.- Ever since they first appeared, mountaineering associations have been pioneers in this sector in advocating the protection and defence of mountainous areas. It is logical that they should be present in forums discussing and exchanging ideas on territorial planning and development due to the fact that this is the area in which mountaineering activities take place.

6.- The clubs' nature committees have been involved in spreading the word and raising awareness of the natural environment at local and regional level. This has resulted in the transmission of behavioural values and ethics, based on active involvement in environmental problems and participating in sporting activities in a responsible fashion. Such work should be firmly supported by the governing authorities to obtain greater awareness not only amongst these associations but by the rest of society as well.

7.- For more than a century mountaineering clubs and their federations have been carrying out extensive work in publishing books on the world of the hiker, showing views of landscapes and places from a hiking perspective, usually adopting a respectful approach to nature. This task of responsible dissemination of the environment (publications, talks, organising events, etc.) should be complemented and coordinated through publicity campaigns within the framework of the management of protected areas and other editorial sectors, with the aim of achieving information that will succeed in involving the users and readers in the conservation and responsible use of natural areas.

8.- Amongst the huge variety of professionals working in the mountains, refuge wardens perform tasks and cooperate with the managers of protected natural areas, and are thus considered to act as references for the environmental awareness activities conducted in these areas.

Participation, volunteer work and environmental education

9.- Participation is a fundamental tool for ensuring that people engaging in mountaineering activities are well-informed, aware and capacitated to take action to protect the environment since:

It is a process by means of which the mountaineering sector carries out positive actions for the natural environment and also becomes actively involved in the participatory bodies and other forums concerning Protected Natural Areas.

It enables the mountaineering sector to become an element that tells its members, along with society in general, about the importance of preserving the natural environment and also galvanises other people into action to adopt this commitment as well.

It contributes towards achieving a better diagnosis of the problems of the area, and ensures a greater number of solutions or tasks that are binding for all involved since they have been reached by consensus.

Knowledge on the part of the mountaineers of the environmental reality of the area where they carry out their activity is an extremely valuable resource for environmental education.

10.- Environmental voluntary work in Spain has a broad base partly due to the mountaineering sector and should therefore be given special attention and support, particularly in Protected Natural Areas.

RECOMMENDATIONS

All parties concerned should work to enhance the environmental education of mountaineers in keeping with the guidelines and trends emanating from recent national and international conferences on the environment that propose advancing towards sustainability by involving all the agents concerned (federations, authorities, local population, etc.).

It is essential to disseminate and promote amongst public administrations and non-profit organisations (NGOs, sports, environmental, cultural, youth associations, etc.) the important work done by mountaineering clubs and federations holding beginners courses in mountaineering and familiarisation techniques with the surroundings as a considerate strategy for bringing the general public into contact with nature.

Mountaineering has traditionally been thought to encourage a set of values and behaviours that are respectful of the environment, which should be maintained and promoted in all areas of the sport (competitions, courses, outings, hikes, ascents, bivouacs, etc.). Environmental authorities and sports federations should work to disseminate codes of good environmental practice, in order to be able to make their messages and attitudes known more effectively amongst the different clubs in the confederation and all those groups that express concern for the mountains.

Formal, regulated training recognised by the Ministry of Education has its maximum expression in Royal Decree 1913/1997, of 19 December, by virtue of which training courses leading to qualifications as sports technicians are configured as specially regulated models of education. Mountaineering has – for the past decade – formed part of the formal education sector, with training including courses on the environment at curricular level, in particular the modules on environmental awareness and interpretation. Support should be provided from the sports colleges and public administrations for these qualifications and channels of cooperation set up between those responsible for managing the public use of Protected Natural Areas and mountaineering experts, in order to contribute towards acquiring better training in this subject, which will help in the transmission of environmental values and attitudes to people working as guides.

50,000 kilometres of the network of long and short trails in Spain are now marked in accordance with the regulations and technical endorsement procedure. This system of rambler's walks forms a great tool for bringing society into closer contact with nature in a safe and respectful manner. It is interesting to see that the institutions responsible for managing Protected Natural Areas provide support and advice for endowing these trails with enhanced environmental content, particularly along short, local paths that can be used to convey knowledge and attitudes concerning the environmental in a simple way. At the same time, greater coordination should be sought between the federations and environmental authorities with respect to the promotion and signposting of new trails.

The emergence of new technologies in society opens up another very attractive sphere of activity in the field of environmental education, above all using computer tools and information networks. This should provide the clubs and federations with a means of communicating and informing their members and also the rest of society as a whole in a responsible and sustainable fashion.

Closer contact with nature should be promoted through the federations and public organisations using non-motorised forms of sporting activities – in compliance with current legislation – which offer a sustainable method of discovering mountains, contributing through such good environmental practice to the reduction of air pollution and the conservation of mountain regions in the face of the threats posed by climate change.

Federations and public administrations should promote and support documentation centres linked to mountain regions. These will aim to update and disseminate the use of services already existing in the field of environmental education, and also act as a tool to provide advice to teaching staff and institutions. Public administrations can be involved in helping to create and maintain these documentation centres through framework cooperation agreements.

An increase should be encouraged in the number of continuous training programmes put together by federations for teaching staff (instructors, technicians, guides, wardens, coaches, etc.) concerning environmental awareness and academic subjects, through agreements between federations and the competent public authorities for the environment, education and sports. In the same regard, federations will continue to be encouraged to work together with higher education and research centres, facilitating access to PNAs, along with their study and environmental assessment, with special emphasis on their social function.

The programmes and plans for Public Use and Environmental Education in PNAs should aim to boost the active participation of the federations and clubs in all matters relating to the dissemination of regulations governing public use, fostering the efficient development of sporting activities in natural environments, and the training of managers and associates in environmental issues.

PNA reception facilities, along with mountain refuges, should be integrated in education, dissemination and interpretation programmes, and act as a tool for publicising messages that foster attitudes showing greater respect for the environment, encouraging the active participation of visitors in general, and mountaineers in particular.

In this context, it is proposed that specific meetings should be arranged on a periodic basis between the managers of natural areas and mountaineering federations (on the lines of a socio-environmental communication platform) to mutually promote programmes and activities to raise environmental awareness, fostering attitudes and values in these areas that are respectful of nature and compatible with the practice of mountain sports.

