

Nature-based tourism

Nature-based tourism is an important element of an ecologically sustainable development of the alpine region. This form of tourism aims to create a conscientious awareness among visitors of natural and cultural landscapes with a close proximity to nature, and develops out of regional requirements and local participation.

Nature-based tourism promotes a socially and environmentally sustainable form of travel. It should be possible for visitors to experience nature and culture with all their senses. Nature-based tourism encompasses the entire spectrum of the tourism service chain, from ecological, high quality accommodation and catering to tourism offers to environmentally and culturally sustainable transport planning to professional information and marketing.

The demand for nature-based tourism in the alpine countries is considerable and global as well as tourism trends show continued growth. However nature-based tourism, if carried out in an environmentally and culturally unsound way, implicates new threats and risks for sensitive natural areas in the Alps. Alpine wide quality standards propose new recommendations for nature-based tourism in the alpine space to protect biodiversity, habitats and landscape quality.

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NATURE-BASED TOURISM Checklist



INSTITUT FÜR
LANDSCHAFT UND FREIRAUM



HSR

HOCHSCHULE FÜR TECHNIK
RAPPERSWIL

FHO Fachhochschule Ostschweiz

Quality standards

In collaboration with experts from alpine countries, the HSR University of Applied Sciences Rapperswil developed alpine-wide quality standards for nature-based tourism and verified them by means of case studies. As a result, a commented checklist is available. It consists of ten standards with each one encompassing five criteria underlaid with qualitative and quantitative indicators.

The project results as well as the entire checklist can be read in the following book:

Dominik Siegrist, Susanne Gessner, Lea Ketterer Bonnelame. Naturnaher Tourismus. Qualitätsstandards für sanftes Reisen in den Alpen (2015), Bristol Schriftenreihe Band 44. 309 Seiten, 137 Abbildungen, 21 Tabellen, kartoniert, EUR 36.– / CHF 36.–. ISBN 978-3-258-07922-6. Bern, Haupt Verlag.

Checklist short version

In case a destination is not willing to complete the entire checklist with fifty criteria, there is the option of filling in a short version which evaluates the six central issues for a nature-based tourism development.

Questions for the destination	Fulfilled	Partially fulfilled	Unfulfilled
<p>Strategy and positioning Nature-based tourism, the protection of nature and landscape as well as the enhancement of biodiversity are of high importance in the tourism strategy of our region. All of it build a core element of the positioning of our region.</p>	○	○	○
<p>Development of offers Our region pursues the development of a variety attractive and marketable products, so that nature-based attractions and activities constitute a considerable and well-visible component of our overall attractions. Local participation is crucial for us.</p>	○	○	○
<p>Transport planning Sustainable transport planning is a core component of our strategy. The promotion of arrivals and departures with public transport and non-motorized traffic plays an important role in our region.</p>	○	○	○
<p>Protection of nature and landscape Our region supports the establishment and maintenance of landscape and nature protected areas in sensitive natural spaces and favors soft, and, as required hard measures of visitor guidance. To this end we search for collaborations with nature protection associations.</p>	○	○	○
<p>Communication and marketing Nature and landscape values build the core component of our region's marketing strategy and we actively promote these values.</p>	○	○	○
<p>Added value The creation of a link between added value and nature protection, landscape development and enhancement of biodiversity is a priority for our region.</p>	○	○	○