

3. Development of Eco-tourism in Bulgarian parks

Long-term aim

- Win over the local population for the objectives of the parkObjectives
- Increase number of eco-tourists in parks
- Increase the incomes of local people
- Create and implement a system for managing visitors
- Popularisation and awareness-raising in terms of the natural heritage within the parks in Bulgaria

Activities

1. Improving and renovating of existing buildings for services to visitors

- Existing chalets
- Other buildings not owned by the Bulgarian tourist union but which still provide some services to tourists
- Full inventory of existing infrastructure and chalets in Bulgaria
- Introducing standards
- Categorisation of chalets according to the extent to which they need to be renovated
- Assessment and project preparation
- Investment activities for chalets and other buildings to turn them into eco-chalets, ie improving fuel efficiency, drinking and waste water management; household and other waste management; and the image and living conditions in the buildings.
- Chalets should be self-financing. Additional funds should be available from park administration for improving infrastructure, with the help of local and national tourist businesses. Hope to establish a structure or body uniting the efforts of the park directorates, local businesses, local people and all those interested in tourist service provision. (this bullet point is added to emphasise the sustainability of the project)

2. Building of interpretative infrastructure (restoration and construction)

- tourist routes
- recreation centres, points, entrances to the parks
- camps sites
- specialised tracks
- visitor centres (meaning construction)

3. Development of interpretative programmes

- market surveys
- working on the ground
- training

- creating aids for all types of interpretation
- project preparation and implementation of the interpretative structures
- advertising and promotion (leaflets, maps, boards etc)

4. Development and implementation of monitoring systems

- develop and implement a methodology to identify the limits of acceptable impacts of tourists (limits of acceptable change, LAC):
 - criteria
 - indicators
 - legitimise methods (a bureaucratic procedure)
- develop a programme for monitoring tourism
- staff training
- programme for assessing economic growth and public support

5. Expected results

- increased number of tourists (in target group)
- raised income of local people
- raised income of park institutions
- operational monitoring system of the impacts of tourists in place
- increase public support
- improve social and economic conditions in the area
- preserved biodiversity in parks