

Submitted Abstract

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Abstract

Initiatives towards sustainable development are evolving in the tourism sector all over the Alpine Space. Given the grand challenges of global change, calls for deep socio-economic transformations in the human-environmental relationships increase. What is the contribution of non-profit-associations as place-based actors within this process?

Non-profit-associations such as the Alpine Club Sections are urging to implement sustainability strategies with respect to their built trekking infrastructure - operated high mountain huts. In a transdisciplinary project, the scientific partners in co-creation with the practitioners have developed an indicator-based sustainability monitoring system. The strategy has been empirically applied to five operated huts in Austria and Germany. With a mixed-methods approach rooted in social-science methodology, the sustainability of the huts was evaluated within a broadened approach of practices, going beyond existing sectoral views.

Presenting empirical evidence from the German and Austrian alpine region, we outline the significance of the huts within regional sustainable transformation and the global-local entanglements of materiality and meaning. Place-based practices such as economic activities, material flows and mobility connected to the hut's operation, the outdoor recreation and sportive activities are focused within an integrated approach. The development of a comprehensive monitoring-system is aimed to identify the potential for sustainable operation of alpine huts and furthermore reveal the responsibility and role of DAV as place-based actor within sustainable (regional) transitions.

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