

Submitted Abstract

ID IMC22-FSAbstr- 637

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Country	France
Region	Western Europe
Title	The Linkages Between Scientific Research And Socioeconomic Activities In Mountain Regions: Experience From The Research Project Reflab To Tourism In The Ecrins Massif (French Alps).
Keywords	Resource, Scientific Knowledge, French Alps, Tourism Mobility, Societal And Environmental Changes
Type	List Of Focus Session
Focus Session ID	41

Abstract

The mountain as a scientific object (Joutard, 1986), a social construct and a place to live, is an open-air laboratory for scientific research (Debarbieux, 2001; Debarbieux, Fourny, 2004). It serves as a field of study for research, but at the same time it is also a place conducive to mobility such as leisure and tourism. However, this space faces current societal and environmental changes. On the one side, this reinforces scientific interest, and at the same it requires to rethink the socioeconomic activities that take place (Bourdeau, 2006). The proposed human geographical approach attempts to show the links that exist between tourism mobility and scientific research. Thus, it can explain how these linkages can contribute to improve the relations between society and ecosystems in mountain areas.

Scientific research and associated knowledge can become important resources for a territory. We define resources as unique assets because they are 1. generic and not linked to the territory and 2. specific, because they are embedded in a specific context (Colletis & Pecqueur, 2005). Scientific knowledge illustrates this point. It can be localised and therefore specific to a given place and time. It can also be transferable, highlighting its generic side. They have an intellectual, economic and heritage interest.

Mountain areas need to adapt their activities rapidly in the face of the fast and unprecedented societal and climatic changes (Dentant & al., 2021). Scientific resources can help to facilitate this adaptation process. Thus, local societies have great interest to operationalise this resources and develop other socioeconomic activities. They contribute to the development and attractiveness of the territory and facilitate the awareness of large scale global changes (in particular climatic).

Our study leans on the research project RefLab in the National Park Ecrins in the French Alps. This project considers mountain huts as potential laboratories for various research (social sciences, ecology, climatology...). We show how RefLab contribute to local and to generic knowledge and associated socioeconomics activities such as the Itinerancy in Sentinel Huts. And so, our research shows how the interactions between research and tourism can lead to a better comprehension of social and ecological changes in mountain areas.