



Cultural Heritage Tourism Around Legally Protected Areas on The Example of Stołowe Mountains National Park (Poland)

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Abstract

The legally protected areas attract tourists interested particularly in their natural values. In their area, tourism is conflict-prone, because it is necessary to reconcile the interest of nature conservation and the cognitive needs of visitors. The number of tourists visiting the Stołowe Mountains National Park exceeded 1.2 million in 2020 and it is still growing. The highest intensity of tourist traffic was recorded, as in previous years, at two main tourist attractions - Szczeliniec Wielki (the highest peak, 922 m a.s.l.) and in the rock labyrinth - Błędne Skały. Overtourism occurs seasonally in their area. As a result of the conducted field inventory, over 100 cultural heritage objects were identified in the area of the national park. Their promotion may contribute to the deglomeration of tourist traffic. The aim of the conducted research was to identify whether tourists are interested in visiting cultural heritage sites and to obtain an assessment of the proposed educational paths based on rich and diverse heritage objects. 815 responses obtained during the implementation of surveys using a direct interview questionnaire were analysed. Tourists showed a varied interest in cultural objects, which made it possible to segment tourists. Thematic cultural trails, marked out in the form of educational paths both in the area of the park and in the neighboring communes, may play a key role. Their setting would implement the provisions contained in planning documents in the field of tourism and would be in line with the 30th anniversary of the national park in 2023.

Keywords: cultural tourism, cultural values, legally protected areas, over tourism, tourist traffic deglomeration