

THE CENTRAL BALKAN NATIONAL PARK

...and the People





A huge territory with thick forests, vast green pastures, alpine rocks and countless creeks and rivers, full with timber, herbs and animals, right in the middle of Bulgaria. This is what The Central Balkan National Park is about...And of course all these features make a significant impact to those who live in and around the park.



The people are connected to The Central Balkan by very different ways and meanings:



- Park employees
- Inhabitants of the park
- Seasonal workers
- Tourists, hikers, alpinists



Park administration, Park rangers, Mountain Rescuers, Scientists

- The park administration includes the people who maintain the park on legal and management level. They are subordinates of The Ministry of Environment and Water of Bulgaria.
- The Park Rangers are the people who represent the law in the park. Something like a mountain police. There is no forgiveness for those who break the park rules. The Park Rangers constantly patrol the tourist and vehicles paths and the hot spots of the park. They also keep an eye on the condition of the nature in the park.



Mountain Rescuers and Scientists



- The Mountain Rescuers are the people who help and provide safety to the people in trouble while in the mountain.



- Scientists are the people who use their special knowledge of ecology, biology, engineering, etc. to do researches and help to improve and fix the conditions inside the park.

The Inhabitants – the people who live in and by The Park



Stock-breeding is allowed in The Central Balkan National Park but only under special and strict regulation. There are thousands and thousands of sheeps, goats, cattles and horses. The people who breed them are the only ones who live in the park, although during the winter they move the herds down the mountain to the nearby villages.



The Seasonal Workers



Woodcutters



They cull the forest and provide timber for production and heating. Most of the timber is cut down outside the park boundaries but it may be done inside the park if necessary under very strict control and mandatory forestation after that.



Herbs and berry pickers



A lot of people from the surrounding villages make a humble profit by harvesting blueberries, dog rose hips, mushrooms and all kind of herbs. A special permission from the park directorate is required for this activity.



The chalet keepers



To be a chalet keeper is a very hard job both physical and mentally. These people, alone or with their families, run the huts and chalets from A to Z, providing shelter, heat, food and everything a tourist might need. Often they carry out their duties in very hard conditions, lack of utilities and isolation. Their purpose is one – to welcome and host the tourists in the heart of the mountain.

Tourists, hikers, alpinists



About 100 000 tourists visit The Central Balkan National Park. Some of them just rest at the bivouacs and meadows, some of them hike between the 23 chalets and shelters and go to the mountain tops. The most extreme are the alpinists who climb the alpine rocks with ropes and special equipment.



The Ecological Problems



The expanding tourism brings a lot of people with very low ecological culture. Rubbish of any kind in the mountain is disgusting, repulsive and very sad view.

The Ecological Problems



The illegal use of off-road motor machines like motorbikes and ATV's causes damages to the ecosystems in The Park.

The Ecological Problems



- Poaching – Do not occur very often nowadays but still exists.



- The expanding high pastures stock-breeding increase the usage of off-road vehicles, conflicts with the wild animals and with the tourists.



Fires caused by people's neglect

