

# **PROTECTIA MEDIULUI, O PROBLEMA MAJORA A LUMII CONTEMPORANE. ASPECTE PRIVIND POSIBILITATILE DE DEZVOLTARE ALE TURISMULUI ECOLOGIC IN REGIUNEA FAGARAS**

## **ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION, AN IMPORTANT PROBLEM OF CONTEMPORARY WORLD ASPECTS REGARDING THE POSSIBILITIES OF ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN FĂGĂRAȘ REGION**

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### **REZUMAT**

*Cercetările științifice internaționale, în ultimii treizeci de ani, au demonstrat deteriorarea alarmantă a mediului inconjurator de către om. Această lucrare analizează provocarea cu care se confruntă România și anume dezvoltarea sectorului său turistic, mai ales a ecoturismului în regiunile de munte, cum ar fi regiunea Făgăraș. De fapt, ecoturismul este văzută ca un factor de regenerare a economiei și, în același timp, ca un element pentru conservarea mediului. Lucrarea de față realizează o evaluare a stadiului actual de dezvoltare a turismului în România, precum și o imagine de ansamblu asupra factorilor favorizanti și defavorabili care trebuie luați în considerare în strategia de marketing turistic.*

### **ABSTRACT**

*An international scientific research in last thirty years proved a constant alarming aspect in environment's deterioration by human being. This paper examines the challenge faced by Romania to develop its tourism sector, especially ecotourism in mountain regions - Făgăraș Region. In fact, ecotourism is seen as a regenerative factor of economy and, at the same time, as an element for preserving the environment. This paper purposes an evaluation of the actual state of tourism development in Romania as well as an overview on the favouring and disfavouring factors that must be considered by tourism marketing strategy.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Fagaras Country is located in central Romania, including in its heart the vast lowland area of Fagaras and its gravity zones in ethno historical terms. Fagaras land is bordered to the north of the localities Hoghiz-Ungra-Ticuș Cincu-Bruuiu, then west to Olt Valley, which is headed from Avrig to the south to Turnu Rosu, south of the northern slope of the Fagaras mountains and east of the Barsei Valley and Sebes, the top mountains Persani and Bogatei-Hoghiz Valley.

Because depression is drained by the Olt flow, Fagaras Country is known as the Country of Olt. Both names of the old hearth of Romanian history kept the term "country", a term which means, with early principalities of the beginning of the second millennium, the forms of Romanian social-economic and politico-military inside and outside the Carpathian arch.

In morph structural and morph metric terms, the landscape is differentiated into three categories of units: mountains, valley (lowland) and hills. Mountainous terrain occupies about 35% of the total Fagaras Country and the depression and hills about 65%. The mountain juxtaposition Fagaras lowland, creates high contrast level (2544m Moldoveanu Peak and 400 m Olt Meadow), pointing out this mountain, which is leading to spectacular scenery, which is why the French geographer Emmanoil The Martonne named it "Alps of Transylvania".

Fagaras Mountains are the highest in the country and are part of the Southern Carpathians. They show a high altitude landscape particularly along the main ridge which covers more than 70 km, between the Olt valley and the Bran corridor with a jagged alpine impressive profile. Although they are composed of crystalline schist that shape heavy glacial erosion of the Pleistocene glacial valleys carved circus grand chain which are held between the Suru Peak -2282 m and 2303 m Berivoiul Mare. As well on the northern slopes and on the southern, their approach formed embattled knolls, popular called "custuri" (of Caltunului, of Caprei, etc.) and other formations in the form of towers, jags, glens (Strunga Dracului) fields of stones, horseshoes, niches, etc.

Many valleys come down on the northern slope creating waterfalls (Balea), sunken courses (glacial valley of Balea). Slopes to the north, northeast, northwest, contain numerous nooks in which the winter snow lasts until late in the spring where you can ski (Sambetei valley, Balei valley).

At high altitude, in the glacier circus, you can frequently meet large glacial lakes, of a unique picturesque (the biggest being Balea si Capra - one side and the other of Peak Vanatoarea lui Buteanu at 2506 m altitude; Podragul Mare, under Peak Arpasul of 2475 m altitude; Avrig under Peak Ciortea, of 2426m).

Fagaras Lowland presents a relief in steps. Immediately below the mountain, develops a border of high hills (600-700 m), covered with meadows and groves of rare woods, then is one step lower, consisting of plain, very large meadow of the Olt.

Plateau Hârtibaciu is widely corrugated, having an average altitude of 500m. The wide valleys with terraces, are agricultural grown and include vineyards, while the peaks are covered with forests of Holm-oak and beech.

The whole territory is framed in the higher water catchment's area of Olt River which crosses it all from east to west. We can say that in genetically terms Fagaras Country is the work of this river.

The water painting surface is added to the glacial lakes of the ridge: Urlea, Podragu, Podragel, Capra, Balea, Avrig, Doamnei (water supply sources of rivers and major tourist attractions), with artificial lakes: Vistea, Voila, Mandra, and with trout hatchery: Dejani, Sambata de Sus.

Over the mountain rivers and barrage lakes you can practice sports or take advantage of the recreational fishing lakes.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Fagaras vegetation is characteristic of the land of hills and mountain areas. It covers about ½ (a half) of the species growing in Romania, represented by the Euro-Asian elements, central Europe, southern Mediterranean and Black Sea.

Forests are the greatest biomass of stability in the region and give a special note of the landscape, much appreciated by tourists. Forest area is represented by forests of oak, beech, Holm-oak and spruce.

The forests of oak (*Quercus robur*), limited today were previously more extensive, occupying the lowland to the meadow, slopes and sunny versants of the plateau Hârtibaciu at altitudes varying between 500-700 m. There still are on Bogatei valley and in

right bank of the Olt. Along with oak wood and other plants are present as: maple (*Acer campestre*), hazel (*Corylus avellana*), dog-rose (*Rosa canina*), hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), *Ligustrum vulgare* (*Ligustrum vulgarae*), corn (*Cornus mas*), and others. etc.

The inferior sector of pure or mixed beech forests has a wide amplitude, can be found at 500-600 m on the north slopes to 1000 m on sunny slopes. In the forests of beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) there are also other tree species: hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*), ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), elm (*Ulmus nauseating*) and various species of shrubs and herbs. The inferior sector of beech is perhaps the most extensive in terms of pure beech forests in Perșani mountings, and mixed with spruce or in places with trees in the Fagaras Mountains.

The forests of oak (*Quercus petraea*) is localized on the sunny slopes of Perșani mountains and Hârțibaciu hills.

The inferior sector of spruce (*Picea abies*) deals generally beech forests floors above the Alpine area. The Floor above inferior spruce alpine stretching (1800-2000m), consisting of bushes of rose bay, mountain pine, juniper, bilberry, cranberry and meadows. On highest ridges, where is soil and fixing place, alpine meadows are spread over 2000 m altitude.

In Olt meadow we meet even zone less vegetation composed of soft grass meadows, black alder leas (*Alnus glutinosa*) and willow (*Salix Alba*, *S. caprea*, *S. fragilis*).

The fauna is very varied, due to variety of biotopes encountered from the Olt valley and up the mountain ridges.

The waters in this area are populated with various species of fish, especially trout (*Salmo trutta fario*), grayling (*Thymallus thymallus*) barbell (*Barbus Barbus*), and in ecosystems with excess moisture, as in forests, abound species of amphibians, reptiles, birds sedentary or migratory.

Most often you can see the presence of common mice and mouse “with shoes on”, the storks, the bird, ducks, blackbirds, woodpecker, eagle, grouse, raven, etc.

The most representative remains the mammals fauna, known by valuable trophies: Chamois (*Rupicapra Rupicapra*), Deer (*Cervus elaphus*), Bear (*Ursus arctos*), Rafter (*Capreolus capreolus*), Wild boar (*Sus scrofa*), Lynx (*Linx Linx* ) which is a valuable ornament to the landscape.

Cultural values of the area are given by many cultural buildings: archaeological remains, historical monuments and religious architecture. The most impressive monument is the region of Fagaras fortress built of wood in 1310 by Prince of Transylvania, Ladislaus Kan. Here reigned Mailat Stefan (1528-1541), Baltazar Bathori, Mihai Viteazu (1599-1600), Stefann Csaki (1601-1613), Gabriel Bethlen (1613-1629), Gheorghe Rakoczi I (1630-1648), Mihail Apafi ( 1661-1690), etc.

The fortress becomes a veritable real fortress from the XV - XVII centuries restorations and enhancement. The interior building, the castle were refurbished and modernized in the Renaissance style (1650). The inside of the walls are four bastions Vauban type (XVII century - XVIII).

Between 1948 and 1960, the castle was used as a prison for political prisoners, and after 1965 it was renovated and arranged for History and Ethnography Museum of Fagaras Country.

Guarding the fortress on the left lane of Fagaras Fortress is the statue of Lady Stanca, sculptor Spiridon Georgescu, which was unveiled in 1938 following the initiative of Nicolae Iorga.

Visitors can enjoy the town of Fagaras and other important monuments and cultural buildings. Badea Cârțan statue, located next to the House of Culture, sculptor Vasile Blendea (1971) in memory of the famous Cârțișoara Fagaras shepherd who traveled by walk to Rome to see Trajan's Column and other evidence about the Latin origin of the Romanian people.

St. Nicholas Church, founded by Constantin Brâncoveanu, which was built (1697 - 1698) model of the palace chapel Brancovenesc Mogosoia, and is declared a monument of architecture.

The Reformed Church rebuilt between 1712 and 1715, which keeps the two columns at the entrance from the old edifice, a pulpit with a famous decoration carved in stone and an organ.

The evangelical church built in the years 1842 - 1843 in neoclassical style. Here are two tombstones that bring evidence about the existence in Fagaras in the first half of the last century of the wheelwrights and stonemasons, the third being placed in memory of a pharmacist. In this edifice, was found a very valuable Bible printed in german (1544) held until today.

The memorial house Gheorghe Lazar (1779-1823) located in the city Avrig raised in a building (the nineteenth century) on the place where was the parental home of the the scholar. In the two rooms are exposed objects and documents that illustrate the life and work of Gheorghe Lazar, founder of education in romanian language in Tara Romaneasca district.

Among the most important historic sites that can be visited in the vicinity of Fagaras, inferior lowland zone and slopes area, include:

- The ruins of feudal fortress XIII century at the village Breaza, attributed by local people to Negru Voda and remains of the Dacian fortress, dated from the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC;
- Daco-Roman necropolis dated 2<sup>nd</sup> century consisting of approx. 50 barrows with cremation graves discovered at the border Calbor village;
- Museum of Cârțișoara setting out books from the Badea Cârțan library's and a beautiful collection of icons on glass, ceramics;
- Fortified Evangelical Saxon church building (XIV-XV) of Cincșor built on fachwerk system for the characteristic houses of the Gothic era;
- Roman Church of the town Cincu, architectural monument dated from the last decades of the century XIII, in which it is stored a collection of carpets from Minor Asia (XVII-XVIII century);
- Cuciulata village where the revolutionary Aron Pumnul was born in 1848, later he became the teacher of Mihai Eminescu;
- Roman Entrenchment of Feldioara dated century II-III;
- Basilica of Hălmeag dated soon after the year 1260, which retains Roman Catholic features of Alba Iulia Cathedral;
- Fortified Church with Romanesque portal and collection of religious books (XVII-XVIII century) from Săcădat;
- Orthodox Church of Săsciori, built of stone and brick, with over 300 years old;
- Castle on Sambata de Jos, built in baroque style in 1770 by Iosif Brukenthal;
- The Lipizzaner stud in the Sambata de Jos, the most important nursery of Lipizzaner horses in Europe;
- Castle on Sambata de Sus, built between 1653 and 1678 by Constantin Brâncoveanu;
- Orthodox Monastery of Sambata de Sus built in 1696 by Constantin Brâncoveanu with craftsmen brought from Tara Romaneasca district;
- The tower and the walls of Turnu Rosu fortress built in Roman style in 1411 and The Orthodox church from 1653, built by Matei Basarab, where is kept a copy of the New Testament printed in 1648 in Balgrad (Alba Iulia);
- The Orthodox Church Voivodeni, the oldest monument of its kind in Tara Oltului district, is built in Gothic style and store pictures from the years 1772-1782.

### **Practicable environmental forms of tourism**

Applying ecotourism as a model of tourism development, especially in the analysis and its principles have a dual target: first full exploitation of natural resources and cultural

exception, with improved quality of life in local communities, and secondly satisfy the motivations and needs of tourists in line with environmental conservation for future generations.

Eco-tourism development in protected areas mainly concern four fields:

- Economic recovery by increasing resources, particularly the least known, to reduce pressure on the most heavily exploited;
- Environment by ensuring the rational use of all resources, reduce and eliminate waste, recycling them, ensure the conservation and environmental protection, decreased removal process agricultural and forest land from agricultural and forestry;
- Social by increasing the number of jobs, maintaining traditional trades, attracting people practicing different forms of tourism;
- Culture by exploiting elements of civilization, art and different cultures, which expresses a particular cultural identity and develop a spirit of tolerance. Ecological forms of tourism that can be practiced are: leisure, hiking mountain, winter sports tourism, rural tourism, adventure tourism, equestrian tourism, scientific tourism, meetings and congress tourism.
- Leisure exploit the natural qualities, so interested people can walk to hiking trails of unprecedented beauty, observe rich flora with many rare or endemic species, to enjoy the sight of glacial lakes and to observe special fauna elements.
- Hiking Mountain is one of the most important forms of tourism which may take place in the region. Mountain Hiking will take place especially in the high (primary or secondary ridge) or access routes to it. Currently there are several tourist routes heavily marked.
- Winter sports tourism is one of the main forms of tourism that may take place in heavily during winter period.
- Rural tourism can take a great extent in future years. Fagaras Country meets special conditions to carry this form of tourism. Unfortunately so far in the rural tourism circuit, entered only a few villages in the area.
- Adventure-tourism is less developed in this area and is manifested in particular by climbing, mountain-biking, cycling but can practice other sports such as paragliding, etc.
- Equestrian-tourism – in Sambata de Jos village can be practiced this type of tourism. Here are the Lipizzaner horses, the most important nursery of Lipizzaner horses in Europe.
- Scientific tourism is a form of tourism with great potential for development due, in particular, to the existing special biodiversity of Fagaras.
- Meetings and congress tourism is a form of travel less done due to lack of initiative and specific facilities for it.



**Figure 1 Adventure tourism**

## CONCLUSIONS

Ecotourism development in Fagaras Country can be done by promoting eco-tourism concept and development to support nature conservation and local communities.

To achieve this goal it must be taken of the following strategic objectives:

1. Increasing the capacity of protected area managers and / or organizations engaged in nature conservation projects, to harness natural capital through ecotourism and traditions respecting nature;
2. Supporting companies engaged in tourism in developing ecotourism products and programs with the basic natural capital and traditions respecting nature;
3. Support partnerships between companies engaged in tourism and protected area managers and / or organizations engaged in nature conservation projects in developing and running programs ecotourism;
4. Raising awareness and application of the concept of ecotourism among partners involved in developing and promoting ecotourism products.

Local authorities will have to support initiatives related to sustainable exploitation of local natural and cultural resources through direct involvement and participation of as many community members. Initiatives may cover one or more areas:

- Creating thematic paths visiting (nature trails) and incorporate and promote them in a ecotourism product frame specific to the area (promoted by at least one travel agency);
- Development of specific elements for interpretation and visitation centers in areas with protected areas or in close proximity to their inclusion and promote them in a ecotourism product frame specific to the area (promoted by at least one travel agency);
- Development and promotion of ecotourism products and programs by travel agents in partnership with the protected areas administrations and NGOs of conservation programs;
- Building and promoting observatories of wild animals and incorporate and promote them in a ecotourism product frame specific to the area (promoted by at least one travel agency);
- Develop and implement training programs for the practical application of the concept of ecotourism, with a practical purpose in existence and marketing of products / ecotourism programs.

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