

Tourism activities in areas at natural risks: danger and attraction

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Although mountains are prone to multiple risks of natural hazards including earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, snow avalanches, debris flows, landslides, and others, these areas attract the largest number of visitors. Many popular tourist resorts are located in mountains. It is very important task to manage visitor flows in such areas to create opportunities for tourism and recreational activities, on the one hand, and reduce dangerous impacts of natural hazards on tourists to the possible lowest level, on the other hand. Long traditions of using areas at natural risk for tourism and recreational purposes have such countries as Japan, China, Italy, and Russia. These countries have, for example, very useful and interesting experiences in the development of recreation and tourism in areas of active volcanism (Aso and Usu volcanoes in Japan, Etna in Italy, Yangmingshan National Park in Taiwan, and Volcanoes of Kamchatka in Russia). Despite the real danger coming from volcanoes, they are among of the most attractive natural sites. It confirmed interviews that we conducted at university centers of Russia and Japan within the framework of a joint project “Comparison of natural landscapes appreciation between Russia and Japan” ; all respondents evaluated volcanic landscapes as very attractive, as compared to other types of natural landscapes. The last eruption of the volcano Kusatsu-Shirane in Gunma Prefecture (Japan) in January 2018 caused one victim and 11 injuries in ski resort. It is a popular outdoor recreation area which offers hiking in the spring, summer, and autumn and skiing in the winter. The paper discusses how to manage tourism development in areas at natural risk.

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