FIRST VERSION

GUIDELINES

Monitoring Methodology for monitoring the dynamics of tourism environmental, social and economical impact in the Slītere National Park

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1. Introductory questions

The goal for this project is to identify a methodology for monitoring of visitors to the Slītere National Park so as to specify the flow of tourists at the park, as well as the environmental, social and economic effects which they have on the location.

The effects of tourism from the **economic** perspective relate to:

1) Job creation (also for groups which are often excluded from employment in rural regions, such as women and local minorities):
    a. Direct employment (at tourism companies – accommodations, dining facilities, rental of inventory, guide services, etc.);
    b. Indirect employment (stores, banks, different services);
2) Additional income from tourism operations. Enhanced market size for local products;
3) Income for the national park as a tourist destination (entry fees, guide services, concessions, etc.);
4) Income for the local government (the individual income tax);
5) Infrastructural investments (an improved and more accessible natural and anthropogenic environment, protection of major natural resources);
6) Enhancement of training and education possibilities in the area;
7) Enhancement of public awareness on the region through marketing efforts of tourism businesses
8) Return of local traditional architecture through tourist supplier's investment in authentic facilities

The effects of tourism from the **social** perspective relate to:

1) Encouragement of the local community with events related to the entertainment of tourists and local population (different events involving local residents, groups and enthusiasts, e.g., the annual Liv Festival);
2) Promotion of socially active people who live in the territory (if jobs are available, then people choose to live in the location and help in shaping the local community, avoidance or reduction of migration);

3) An effect on seasonal and everyday rhythm of life and social norms;
4) The development of local attitudes vis-à-vis tourists;
5) Promotion and restoration of local traditions through tourists' interest and knowledge transfer from generation to generation;
6) Maintenance of historical and archaeological artefacts and protected sites (initiated and financed by tourism income).

The effects of tourism from the **environmental** perspective relate to:

1) The effects of visitors (tourists, day trippers) on the natural resources that are in the park, both in terms of biological diversity and the non-living components of the environment, including both its various elements and its totality;
2) Support of local residents for environmental protection and education about that subject (support for local restrictions);
3) A rational and gentle use of existing and potential resources.
4) Enhancement of protection of endangered species through tourists' interest and available founds.
5) Tourists' visit have an effects on energy and water consumption, waste and wastewater, greenhouse gas as well as other pollutants, mainly outside the boarder of the park, but also inside the park. Strict regulations need to be in place to ensure sustainable use.

Monitoring, for our purposes, refers to systematic and regular observation of the resources that are involved in the tourism sector, doing so in both qualitative and quantitative terms. This is necessary to ensure the more effective planning and long-term implementation of steps related to tourism, the protection of environmental resources, and the management of the territory.

From the economic and social perspective, **monitoring** refers to systematic and regular observations of tourist numbers and the dynamics therein, both in qualitative and quantitative terms. This is necessary so as to evaluate the socioeconomic effects of tourism on the territory and on its individual service providers. The goal here is to ensure more justified and effective planning of the work of small and medium businesses in the specific territory and region.

The **tourism monitoring guidelines** (TMG) which are found in this document represent **recommendations** on how to identify and evaluate the effects of tourists and what they do in the park, to ensure long-term observation of natural and cultural objects that are related to the park, to evaluate the obtained results, and then to ensure specific activities that are aimed at the sustainable use of the tourism object (territory). The TMG is also an instrument which will make it possible to evaluate the effects of tourism on the socioeconomic environment of the destination.

The **purpose** of the TMG is to promote environmentally friendly and sustainable tourism in the specific territory as a tourist destination and in the overall territory as a whole.

TMG **components** are the resources which are available in the tourism sector – environmental, historical and other objects and territories, particularly focusing on specially protected environmental territories (SPETs), NATURA 2000 territories, visitors to territories or specific objects, and various aspects such as tourism, environmental, economic and social issues.

The following institutions and individuals can ensure the implementation of the TMG and the relevant types of monitoring:

- The Environmental Protection Board;
- Administrators at SPETs;
- Regional environmental boards;
- Local governments;
- Tourism companies;
- Specialists and experts in the natural sciences and tourism;
- Educators and students from educational institutions;
- The local community and non-governmental organisations;
- Managers and owners of objects (who can come from any of the aforementioned groups).

The **benefits** of implementing the TMG include:

- Data which show the directions, dynamics and tendencies of tourism flows at individual natural, cultural, infrastructural and service provision objects, as well as in the territory overall;
- Data which are necessary for people who are planning improvements in the territory and the tourism sector therein;
- Data which help local businesses to plan tourism-related activities in the long term;
- Sustainable and long-term use and preservation of natural and cultural resources.

If the TMG are not implemented, major **losses** may include natural and cultural components that are degraded or negatively affected by tourists, an unattractive landscape, a poor reputation for tourism in the territory, damaged (and, therefore, dangerous) infrastructural elements, as well as companies and services that are inappropriate for the existing situation and circumstances – something which in the long term will reduce tourism numbers and have a subsequent multiplicative effect.

The most important **prerequisites** for the TMG are the following:

- The interest and understanding of all parties involved in the long-term development of tourism, environmental protection, and the territory when it comes to the need for monitoring and the benefits which relate to it;
- At least minimal financing for specific and high-priority types of monitoring;
- Financing for the purchase and installation of an electronic system of registering visitors, if needed;
- Co-operation among all involved parties;
- Systematic preservation and convenient long-term public access to the monitoring data;
- Steps taken on the basis of the monitoring results to identify sensible and logical solutions to problems related to tourism, environmental protection and socioeconomic issues;
- Types of monitoring must be selected in accordance with the existing situation – they must be as easy to implement, understand and interpret as possible, they must be comparatively inexpensive, and they must be focused on as broad a range of members of the community and other interested parties as possible.

These guidelines are not an instrument for calculating the economic investment of the tourism sector in absolute or relative numbers, but implementation of the TMG will make it possible to judge the effects of tourism as a sector of the economy in the specific sector.

2. Types and methods of tourism monitoring

Type of monitoring	Explanation	Advantages/frequency/results	Potential organisers
Methods which help in evaluating the effects of tourists on the natural environment			
Regular visits to the object and visual monitoring	A visual evaluation of the condition of a tourism object (territory) and its surroundings and of changes therein. In this case, it is important to make note of the initial condition of the object, then monitoring changes that are created by people or by the environment. This means a regular visit to the relevant objects *in situ* – at least once or twice a year. That is necessary for each and every natural, cultural or historical object that is not regularly managed and supervised.	**Advantage**: This is comparatively inexpensive, it can be done by anyone, no special equipment is needed, and this provides information about the specific situation. **Shortcoming**: Risk of personal interpretation of the situation. Results depend on personal perception and differ between evaluators. **Frequency**: Depending on the sensitivity of the object, once or twice during the tourist season. **Result**: A properly managed (not least from the perspective of environmental protection) and visually attractive object which has maintained its initial value as much as possible.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9
Digital photo monitoring	This is used for long-term monitoring of an object's details and of "global" changes. This includes monitoring of sandstone cliffs, rare species, or tourism accommodations. Photographic and video materials that have been produced in the past can be used, too. A digital video camera can be used in place of an ordinary camera. Very interesting and valuable information, for instance, can be gleaned from photographs taken at the beginning of the last century, putting together historical and contemporary photographs about a specific location or territory. This will help to see the types of economic activities that are ongoing in the territory, also allowing us to look at the ways in which these activities affect the natural and cultural environment in the park.	**Advantages**: This is comparatively inexpensive, it can be done by anyone, no special equipment is needed, and this provides information about the specific situation. The digital format is easy to store and use. **Shortcoming**: Digital photo monitoring alone does not give a complete picture of the whole situation. An accompanying written report is necessary. **Frequency**: More often at places which are often visited by tourists, less often elsewhere (once every couple of years, once every 10 years, etc.). **Result**: The ability to note changes and to take steps in response to these so as to protect and manage the relevant objects. The data will also be of use in studying the further dynamics of natural and human-caused processes in the future.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9

Establishment of sample areas	An appropriate method for botanical monitoring to determine the level of trampling in an area, changes in the composition of species, monitoring the locations of rare species, etc.	**Advantages**: The results will make it possible to make judgments about the capacity of a specific location or object if at least the approximate number of visitors is known. This also shows various anthropogenic and natural effects and the consequences therein. **Shortcoming**: This is not a process that is widely used, and it mostly requires specialists. **Frequency**: Before and after the tourism season at the most important tourist objects. **Result**: The data will make it possible to plan the management of various objects more effectively.	1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9
Registration of negative effects along tourism routes	On longer active tourism routes (biking, hiking, water tourism) or along a specific part of the seashore, there can be identification and registration of various negative effects such as new places for campfires or garbage dumping, unlawful tenting locations, trees chopped down for firewood, etc. This can be merged with steps taken to control the territory via the first method cited in this table.	**Advantages**: Cheap and possible for any observer. **Shortcoming**: Does not provide a complete picture of the area, only highly visited tourists routes are being evaluated. **Frequency**: Once every tourism season, presumably at the end of the season so as to look at what needs to be restored in terms of infrastructure along the route. Along those routes where there is a great inflow of visitors (e.g., the seashore), this should be done more often. During the peak of the season, the number of visitors can be recorded. **Results**: The data will make it possible to plan the management of the territories and objects therein more effectively.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9
Methods which make it possible to evaluate the effects of tourism on the territory's socioeconomic environment, but also, indirectly, on the natural environment			
Registration of visitors to tourism objects	This usually is possible at those facilities which sell tickets – accommodations, museums, and other, similar objects. During the summer (particularly on Saturdays and Sundays) it would be preferable to take a look at the overall number of people on the seashore at least once per season. This can be combined with seashore monitoring trips, with the inspectors travelling down the entire shoreline of the national park during the course of one day.	**Advantages**: Precise data. Suitable for long-term research. Inexpensive. **Shortcomings**: These data are not always publicly available or precise after they are published. **Frequency**: Throughout the year or tourism season, depending on the opening hours of the relevant facility. **Result**: Knowledge about the specific number of tourists and the dynamics of this process month by month. This helps to plan tourist flows, products and infrastructure.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9

Electronic or mechanical registration of visitor numbers	This would involve hidden electronic or mechanical systems at those places where tickets are not sold. It would refer to the most popular environmental tourism objects, as well as those which are in the periphery when it comes to parts of Latvia which tourists visit most often. This would apply to tourism routes and nature trails.	**Advantages**: The registration is automatic, requires little human resources, is accurate and reliable, and is a long-term investment. **Shortcomings**: This is an expensive method, especially if the equipment is damaged or destroyed by vandals or the weather. **Frequency**: During the entire year, every day and every hour **Result**: There will be information about total visitor numbers and dynamics on a monthly or daily basis. This will help to plan tourism flows and infrastructure and to take various administrative steps in this regard. There will be precise information about visitor numbers in locations about which no statistical information at all was available in the past.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9
Specification of total visitor numbers to a concrete territory	It is necessary to know the approximate number of tourists visiting a destination such as a national park or a nature park so that we can look at the dynamics of these numbers over a longer period of time. This would involve a combined method -- correlation of all known and available statistics from tourism businesses, service providers, electronic equipment, etc.	**Frequency**: Once a year, at the end of and at the beginning of the season **Result**: A long-term view of changes in visitor numbers, as dependent upon different internal and external factors. This will help in planning and redirecting tourist flows. **Shortcoming**: There are objective difficulties related to the ability to receive data from all of the service providers in a specific territory. The larger the territory and the more services that are rendered, the more imprecise the information will be. There also has to be someone who correlates stores and interprets the data.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9
Self-registration of visitors	Each visitor leaves a record of himself, and many leave comments about the site. This involves guest books or special registration books along tourism routes. This is a common practice in Norway, Sweden, the Czech Republic, and elsewhere.	**Advantages**: Cheap and simple, not reliable, depending on the willingness of tourists. **Shortcoming**: Irregular registration, because only those who want to take part will do so. Not all tourism companies have guest books. **Result**: A general sense of visitor flows and numbers, including on a month-by-month basis	2, 4, 5, 8, 9
Questionnaires	Questionnaires with short, precise and understandable questions, the aim being to find answers to timely questions that are a problem. There can be different kinds of questionnaires,	**Advantages and results**: This is a comparatively inexpensive process, cheaper than organised interviews. These questionnaires, however, can help in finding out about tourism destinations -- socioeconomic and environmental	2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9

	on the basis of the goal and the needs -- the survey can focus on local residents in a region, or on the guests and visitors of the relevant territory. A survey of guests makes it possible to determine the level of satisfaction, as well as to find out where the tourist comes from, what he does in life, and what his interests are. This makes it possible to develop more competitive tourism offers in the relevant territory. A survey of residents, businesspeople, local government representatives, NGOs, and officials from other government institutions makes it possible to find out views about economic issues and clients in terms of their types, their demands, etc.	problems, for instance. Then solutions can be found with the help of an adequately broad target audience. If the surveys are conducted in a professional way, with precisely formulated goals, questions and analysis, then the results can be quite precise, indeed. **Frequency**: As needed, but at least once every couple of years **Shortcomings**: Complex questions cannot be presented in a questionnaire, which means that there will be generalised answers without explanations or any in-depth understanding of the question. In those cases when information is unclear, incomplete or imprecise, there is no chance to ask further questions. The process of correlating the data is time-consuming and expensive.	
Interviews	Interviews provide direct contacts between interviewer and interviewee, the aim being to obtain concrete and focused information.	**Advantages**: This is useful when complex and extensive information is needed. This information is far more representative than that which comes from a written questionnaire, and the quality of the content of answers is higher. An interview with one person selected on the basis of very specific criteria can yield as much information as a questionnaire involving lots of respondents. **Shortcomings**: Interviews are more expensive and time consuming than questionnaires. Because of a shortage of time and financing, only limited numbers of people can be interviewed. It is also true that information which comes from interviews can be dependent on the interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee. **Frequency**: As needed, but at least once every five years	2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9
Public monitoring	Voluntary monitoring of a territory's residents, as begun in 2006 in the Northern Vidzeme Biosphere Reserve. The principle here is that each parish has one person who correlates public monitoring data, takes part in the organisation of information events, etc. This creates a sense of belonging in the territory and encourages	**Advantage**: New approach, which gives insights into personal perceptions of the situation. **Shortcoming**: Time-consuming, dependent on the cooperation of communities. **Frequency**: As necessary in relation to public activities and initiatives.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9

	people to defend its interests.		
Aerial photo or video monitoring	Aerial photos and videos can be used to register tourist numbers. This is appropriate when there are large and concentrated groups of people – on the beach during the peak summer season, for instance. Qualitative information is available here – the direction of movement, types of tourists, etc. Video monitoring can be used as a supplement to questionnaires or interviews. An ordinary or Web camera installed at a specific location can also help to keep track of the specific object.	**Advantage**: Photographs offer exhaustive information on visitors and their types – hikers, bikers, dog-walkers, men, women, adults, children, etc. We can tell the size of a group and the direction in which it is moving. **Shortcoming**: This, of course, is possible only in open-air locations such as beaches and central city squares. Analysis of aerial video and photographs is time consuming and very, very expensive, so there must be a justified need. This method can be merged with another.	2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9
Analysis of statistics	There is information about residents, companies, household numbers, etc. This information becomes important from the perspective of time -- it can be used to monitor the trends and dynamics of the data.	**Advantage**: The available information is comparatively inexpensive, and it can be used to analyse trends. **Result**: Analysis of dynamics and trends in data. **Frequency**: Yearly. **Shortcomings**: Statistical data and information about small and local territories is not always available. For instance, there are no data about the GDP created by each sector in a specific local government territory, or about population numbers in such a territory. Danger of using incorrect or biased data. Further data offers the risk of being updated.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9

3. Objects to be monitored

Type of monitoring	Objects/territories where there should be monitoring
Regular visits and visual monitoring of objects: A priority	Any major tourism object and important elements of the infrastructural elements which support tourists and tourism (pathways, viewing towers, relaxation areas, beaches, etc.) are all tourism objects in a specific area. The priority here is the most popular and most often visited tourism objects in a specific territory -- nature trails, etc. In this case, it refers to the Slītere Nature Trail, the Pēterezers Nature Trail, the Snowy Pine Trail, the Ēvaži Shorline Trail, and the Mazirbe beach and its surrounding territory.
Digital photo monitoring: A priority	Any important tourism object, including important infrastructural elements which support tourism and tourists, the surroundings of tourism objects, the landscape and certain elements therein, etc. Priorities are those destinations which are visited most often, e.g., Kolkasrags and the places where the sea can be accessed from small villages.
Establishment of sample areas	Sensitive natural objects or habitats which are important tourism resources or are in the direct proximity of popular tourism destinations. This includes certain trails (the Pēterezers nature trail, the Snowy Pine Trail), zones alongside trails

	and footpaths, as well as rare plants or animals which are near popular destinations or routes. The aforementioned trails and their surroundings are a priority, as are certain sandstone cliffs (Dāvids' castle, the Zārtapi valley cliffs, etc.).
Registration of visitors to tourism routes (can be merged with monitoring of objects, visual monitoring, and photo monitoring)	Certain very popular active tourism routes or objects therein. Examples include the Kolka-Sīkrags or Košrags-Melnsils bike routes, where the number of visitors can be registered on Saturdays, Sundays or certain weekdays, along with an evaluation of the condition of the various objects. At least once a year (on a sunny weekend day during the summer), there should be a registration of the number of people who visit the beach between Uši, Kolka and Sīkrags, which is all part of the national park.
Registration of visitor numbers at tourism destinations: A priority	The priority here is tourism accommodations, food service companies, management leisure and swimming locations, places which lease out inventory, providers of tourism information (visitor centres), museums, various mass events, etc.
Electronic or mechanical registration of visitors: A priority if the tourism offer involves unique or rare natural resources	Only in certain tourism destinations or territories that are important from the perspective of environmental protection and tourism. Priorities include the Pēterzers nature trail, the beach at Mazirbe, Kolkasrags, routes or roads next to nature reserves, as well as other objects, as needed. This can also be used if the necessary technologies are easily accessed and can be hidden so as to avoid their damage or theft.
Surveys, questionnaires, interviews, etc.	At least once every two or three years, it is necessary to survey local businesspeople, local government employees, NGOs and representatives of government institutions and problems related to the planning and implementation of tourism activities in a specific territory. This is best done by a third party – someone who does not live or spend time in the relevant territory.
Analysis of statistical information	Regular analysis related to the tourism turnover in a park and a local government territory over the course of a year, also registering employment in the tourism industry and the number of companies therein.
Aerial photography	Once every 10-15 years during the tourism season. High-definition photographs of beaches and villages. Depending on how expensive this is, it can be merged with other processes such as monitoring of territories or aerial photography for cartography purposes. Comparatively less expensive methods such as aerial photography from a glider can be used.
Self-registration of visitors	Guest books and response books at tourism companies
Public monitoring	Throughout a park, dependent on the activity and initiative of local people

4. Monitoring of visitor numbers at the Slītere National Park

This mostly applies to collecting and correlating information from those tourism destinations at which the visitor is in direct contact with service providers (registration of visitor numbers). This applies to accommodations, dining establishments, tourist guides, managers of leisure and swimming locations, companies which lease inventory, craftspeople, farms, tourism information and visitor centres, different organised events, people involved with tourism in a national park (organisers of educational events, providers of information), etc.

Visitor numbers should be correlated from several perspectives – by month, by week, by day or by year, looking at the total number of visitors, the number of tourists who made use of specific products, the number of objects of inventory that were leased, and the number of people who visited national parks, took tours, attended town festivals, etc.

Monitoring of visitor numbers should be conducted by as many tourism service providers as possible so as to get a full view of tourism flows, directions and volumes. These data will be of use in planning future activities among service providers and regional tourism planners.

The data mentioned in the second paragraph can be correlated in different ways. One relates to the Dundaga Administrative District Tourism Information Centre or to people who are responsible for tourism development. The second option is the Northern Kurzeme Shoreline Association. Data are collected over the course of a year and are digitalised and visualised in various perspectives. They are published on the homepage of the national park or association in co-operation with the administrators of the national park. The association also makes proposals to administrators as to the further development of tourism in the national park, and vice versa.

The data are far more complete if they are supplemented with the results of electronic or mechanical registration of visitor numbers.

The registration of tourist numbers and relevant data is voluntary, but very desirable. This is done each year over the long term to evaluate global trends and their interrelationship.

5. Terminology

Monitoring	In the context of this document, qualitative and quantitative evaluations of the condition of resources related to the tourism sector – something that is necessary for the more effective long term planning and implementation of projects related to tourism, protection of natural resources, and management of the relevant territories.
A sample area	A specific quadrant with specific borders in which there is long term monitoring of changes affecting species, geology, etc., that may be caused by human beings, environmental processes, both factors together, etc.
Effects of tourism	Changes created by tourism in the natural, cultural, social and economic environment. These changes can be both positive and negative.
Environmental carrying capacity	The physical capacity of the environment, meaning the ability of nature and the cultural environment to react to various types of influence without losing value, properties and qualities.

6. Sources

1. http://biodiv.lvgma.gov.lv/fol302307
2. http://biodiv.lvgma.gov.lv/fol302307/fol818778
3. http://www.biosfera.lv/lv/node/293
4. http://www.ldf.lv/pub/?doc_id=28334
5. http://www.liis.lv/gpt/monitor.htm
6. http://www.lva.gov.lv/monitor/monitorings.htm
7. "Visitor Monitoring in Nature Areas," Swedish Environmental Protection Agency, 2007
8. Database of academic terminology – http://termini.lza/lv/akadterm

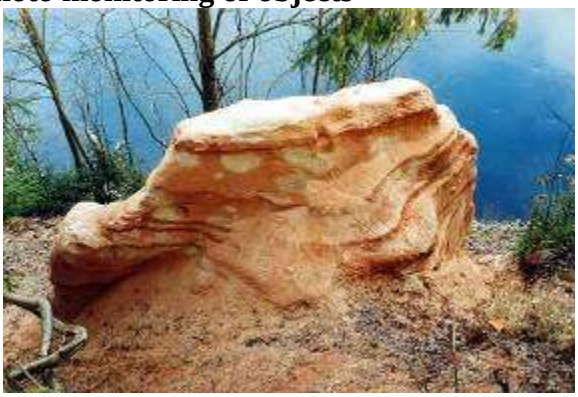
APPENDIX

This appendix offers visual and textual descriptions of the ways in which various monitoring methods are pursued or may be pursued in the Slītere National Park, as well as in other specially protected environmental territories and their environs in Latvia.

Regular and visual monitoring of objects

Image 1. Representatives of the Slītere National Park and Country Traveller monitored the most important tourism resources in the national park several times in 2009 – both environmental and historical objects to make note of their actual condition.

Photo monitoring of objects



In 1997

In 2006

Image 2. Photo monitoring over the course of five to 10 years clearly shows changes caused by people and the environment. This rock is visited quite often at the Salaca Nature Park. Monitoring in 2009 will make note of all of the most important environmental and cultural objects in the Slītere National Park. This will offer an important basis for future monitoring. The problem here is that it is not always possible to find photographs of specific objects that were taken 10 or more years ago.

Sample areas

Image 3. This applies to monitoring of the plant known as *Epipactis atrorubens* along the Snowy pine trail. The sample area is 21 m^2 in size and was established on August 7, 2009, to monitor rare and protected species near this popular hiking trail. The white circles show where the plant grows. Monitoring of sample areas should involve places that are regularly visited by tourists if there are rare plants or animals nearby. The method is worthwhile only if the monitoring can be conducted over a longer period of time – five to 10 years.

Registration of negative effects along tourism routes

Image 4. This method is of practical use, because negative effects such as damage to infrastructure can be identified by hiking the specific trail or route. This should be followed up with specific actions aimed at dealing with these effects. Then the method is effective. This photograph shows a damaged footpath along the Pēterezers nature trail.

Registration of visitors to tourism objects

Image 5. This is done by SIA Kolkasrags, which each year registers the number of cars and people in the Kolkasrags car park. These data are publicly available. Visitors are also counted up at tourism accommodations in the national park.

Electronic registration of visitors

Image 6. Preparing the electronic registration system. The Slītere National Park is the first national park and one of the first territories in Latvia where visitor numbers will be registered electronically.

Self-registration of visitors

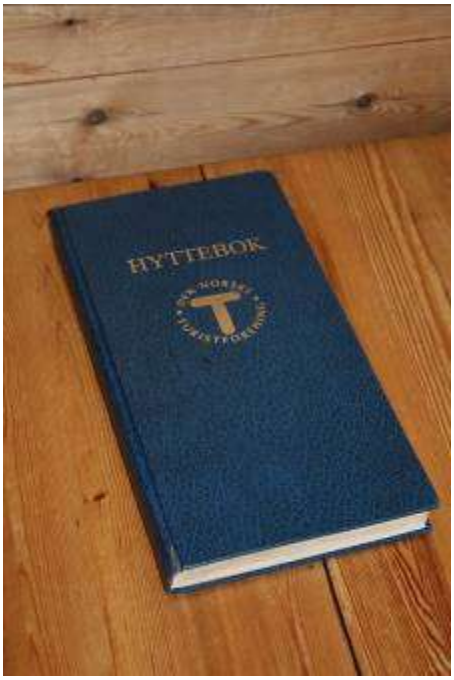


Image 7. A guest book filled in by visitors to the tourist facility of the Norwegian Mountain Hiking Association. Self-registration is not common in Latvia, apart from reference books in tourism accommodations and dining facilities. The problem is that such books might be stolen at outdoor facilities.

Surveys

Image 8. This is a box where tourists can put completed surveys and which was established by Country Traveller at the Dundaga Tourism Information Centre. Similar boxes were also places at the tourism information centres in Talsi and Roja, as well as at Kolkasrags. The surveys are also disseminated to people in the Slītere National Park and its surrounding accommodations,

and they are also available on the Internet. The survey includes 21 questions to learn the views of visitors about the Slītere National Park, the services which are or are not rendered there, etc. The survey is to be conducted over the course of three years so as to monitor trends. This is an enormously important source of information for the further planning of tourism in the Slītere National Park.

Interviews

Image 9. Interviews of visitors on July 10, 2009. These were based on the Slītere National Park questionnaire at Kolkasrags. 41 respondents were interviewed between 10:00 AM and 6:00 PM. Only one person from each family or group was interviewed. This provided qualitative answers to the various questions. More than 90% of those who were approached agreed to the interview.

Image 10. A structured interview with a businessman at the Slītere National Park. These interviews help to learn the views of businesspeople and tourism specialists about the Slītere National Park, the services rendered by it, attitudes toward the natural values of the park, and the future intentions of the respondents. The plan is to compare these views with those of visitors. The interviews are conducted by third parties, which means that local residents can be brought into the process.