



Decentralized cooperation in the Balkans



Macedonia

16th to 28th march 2008

Results &
Assessment

Text : Yves Fouque, Mountain Leader
Date : 15th April 2008



Summary

Objectives (extract from the Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs 2008 Call for Proposals in support of decentralized cooperation)	pages 2-4
Itinerary and programme	pages 5-9
Assessment, analysis and prospects	page 10

Appendices

Appendix 1: Organizing Mountain Leader Training in Macedonia, prospects	pages 12-13
Appendix 2: Guides present on the training course	pages 14-15
Appendix 3: Detailed Programme and Itinerary	pages 16-17
Appendix 4: Provisional itinerary and programme for the guides' visit to France in June	pages 18-19
Appendix 5: Provisional itinerary and programme for the Tetovo visit to France in September/October	pages 20-21
Appendix 6: Key people met in Tetovo	pages 22-23

Objectives

Responsible tourism can be defined as a means towards the mutual understanding of another person's activities in his environment. Developing tourism, in an inhabited area, has to address social and environmental issues. By striving for a balance between economic, socio-cultural and environmental aspects this multi-sectoral cooperation development plan falls within the field of sustainable tourism.

Decentralized cooperation facilitates partnerships between actors sharing the same issues for territorial management. Tourism development based on similar initiatives is a means of showing solidarity.

The current development plan and the CRET's actions in the Balkans - working in synergy

Basically, the CRET's objective in the Balkans, during training assignments, is to promote mountain tourism as a sustainable economic resource profiting all the community.

The Global Balkans Development Plan suggests several steps

Structuring professions linked to nature and mountain tourism and their economic aspects on a local, regional and national level for each of the countries concerned.

Preserving local characteristics in strict accordance with the European platform for mountain qualification diplomas.

Setting up a pilot area in one of the Balkan countries incorporating several plans or actions working in synergy for the development of mountain territory.

Using the results of this experiment to help unite two or several Balkan countries sharing common objectives, such as Bulgaria and Macedonia.

In this way, it is hoped that the mountains which form a geographical divide between South- Eastern European communities will, in the near future, become the best medium for a common unifying economic activity.

The great potential of the TETOVO area has already been drawn to our attention. Local motivation, together with geographical and economic similarities with the Hautes Alpes and many other mountain regions in the Balkans contribute to make it the ideal candidate to form the pilot area. This can be justified by:

- a well-identified territory represented by a medium-sized town with 87 000 inhabitants; an economy still based on agriculture in the surrounding areas; proximity of a small ski resort providing jobs in the winter season.
- the different ongoing or intended development plans stemming from different partnerships but all leading towards a common goal, namely the development of mountain territory.

Institutional Section

Helping the community to develop and manage its territory.

The 2006 reforms in decentralization means cooperating with the town council in Macedonia on management issues and helping local people to become actively involved in the development of their territory. For the development plan to succeed, awareness-raising is essential by taking their aspirations into account and defining the stakes and main objectives.

Sustainable Development Section

Exploiting the potential of mountain tourism as a sustainable economic resource.

For expected impacts to benefit the local community, it is essential to restructure the existing economy. The quality of a participative approach lies in well-preparing and training the locals. Therefore, direct actions should gradually be replaced by support and training. The local community should be directly responsible for promoting conscientious tourism.

For this reason, the present development plan concentrates on training local members of the community at all levels, from local councillors and community administrators to teachers and students, economic players in the tourist and mountain trades, and associations.

Attracting a significant number of tourists to the area depends on providing essential amenities, particularly where water, sanitation and environmental protection issues are concerned. Management of natural resources should be sustainable and locals made aware of conserving energy and rare resources. The present development plan has drawn up a series of awareness - raising actions concerning environmental protection and resource management.

Specific objectives for each action consist of:

- 1 training the local community
- 2 setting-up a policy for developing natural and cultural heritage
- 3 setting-up a policy of environmental awareness



Why a cooperation development plan between Tetovo and the Hautes Alpes General Council?

This development plan arose from a meeting between professional mountain workers in September 2007 resulting from a pre-analysis carried out by the Hautes-Alpes Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI) and the Cret of Briançon, its consular organization, during an assignment in 2005. The September 2007 assignment brought together Macedonian and French mountain people who were greatly interested in setting up a cooperation programme to help develop mountain tourism.

The French assignment brought out many strong geographical and demographical similarities between Macedonia and the Hautes-Alpes. Both are sparsely-populated mountain regions; although neither is on the coast both have big lakes and they both share a mountain range with a neighbouring country. We can also add the wealth of natural and architectural heritage, the existence of local ski resorts (only 30 minutes away from Tetovo) and the production of apples and pears.

The Hautes-Alpes now has 50 years experience and know-how in mountain tourism in the fields of policies, territorial development, heritage management, infrastructures and environmental protection. Therefore a rapprochement of Tetovo with the Hautes Alpes will encourage an exchange of experiences and skills transfer.



Tetovo

Itinerary and programme

Sunday 16 March

Flight from Lyon to Skopje. Met by Goran Tinkoski, the administrative director of the Guide Training Centre at the Macedonian Federation for Mountain Sports. Dinner with G Tinkoski and Kostantin Ciriviri, director of training. They are concerned as the profession of mountain leader in its own right has not yet gained official recognition due to some political instability. Prospects and strategies for training guides and mountain leaders are developed in the appendix.

Monday 17 March

Preparatory meeting at the French Cultural Centre with Johan Uhres, director, Paul Chambry, director of the Tetovo branch of the French Institute (Alliance Francaise), Maude Revoise student at the Political Science Faculty (Sciences Po) Lyons, and Yves Fouque the expert appointed by the Cret, and commissioned as project manager by the Hautes Alpes General Council.

The first part of the assignment, namely training the guides through a series of indoor lectures alternating with snowshoeing sessions, is presented by Yves Fouque. The second part, dealing with meetings with local councillors and representatives from Tetovo was organized by Paul Chambry assisted by Faton Serifi, president of the French institute.

The problem the guides have in learning French is brought up. We would like to thank The French Embassy which has been financing French lessons since February but unfortunately, for personal reasons, attendance is not always good. We all hope that the training session will help revive the participants' determination and motivation.

Great news late afternoon, the development plan submitted to the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs in support of decentralized cooperation has been accepted. This association between the Hautes Alpes General Council and the Town of Tetovo gives an added boost to this, and to future assignments on the theme of territorial and tourism development in mountain regions.

Evening- meeting with Guides from Skopje and young Francophones. The same question crops up again and again throughout the visit, namely is it possible to make a living as a guide?

Tuesday 18 March

Transfer to the ski resort of Popova Sapka located above Tetovo and general presentation of the programme, particularly of the five days we are going to spend together. In the afternoon we went out snow shoeing. Although the participants have no previous experience of this type of activity, they soon appreciated the modern equipment, kindly donated by the French company TSL, the market leader, and the fun activity. Their first attempts made a good impression and this was confirmed over the following days.

Late afternoon - a drawing test, showing different interpretations of the same drawing, highlights problems people have in communicating.

Wednesday 19 March

Indoor training session with Durim Shabani, an interpreter who came from Tetovo in icy conditions as it snowed overnight. Subjects discussed are the background history of the mountain leader profession in France; working conditions for mountain professionals in France, competition, how to find clients and teaching methods. (See appendix for the detailed programme of the session).

Thursday 20 March

Morning: climb from the Sremka chalet to Sin Vrv at a height of 2550 m in strong winds and unsettled weather. On the ascent and descent, the participants really began to understand all the possibilities this type of activity has to offer.

Afternoon: clients' expectations of a tour from the basics to precise details, stopping for breaks and so on.

Evening: discussion about the qualification of mountain leader in Macedonia, from the organization of training, validation, to official recognition of the qualification by the Macedonian State (please see appendix)



Friday 21 March

Morning: a big half-day out snowshoeing with practical exercises for helping clients get up in powder snow, use of “heel lifters” called ascenders to facilitate hill-climbing, precautions to take in different types of snow. The students quickly mastered the art of breaking a trail and making tracks in fresh snow.

Early afternoon: an interview with Ilco Svetanoski, a journalist from Tetovo from the Dnevnik newspaper, followed by an outing above the holiday-home development of Popova Spaka, to practise descending on rough ground. This type of test is part of the entrance exam for mountain leader training in France. The test is conclusive and the level excellent. However, the place was filthy with rubbish everywhere. This important issue will have to be resolved rapidly if we want to attract foreign tourists to the resort.

Late afternoon: exchange of information about the cost of living in France and in Macedonia ; about how much a mountain leader in France earns, with fees, costs and number of days worked. Multi-job holding is stressed, as it is common in France and on the fact that to start with, working as a guide will be a complement to another job.

Saturday 22 March

Morning: practical work. Based on what they have been told already, the students are asked to devise two tours lasting 8 and 12 days in Macedonia (France - France). A few small corrections are made but globally they have understood what the client expects, and the visits are coherent (see appendix). After lunch, feedback session followed by transfer to the Mont Kosuf ski resort, in the south, on the border with Greece.



Sunday 23 and Monday 24 March

We had two days to explore Mont Kosuf, a mountain region with a lot of potential. A network of wide paths or trails, relics from the 1912 to 1918 wars, run along the crest between Macedonia and Greece. This network is still in good condition and, if appropriate accommodation was built or the old stone barracks renovated, would be the ideal setting for a several day-long trek to the Pelister National Park. In the eastern part of the range a ski resort is being constructed targeting Greeks who come to play at the Casino in Macedonia (forbidden in Greece), or directly from Thessalonika, the second biggest town in Greece, and linked to the valley by a motorway. Both the ideas and the means exist. The resort has planned for a water purification plant and at the top of the chairlift, a barracks has been transformed into a beautiful mountain restaurant in wood and stone with a fireplace.

Return to Skopje, then Tetovo on Monday evening.

Tuesday 25 March

Morning:

Visit of the French Institute, in the centre of Tetovo.

Like all French Institutes, its aim is to spread the French language and culture. There is a second Institute at Bitola. They are financed partly by the Ministry for Foreign and European affairs and partly by French lessons. The President is Faton Sherifi and the director, Paul Chambry, who showed me round the old part of the town and the painted mosque, the emblem of Tetovo.

Afternoon:

Meetings organized by the French Institute with Paul Chambry and Mr Sherifi translating. Interview with Mr Memedi, in charge of sport at the South East University, opened in 2000 and financed by European and American funds. He confirmed that no courses on sport are run at the university.

Meeting at the State University with Blake Childs, the American counsellor at the International Relations Office at the University, Senad Abduli, head of this office, Fadil Nika, dean of the Physical Education and Sport Faculty. We learn that the Faculty organizes a basic skiing and mountaineering course of 10 days per year which is validated by a certificate. A professional orientation exists but needs to be looked into more deeply. It seems important that the Macedonian Federation for Mountain Sports contact them. Equally, the Faculty could need some expert consultancy help regarding the Masters degree linked to tourism in collaboration with Ohrid University and could appeal to the CRET on certain themes. The CCI/CRET works in partnership with the Gap/Marseille University collaborating with the professional training centre and the professional degree in sport at Gap.

The day ends at the premises of the Eurotourist Travel Agency. Once again what emerges is that most of tourist activity is geared towards the exterior apart from Macedonians who have emigrated abroad and return for their holidays. In fact Macedonia is not known as a tourist destination by those in the tourist industry or by the general public. To promote Macedonia as a tourist destination it will therefore be necessary to quickly put in place press trips or educational tours. Macedonia could participate by offering free flights and accommodation.



French Institute « Alliance Française » at Tetovo

Wednesday 26 March

Morning

Meeting at the Tetovo Town Hall with Hazib Lika, the mayor, Harjula Hasani, in charge of water management, Hussein Xhemaili, head of the Ecology Inspectors department, Flora Bajrami, director of tourism, Faton Sherifi, President of the French Institute, and translator and representing France, Johann Urhes, Cultural Advisor and Manager of the Cultural Centre at Skopje, Anne Segara, cultural attaché, Paul Chambry, manager of the French Institute at Tetovo, and Yves Fouque project manager appointed by the Hautes Alpes General Council.

After introductions by Mr Urhes and Mr Lika, Mr Fouque explains the choice of Tetovo and the points that Tetovo has in common with the Hautes-Alpes (see introduction). The discussion with Mr Lika brings out the exact needs targeted. With mountain tourism as the main thread, three main areas are singled out namely:

- territorial organization for alternative tourism development
- water management (supply and treatment)
- waste management.

These issues will be the object of an exchange of experiences with the Hautes-Alpes during a study trip to France for 12 days at the end of September (see appendix for tentative itinerary and programme).

The meeting ends with Yves Fouque being presented with a commemorative plaque representing the painted mosque for the Hautes - Alpes General Council.

Afternoon

Visit of the Shkumbin Valley (Pena in Macedonian) to the village of Vica (Vejce). Both the valley and the village are still well-conserved and have great potential.

Late afternoon - a very productive meeting with the heads of the Ekonatura Association. They are very enthusiastic and one of their goals is to revitalize the mountain villages.

Thursday 27 March

Early morning Press conference at the French Institute with a television channel from Tetovo and the journalist already met at Popova Sapka on Friday 21 March.

Mid morning visit with Eko Natura of the village of Pallcisti i eprem located on the mountain-side between Tetovo and Gostivar. Only five families still live in the village as all the others have moved down to the valley and many houses are in ruins .We visit a house with a magnificent painted ceiling followed by a short walk to the start of a gorge with a lot of character , rocks and trees, and an ancestral path leading up to Popova Sakpa. Once again this confirms the potential of this mountain region.

Early afternoon transfer and final meeting with Goran Tinkosi and Kostantin Ciriviri about guide training.

Friday 28 March

Feedback session at the French Cultural Centre with Mr Urhes and Madame Segara followed by a press conference.

Late afternoon return to France.

Assessment, analysis and prospects

The first part of the assignment with the guide-instructors confirmed that they had a very high technical level and were at ease in the mountains. Their knowledge of prospective clients remains theoretical but they now have all the necessary information at their disposal to help them professionally.

The way in which guides are trained could soon change to better cater for all mountaineers including those who are not members of a club recognized by the Federation. The problem of the official recognition of the profession and the qualification by the Macedonian State has not yet been resolved. This recognition is essential if the Macedonian mountain leaders want to be recognized and join the UIMLA (Union of International Mountain Leader Associations).

The choice of Tetovo as the Hautes-Alpes General council's partner community proves more and more relevant given the great potential for mountain tourism. The mayor has understood that we can provide know-how and advice and that finding financial aid for investments remains his entire responsibility.

The trip this autumn promises to be of great interest (see appendix for the tentative programme)

The French Institute in Tetovo is prepared to take on the role of local project manager. The idea of setting up a space dedicated to the Hautes-Alpes and environmental education should hopefully see the light of day during the year. French-English glossaries for professions in tourism, published by the Cret, have been left at the French Institute to serve as a base for French-Macedonian and Albanian glossaries.

A press pack promoting Macedonia should be written hopefully before the Tetovo assignment comes to France in September.

Please note that the training session was paid by the Federation and that Yves Fouque was put up by Paul Chambry in Tetovo.



The painted mosque, the emblem of Tetovo

APPENDICES

Organisation of Training of Mountain Leaders in Macedonia, prospects

Firstly, to be quite clear that we are talking about the same thing, the profession of "accompagnateur en montagne" or Mountain Leader in English consists of being paid for taking people into the mountains on foot or on snowshoes without using specialized mountaineering techniques or equipment. Although the mountain leader is always concerned about safety, he is considered more as a go-between or a link between the visitor and the region or country visited. It is therefore his duty to transmit his knowledge about natural and cultural aspects and about the local inhabitants.

A framework of the essential skills required for a mountain leader has been drawn up by the Union of International Mountain Leader Associations (UIMLA, uimla.org). Each country can then add other skills depending on local customs and geography and can decide on the name given to the profession, usually "guide".

The Current Situation and Limits

Professional guide training is carried out by a branch of the Macedonian Federation of Mountain Sports, called "Professional Training Centre".

To be accepted for training, candidates have to justify an experience of 5 years, certified by one of the mountain clubs belonging to the Federation. The initial idea was to only accept those whose level was known to be sufficient in order to shorten training time for financial reasons. The problem however, is that all other candidates with experience in the mountains such as young villagers or other associations are excluded from the system although they have practical experience and a good knowledge of the field. This situation creates tensions and can only be continued on a short term basis. They also have to pass a physical test. The training course then lasts one year in the form of units. Please note that up till now the training has been paid for by the OSCE (Organization for Safety and Cooperation in Europe), the USAID (United States Agency for International Development) and the Red Cross.

The best solution could be to make the entrance test a higher level and the course longer, with it being up to the participants to find the necessary funding.

The Macedonian Federation for Mountain Sports

As in all countries with the arrival of mountain tourism, it is difficult for many people to understand the difference between voluntary work and professionalism. Instructors at clubs work on a voluntary basis for their association. They do not have to deal with paying clients who demand means and results. The arrival of these often young professional workers can make them lose their self-esteem and feel obsolete. "Selling" the mountains can shock and upset them. It is therefore necessary to explain the situation so that everyone knows his place. It makes no sense to lower the level of the qualification by awarding the equivalent qualification to just anyone. This should be awarded only to those who were professionally active before the diploma was put in place. Basically, the organization of the qualification needs to be changed in a way that will satisfy everyone.

Short Term Goals

To be accepted by the UIMLA and obtain international recognition, the profession of Mountain Leader needs to be officially recognized by the Macedonian State. The Tourism department of the Ministry for Economy would appear to be the best spokesman to this end. This decision is essential in the public interest.

As only a professional association can join UIMLA, the mountain leaders will have to form a non-profit making organization, not linked to the market or travel agencies. Equally it cannot be the training

organization although members may participate on training courses as instructors or examiners in a private capacity.

On the other hand, the association could be a means of promoting the mountain leaders by creating a list of mountain leaders according to regions, an Internet website, badges and so on.

This is also a means of ensuring that there is no confusion between volunteers and professionals. Imagine that the Federation has a request from a foreign Club for a trek in Macedonia. The Federation can either direct them to a club in the area concerned which would then send out information or even send a representative, or to the Guide Association which would send the list of professional mountain leaders. In the long run, professional mountain leaders could contact foreign clubs directly as is common practice elsewhere. This is how hiking clubs which are members of the French Federation for Hiking regularly use the services of mountain leaders.

List of Guides on the Training Course

Boban STOJANOV

STR PARTIZANSKA BR 39/8 STIP

Tel 032 395 658

Mob 070 527 596

bobiextrem@yahoo.com

Electrician in the Army and Ski Patrolman at Mont Kosuf

Krunoslav ADZIEVSKA

STR JANE SANDASKI 51/10, 1000 SKOPJE

MOB 070 342 828

krunoslav_adzievski@moi.gov.mk, adievski@gmail.com

Scientific Police Technician and Ski Patrolman at Mt Kosuf

Kostantin CIRIVIRI

STR FRANKLIN RUZVELT 68.1/2 1000 SKOPJE

Mob 071 369 280, 070 38 27 98

kciriviri@hotmail.com

Director of Guide Training at the Federation and head of ski patrol at Mt Kosuf

Kocoski KOCO

BV 11 OKTOBRU 61/5 KICEVO

Mob 045 220 407, 070 512 599

Computer Technician

Tatjana DUKOSKA

S LAKTIJINE ORHID

Mob 077 563 394

tatjaja.dukoska@freemail.com.mk

Student at the Tourism Faculty in Orhid

Goran IVANOVSKI

ST NIKOLA RUSINSKI 32.3A 1/3 SKOPJE

Tel : 023 061 639

Mob : 070 212 615

duko71@yahoo.com, goran.ivanovski@esmak.com.mk

Jovan BOZINOVSKI

TETOVO

Jovangjbozinoski@yahoo.com

MOB 075 64 93 93

Vet student, President of the Luboten Mountain Club in Tetovo

Antonio DODEVSKI

UL DIMITAR VLAHOV BR 57-A/5 6000 PRHID

Mob 075 44 22 48, 071 34 22 48

info.dode@gmail.com

Manager of Orhid Red Cross

Adrian SLOVA

1250 DEBAR

Mob 071 299 947

slova.adrian@knauf.com.mk, asdibra25@hotmail.com

Buyer for a large company, was an interpreter for NATO at Kosovo

Rexhep SALIU

1230 GOSTIVAR

saliurexhep@hotmail.com

Denis RAHINOSKI

ANDON DUKOV 10 ORHID

Mob 075 291 080

denis_ohrid@hotmail.com

Jusuf LAZAMI-CUFO

RR 185 11 TETOVO

Mob 076 425 303

cufatori@hotmail.com, cufatori@gmail.com

Svetlana STOJANOSKA

S.DRASLAJCA 6330 STRUGA

Mob 070 934 174

stojanoska.svetlana@gmail.com

Cheese industry

Programme and Detailed Contents

Interventions during the Training Sessions with the Macedonian Federation for Mountain Sports
Training Recommendations

Background History of the Mountain Leader Profession in France

It was a well-known fact that people in mountain villages worked as "guides". This led to the official diploma being set up by the French State in 1976 to control and ensure the safety of the activity. Anyone working before this date could obtain a recognized equivalent qualification on presenting a file. The same thing will no doubt happen in Macedonia as elsewhere, although it has to be understood that only professional experience is considered. Complementary training courses, especially regarding safety may also be added.

Means and results

The professional mountain leader has to do everything within his means to arrive at the fixed goal, at the same time ensuring the client's safety and in case of accident his evacuation in the best conditions possible. However, the client cannot under any circumstances claim against the mountain leader if the fixed goal is not attained due to circumstances without his control such as weather conditions, or the low level of one of the participants.

The role of the mountain leader

The mountain leader is essentially the go-between between the visitor and the country or region visited. He has to take all the necessary steps to arrive at the fixed goal, in safety obviously but also by ensuring that the walking pace is adapted to the client. The basis of the job is taking into consideration the client's expectations. You have to understand that the job is often not at all what you imagined. You may be in the mountains but you are with clients. You have to walk more slowly than usual, to stop more often and most of your clients will be over 50 - sometimes well over 50!

Taking control of the group and giving information should come naturally - there is only one leader, the mountain leader!

But you are not a boss or a teacher!

You are what holds the group together, the link between people who possibly have never met before. It is therefore not advised to change mountain leader during the trip unless absolutely necessary. Each mountain leader has to know all the mountains he takes his clients to, and be acquainted with the accommodation, local culture and customs, whatever his own. As the objective is to have an internationally recognized diploma it would be odd to have a professional mountain leader who can not leave his own region.

During an organized trip, you are not only present during the trek but from the minute you get up to the minute you go to bed. You have to sort out any problems that may arise with meals or accommodation – in fact you have to be able to deal with anything!

But don't forget that you also have the right to rest and have some time for yourself!

The Client

He has his habits just like everyone. He can change a bit but not too much. Meal times are important, between 12 and 1 pm for lunch or a picnic, from 7 to 8 pm for dinner. Watch out, starving people are aggressive - it's a fact!

The client going to Macedonia will most likely not be on his first trip abroad and will tend to compare things. He will also probably have researched into the country and therefore risks broaching thorny

subjects such as past conflicts and relationships with other communities. Discretion and moderation are called for. It can be useful to ask tactfully about problems close to home such as Belgium or past wars to make them put things into perspective.

If you have a problem with a client, don't forget that safety is the most important issue and that the mountain leader is responsible for the group. However, we are talking about adults (with young people it's a different matter) and we can not force someone to do something he doesn't want to do. In this case, make sure the other members of the group are aware of the situation as they will serve as witnesses. The client is keen to learn and share experiences but also needs some peace and calm so don't overdo it.

Client Insurance

They are covered for costs of rescue, from the place of accident to a hospital, and for medical evacuation and repatriation, from Macedonia to France.

Finding Clients

Client is the widest sense of the word, from an agency to an individual person. For the time being Macedonian guides are just about "invisible". The Federation has sent out information via the Chamber of Commerce but this does not seem to have had much effect. They are going to have to go out and find their clients. Sales promotion will be one of the tasks of the intended Guide Association with a website and badges.

A Day's Walk

You have to start off slowly to let the body warm up then stop for a break every hour for something to eat and drink. French clients are always nibbling at food but it doesn't prevent them from stopping for breakfast and maybe a short siesta. The Mountain Leader obviously has to always be the first to arrive at fixed appointments.

How much does a mountain leader get paid?

A comparison between the cost of living in France and in Macedonia was made as well as how much a mountain leader can expect to earn in France, including the costs he has to pay and his turnover. An idea of price is given if employed by an agency and the daily rate per person for individual clients.

Drawing Up a Tour

Mountain leaders may well be contacted to draw up trekking tours. Therefore the following factors have to be taken into consideration:

- The length of walk depending on client targeted.
- The uniformity in the level of each day's trek. Don't have a harder day than the average on the tour even for a special site.
- try to avoid changing accommodation every day so that you don't have to keep packing and unpacking
- Help with luggage - the client only carries a day bag
- Try and avoid smoky places where possible
- Try and ensure authenticity - this is vague but means trying to rule out places and accommodation that are too ordinary or impersonal.
- Provide picnics at lunchtime on hiking days.
- Tours are submitted to Agencies in France at least six months before departure date for brochure publishing reasons. Therefore you have to use what really exists rather than a promise such as "my accommodation will be ready in a month"!

See appendix for Current training courses for Macedonian guides

Tentative Itinerary and Programme for the Guides' visit to France in June

Dates

June, weeks 24 and 25

Duration of stay

10 days

Arrival Airport

Lyon or Milan, which have better fares or Marseille.

Support

Yves Fouque, project manager during the whole of the trip. He is a professional mountain leader and a trainer at the CRET (Regional and European Tourism Centre); until March 2008 he was third deputy mayor of Ceillac, member of the Queyras National Park Office and representative for Ceillac at the Intercommunal Tourist Promotion Office. He also set up and runs a travel agency specializing in nature tourism with three colleagues. (www.randoqueyras.com)

Accommodation

Full board in Hotels, guest houses, and "gîtes d'étape" (stopover accommodation) based on double or single rooms.

Transport

Hire car throughout the trip (Renault Kangoo)

Themes

- Training guides and mountain leaders
- Organizing mountain tourism
- Environmental education

Participants

Instructors involved in training mountain guides and mountain tourism development in Macedonia or their region.

Tentative Programme

National and International Meetings

- Meeting with Jean-Marc Hermes, the French representative of the Union of International Mountain Leader Associations (UIMLA, <http://www.uimla.org/>) whose head office is at Chambéry. He is also the President of the Union representing mountain leaders, the SNAM (National Union of Mountain Leaders, www.lesaem.org). Macedonian mountain leaders have already written to UIMLA and are considered as potential candidates.
- In Chambéry, contact with a representative from the Union of International Mountain Guide Associations (UIAGM, <http://www.ivbv.info/fr>).
- Visit of the TSL factory at Annecy (<http://www.tslsport.com/>) and their showroom displaying the different range of snowshoes and other mountain equipment that they produce. TSL donated 15 pairs of new snowshoes for the guide training session.
This visit will also be the occasion to promote Macedonia with the local press such as the Dauphiné Libéré and specialized publications such as Trekmag or Montagne Magazine.

Meetings within the Hautes-Alpes

- Presentation and visit of the General Council , (<http://www.cg05.fr/>), the chamber of Commerce and Industry (<http://www.hautes-alpes.cci.fr>) and of the Departemental committee for Tourism in the Hautes Alpes (<http://www.hautes-alpes.net/>)
- Meeting with the local branch of the French Federation for Hiking (Comité département de la Fédération Française de Randonnée Pédestre (FFRP)) for an explanation of the relationships between professional workers and voluntary workers, between the Federation and the SNAM.
- The Environmental Education Network, an association with the aim of helping the development and promotion of activities linked to the environment (www.ree05.org/)
- Visit the CRET (Regional and European Tourism Centre <http://www.cret-cci.com/>) and presentations of the training courses linked to mountain tourism. They will also take part on one of the courses for one or two days.

Local Meetings

Located half-way between Gap and Briançon, the Queyras National Regional Park (<http://www.pnrqueyras.com/>) has managed to associate economic development and environmental conservation with an economy controlled partly by the local inhabitants. It is the ideal place to experience new forms of territorial management, with meetings with official representatives for water, tourism and communications.

The main objective is to show how trekking and mountain tourism in general have been organized in the Queyras since the 1960's. The accent will be on the organization of a network of paths, their maintenance and marking, available accommodation for trekkers, the way the guides and mountain leaders office is set up, the running of mountain refuges (CAF), and the organization of mountain rescue. Cross-border projects between the Queyras Park and Italian valleys will also be discussed.

Tentative Itinerary and Programme for the Tetovo Visit to France in September-October

Dates

Between mid September to mid October

Duration

12 days

Arrival Airport

Lyon or Milan, which have better fares, or Marseille

Support

Yves Fouque, project manager during the whole of the trip. He is mountain leader and a trainer at the CRET (Regional and European Tourism Centre); until March 2008 he was third deputy mayor of Ceillac, member of the Queyras National Park Office and representative for Ceillac at the Intercommunal Tourist Promotion Office. He also set up and runs a travel agency specializing in nature tourism with three colleagues. (www.randoqueyras.com)

Accommodation

Full board in Hotels, guest houses, and gites d'étapes (stopover accommodation) based on double or single rooms

Transport

Hire car throughout the trip (Renault Scenic)

Themes

- drinking water supply
- sewage treatment
- household waste collection
- organization of mountain tourism
- environmental education

All the above issues will be looked at on different levels, generally at the "department" or main towns level then locally on the scale of a community of communes (Queyras) and finally a commune (Ceillac).

Participants

Technical experts in charge of the above files at the Tetovo town hall, civil society members involved in mountain tourism. Faton Sherifi, President of the French Institute in Tetovo and head of marketing and reception at the Popova Sapka ski resort will translate. The idea is that each participant will take part in all of the meetings, even when they cover subjects that do not concern them directly. Once back in Macedonia, they will each be able to testify to what he saw or heard about territorial mountain management.

Tentative Programme

Hautes-Alpes Meetings

- At the General Council (<http://www.cg05.fr/>), the role of each of the administrative organizations in France will be explained from communes, community of communes, to department and region, State, National and Regional Parks, who does what?

- At the chamber of Commerce and Industry(<http://www.hautes-alpes.cci.fr>)
- At the Departemental committee for Tourism in the Hautes Alpes(<http://www.hautes-alpes.net/>)
- At Gap (<http://www.ville-gap.fr/>) or Briancon, with the technical departments and visits on the themes of water and waste.
- The Environmental Education Network, an association with the aim of helping the development and promotion of activities linked to the environment (www.ree05.org/)
- Visit the CRET (Regional and European Tourism Centre <http://www.cret-cci.com/>)and presentations of the training courses linked to mountain tourism.

This study trip will also be the occasion to promote Macedonia in the local press such as the Dauphiné Libéré.

Local Meetings

Located half-way between Gap and Briancon, the Queyras National Regional Park (<http://www.pnrqueyras.com/>) has managed to associate economic development and environmental conservation with an economy controlled partly by the local inhabitants. It is the ideal place to experience new forms of territorial management, with meetings with official representatives for water, tourism and communications.

The main objective is to show how trekking and mountain tourism in general have been organized in the Queyras since the 1960's. The accent will be on the organization of a network of paths, their maintenance and marking, and available accommodation for trekkers and other tourists

- Queyras Park and Community of Communes : water , waste and tourism management (Tourist Office - www.queyras.com)
- Visits of accommodation in the Queyras National Regional Park: hotels, gîtes d'etapes or stopover gites, mountain refuges, and guest houses.
- Ceillac commune: water, waste and tourism management (www.ceillac.com)
- Forestry Commission (Office National des Forêts). The problem of illegal wood cutting by big companies has come up several times during discussions. This meeting will enable us to see how conflicts were resolved in the past and how the forest is run nowadays both locally and for selling wood.

Key People Met in Tetovo

Paul CHAMBRY

Director

00 389 (0) 44 35 11 91

00 389 (0) 71 34 14 16

aft@aft.org.mk

Faton SHERIFI

President

00389 (0) 70 256 896

fatonncherifi@yahoo.fr

Memedi MENAN,

Head of Sports

South-East Europe University

00 389 (0) 70 255 995

memedi.menan@seeu.edu.mk

www.seeu.edu.mk/ <<http://www.seeu.edu.mk/>>

Senad ABDULLI

Manager of the International Relations Office

Tetovo State University

00 389 (0) 71 24 48 58

senleart@yahoo.com <<mailto:senleart@yahoo.com>>

<http://www.unite.edu.mk/>

Blake CHILDS

Counsellor at the International Relations Office

Tetovo State University

00 389 (0) 71 29 86 17

blake.childs@yahoo.com

Fadil NIKA

Dean of the Physical Education and Sports

Tetovo State University

Bujamin DURMISHI

Director of the Tourist Agency « Euro-Tourist »

00 389 (0) 70 329 492

Nexhmedin HALIDI

President of the 'Eko-Natyra' association

00 389 (0) 71 36 37 64

ekonatyra@yahoo.com

www.ekonatyra.org

G ABDURAHIMI

Member of 'Eko-Natyra' association

00389 (0) 70250 063

Hazbi LIKA,

Mayor of Tetovo

00 389 (0) 44 333 196

00 389 (0) 70 381 111

hazbilika@tetovo.gov.mk

<http://www.tetovo.gov.mk/> <<http://www.tetovo.gov.mk/>>

Hajrula HASANI

In charge of water management

Tetovo Town Hall

Hussein XHEMAI

Head of the Ecology Inspectors Office

Ex civil servant at the Ministry of Ecology

Flora BAJRAMI

Tourism Manager

Tetovo Town Hall

00 389 (0) 70 814 852

flora.bajrami@gmail.com