

An analysis of the tourism-, leisure- and sports-related uses of the natural environment and, quite especially, of the protected natural spaces offers specific examples of how certain spaces have deteriorated at the same time as their touristic attraction has diminished. The enjoyment of nature and the use of its resources is a social right stemming from a deeply rooted tradition of open access to the natural environment, but nature is also a resource that makes a very important and in some regions even a predominant contribution to economic development and, consequently, to demographic stability. All these aspects, however, should be compatible with the protection of the territory's natural and cultural values. Today's regulatory framework, which is vague, unclear and often outdated, should be left behind, endowing the activities and uses which take place in the natural environment with a new regulatory system that is adapted to the present-day situation and that even anticipates the changes of the future.