



THE INTERNATIONAL MOUNTAINEERING AND CLIMBING FEDERATION
UNION INTERNATIONALE DES ASSOCIATIONS D'ALPINISME

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Environmentally Acceptable Mountaineering for Expeditions and Treks

We want to experience the mountains of the world, their untouched nature, their unspoiled people, and their unadulterated cultures.

We would like to be guests, guests that are welcome and are greeted with friendliness. We want to avoid everything that could harm the mountains through which we pass and could abuse the hospitality of their people. Considerate guests do not leave ugly marks, neither in the landscape nor in the hearts of the people.

Nobody wants to find paths and campsites in the countryside that are lined with ugly trash and disfigured by dangerous waste. But we tourists and mountaineers come from a society used to equipment, packaging and easy disposal and our habits produce waste that can not be simply absorbed by nature. Tossed away, hidden and buried: our civilisational waste is out of place in the mountainous landscape.

The UIAA is concerned that increasing mountain tourism produces more and more waste and trash. Trash is ugly, can be dangerous and is always a burden to the environment. And, of course, the last-mentioned applies in particular to our travel destination, the mountains. Mountain regions usually exist in a highly unstable balance and thus they are very susceptible to any and all waste and trash left behind by travellers. As the union of all mountaineering organizations, the UIAA is now focusing its attention on emphasizing environmentally and socially acceptable travel.

In order to accomplish this, all must cooperate as partners:

- The official associates in the countries visited,
- The operators, organizers, and expedition leaders,
- The regional representatives in the countries visited, especially the agencies,
- The mountain guides, expedition and tour leaders,
- The producers and suppliers of equipment and provisions,
- The travellers themselves.

The most important contribution must come from the travellers, mountaineers, and hikers themselves. In the end it is their behaviour that will determine whether we can reach our goal or not.

Trekking agencies report that, through conscientious product selection and organization, up to 70% of the previous trash and waste amounts can be avoided from the start. Participants have confirmed that this can be done without reducing the quality of the supplies. For example, more local fresh foods are used instead of canned goods. The travellers are also changing their views. They are limiting their personal gear to the absolute necessities and avoid all possible packaging waste. Besides, it is easier to travel with less and waste-free baggage.

The important goal of the UIAA, that is to practice environmentally acceptable travel and to thus set standards for others, can only be reached when all participants make their contributions and develop their own suggestions based upon experience. The trekking agencies, the mountain

guides and tour leaders and especially the travel participants should inform (and check up on) each other and set good examples for others.

When planning a mountain trip, expedition, trek or individual tour, please remember:

1. Reduce the amount of trash produced as best possible;
2. Dispose of the unavoidable waste by environmentally acceptable means.

Please observe these rules in your own personal area of influence, regardless of whether you are planning a trip in the mountains of the world as an operator, an expedition leader, a trekking agency or as an individual tourist. Review in each situation and with every decision whether you have done all possible to avoid trash and to dispose of the unavoidable waste appropriately. Thus you can help to preserve the mountains of the world as a worthwhile experience for generations to come.

UIAA Mountain Protection Commission