**MMV 9 organized session “Outdoor sports and environmental controversies”**

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The practice of outdoor sports has massively increased since the 80’s. However, the development of these activities is not without causing problems since they take place in natural areas and require suitable spaces (Rech et Mounet, 2011). The question of their environmental impact thus arises, particularly the problem of their sustainability seen from the angle of environmental preservation, in protected areas as well as in ordinary nature (Mounet, 2007).

In this special session, we offer to address three complementary axes.

The first axis concerns the analysis of environmental controversies arising around outdoor sports. Indeed, the currently incomplete knowledge from both the viewpoints of ecology and outdoor sports, makes evaluating the environmental impact of outdoor activities more difficult. This lack of reliable data leads to scientific uncertainty which can be an important source of power for stakeholders, particularly in a context of conflict (Mounet, 2007). The aim is hence to analyse the nature of environmental controversies in outdoor sports (Gurholt, & Broch, 2017) and the actors involved in them.

As a second axis, if the impact of outdoor sports on the environment is difficult to evaluate, some land managers set up management measures. They can vary depending on the type protection status implemented on the territory, ranging from ordinary nature to protected areas with high or low levels of restriction. The type of management adopted by the actors can range from authoritarian management with the set-up of forbidden areas, to concerted (Pouwels et al., 2017 ; Spiess et al., 2008) or even participative management.

Eventually, to be effective, measures require an understanding and acceptance from users (Gundersen & al., 2015; Hammit & al., 2015; Sterl & al., 2008, 2010). For managers it seems necessary to know the visitors, the way they practice their activity (Hardiman, 2010 ; Hunziker, 2007) and their perception of the natural area in which their activities take place, for example in terms of place attachment (Beery & Jonsson, 2017) or environmental ethics (Bjerk et al., 2006). The question of visitor’s knowledge and acceptance of management measures needs to be explored (Garret et al, 2002 ; Le Corre et al., 2013).