

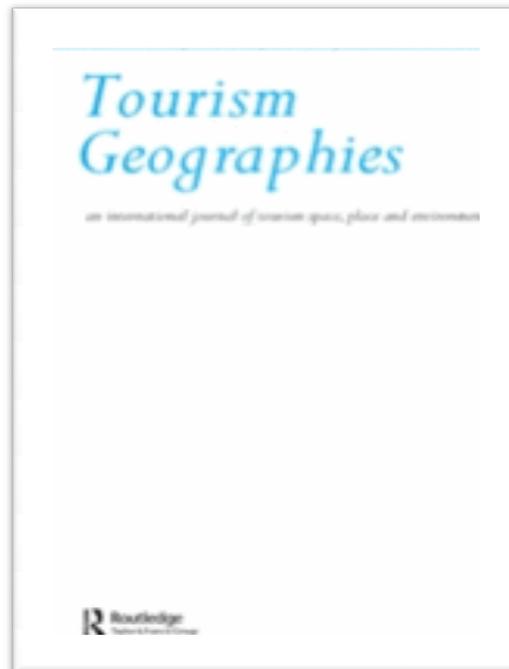
Mountain Tourism: Toward a Conceptual Framework

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A conceptual framework is proposed to examine tourism and recreation issues in mountainous regions. First, six mountain-specific resource characteristics are discussed, which include diversity, marginality, difficulty of access, fragility, niche and aesthetics. It is argued that these characteristics are unique to mountainous regions and, as such, have specific implications for mountain recreation and tourism development. The paper then examines the changing nature of recreation and tourism use in the mountains, especially increasing levels of recreation and tourism activities sought by local recreationists, tourists and amenity migrants, and the implications of these activities for mountain tourism planning and management. A three-class system of recreation and tourism land-use settings is proposed to resolve planning and management challenges associated with increasingly diverse needs of these users. Tourism planning and management in mountainous regions should consider and incorporate mountain-specific resource characteristics. It is argued that the proposed framework not only assists in developing an integrated perspective on mountain tourism planning and management but also advances research fronts in areas of mountain resource characteristics, mountain amenity users and mountain recreational zoning.

Keywords: Mountain tourism; mountain resource characteristics; outdoor recreation; tourism; amenity migration; recreation and tourism land use