

**A chapter from a roadmap for adventure tourism: Mountain hut chain
development in Mtskheta-Mtianeti region**

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Abbreviations

UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
WTTC	World Travel and Tourism council
ATDI	Adventure Tourism Development Index
ICIMOD	International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
ATTA	Adventure Travel Trade Association
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization
MASL	Metres Above Sea Level
DAV	German Alpine Association (Deutsche Alpenverein)
OeAV	Austrian Alpine Association (Österreichischer Alpenverein)

Abstract

Adventure tourism is one of the fastest growing industries in the modern world. The pace of growth is even higher in the countries with developing economics. Nature, mountains, diverse climate, cultural heritage and rich traditions of Georgia makes it attractive to adventurous travellers.

The research focuses on the chain of mountain huts and other essential infrastructure for encouraging trekking and other adventure travel activities associated with the mountainous landscapes, like: mountaineering, mountain biking, ski touring, snowshoeing, paragliding, horseback riding, birdwatching and maybe some others.

The area of research is limited to one region of Georgia. The Mtskheta-Mtianeti region, which is the most visited and popular region among tourists with different preferences. The research is held to identify key practices established internationally, explore potential and current processes of Georgian adventure tourism, to study Northern mountainous areas of the Mtskheta-Mtianeti region for the purposes of Mountain Hut chain development, to apply findings in order to provide recommendations, and highlight the role of mountain huts for the industry and discuss specific influences.

The main source of the up-to-date, relevant information was series of semi-structured, in depth, face to face interviews with the experts in the field, with people of great experience and expertise in adventure tourism and insights into the specifics of Mountain Huts.

The final product of the research is a model of a mountain hut chain best suitable for the region. The model is comprehensively planned, marked on the maps and analysed in depth. The advantages and disadvantages, threats and opportunities for further development, alongside with the influences on natural and socio-economic environment are highlighted, and the means of aligning the project with general beliefs of sustainable tourism development are discussed.