Alternative energy sources and geotourism?

First specialized issue of the Acta Geoturistica journal is focused on the renewable (alternative) energy source utilizations in geotourism and mining tourism.

Not very "compatible" subjects of interest – renewable/alternative energy sources and geotourism and mining tourism – are bridged over the definition of the term "Earth sources", which is used at the Technical University of Košice for several years. The term includes abiotic sources providing treats from nature to the people – mineral resources, renewable energy sources including water, sun, wind, geothermal energy, and facts connected to these treats by human activities – Management of Earth resources, economics of Earth resources, definition and study of geological objects that are subjects of interest within geotourism research, historical mining, non-mining use of past mining objects within mining tourism, cultural, social and sacral objects and symbols connected to the historical mining and metallurgical activities, historical mining education, technical inventions and objects related to the technology development in the field of mining and metallurgy, mining museums, archives, mining guilds and many other parts that can be included within the term "mining heritage". Such a description fits the prof. Rybár's definition of "geotourism" (Rybár et al., 2010) realized by his colleagues and PhD. students at the Technical University of Košice.

The use of renewable energy sources within geotourism and mining tourism is interesting from technical and economic point of view because distant and lonesome geosites or relicts of historical mining objects are often with no infrastructure connection that enables lightning, ventilation or study using equipment requiring electricity. In such cases, use of renewable energy sources represents suitable and welcome alternative for lightning, object improvements (including e.g. presentations, propagation, study of geo- and mining objects, etc.)

Modern technologies using renewable energy sources – sun, wind, geothermal, but hydrogen as an alternative energy source also, may attract technically oriented youth which may discover natural geo-beauties and historical objects of mining heritage during study and research of the energy sources. Appropriate architectural design (design of technical facilities for the use of renewable energy sources) may increase tourists' aesthetic impression from the sight-seeing.

Editors

REFERENCES

Rybár P., Baláž B. and **Štrba Ľ.** (2010) Geoturizmus – identifikácia objektov geoturizmu. Edičné stredisko F BERG TU Košice, 101 p. ISBN 978-80-553-0584-4 (In Slovak)