

## The Impact of Snow Avalanches on the Tourist Activities in the Upper Area of the Piatra Craiului Massif

Anca MUNTEANU<sup>1</sup>, Alexandru NEDELEA, Laura COMANESCU, Valentina STOICA

*Bucharest University, Romania*

**Abstract:** This paper aims at presenting the tourist activities that have impact by the snow avalanches occurring in the upper area of the Piatra Craiului Massif (The Southern Carpathians, Romania). The local features of this mountain unit are given by the presence of a calcareous ridge rising to over 2200 m, having clearly defined and steep slopes, dissected by a stream network. Climatic and vegetal elements specific for this region encourage the accumulation of a thick snow cover and consequently avalanches are common. Their occurrence has a negative impact on the winter tourist activities going on in this area. Starting from this observation, we undertook a general analysis both of the avalanches and the different components of tourist activities. The paper presents a series of data regarding the present situation, which are synthesized in a map of tourist infrastructure showing the tourist paths and mountain shelters in the avalanche prone areas. The study is intended to be a follow up and a deepening of the pioneer studies dealing with the avalanches that occur in this massif. The ultimate goal is to understand the natural hazards and their impact on the tourist activities going on in an area that is part of the most famous natural protected areas in Romania – The Piatra Craiului National Park.

**Key words:** *local conditions, snow avalanches, tourist activities, tourist infrastructure, impacted areas, Piatra Craiului Massif*

---

<sup>1</sup> Corresponding author: Anca MUNTEANU, E-mail: munteanca@yahoo.com  
*Initial submission: October 2012; Acceptance: March 2013*