

Borders of outdoor recreation

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This paper focuses on the establishment of a bilateral and transboundary management of the Halti mountain area. The area is located on the border between Finland and Norway. The region holds a special place in many different aspects. For Finns in general and many tourists Halti holds a national symbolic value as it is the highest mountain in the country. The pristine nature is also attracting many tourists annually, but mainly on the Finnish side of the border. On the Norwegian, just like on the Finnish side, outdoor recreation, hunting, angling and reindeer husbandry are the prominent activities. Reindeer husbandry and cultural heritage are also important attributes that characterize the region. The area is also recognized for its biodiversity as an alpine landscape that connects the coast and boreal taiga forest. As an important wilderness area in Scandinavia that covers this diverse landscape, biology and history on both sides of the border there is a common interest and expressed need to secure a sustainable development for the region. By establishing a lasting cooperative organization – *Halti landscape area cooperative board* – one will work to secure a holistic management of the area that enhances the region's unique value in terms of cultural heritage, biology and landscape qualities which makes it attractive for recreational use. Through forming a common body of management one overcomes some of the challenges that borders represent as the region share many interests, tasks and obligations to the preservation and development of the area.

Outdoor recreation in the border areas between Norway and Finland is growing. However, the contrasts between the countries are substantial on the conditions for development of outdoor recreation and nature based tourism. The border seems to be a border in a traditional sense, stopping people from the two countries going into the neighbor countries and as such represents obstacles for a joint development of outdoor recreation and the tourism industry. There are efforts made through this project to break down the barriers in between. However, the way borders tend to be treated currently, as something dynamic and processual may make these efforts easier. Border is a relational matter, not only between two nations, but also between management system, and people in general. And border can be a resource for tourism development, when dialogues and interaction between management and business people take place. This paper will look into the opportunity for a cross border recreational tourism destination, but also focus on obstacles in the unevenness concerning management systems, visitability and image of the two areas. As such the Halti case serves as an important example of how this can be done and how we can understand these processes today.