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Background and Objective

Remote areas are defined in this study as valleys that can only be accessed and traversed by foot - a rarity in the highly developed Swiss Alps. Most of these areas left today are situated in Southern Switzerland.

The **aims** of this study were to establish a basic knowledge about the supply and demand of hiking tourism in remote valleys of Southern Switzerland and to answer the main question: "Is there a potential for the promotion of hiking tourism in very remote areas and – if the answer is 'yes' – how could it be promoted?"

Results (1): Register of remote areas in Southern Switzerland

Remoteness map

- Moderate remoteness: 30 - 40 remoteness points
- Medium remoteness: 41 - 46 remoteness points
- Extreme remoteness: 47 - 55 remoteness points

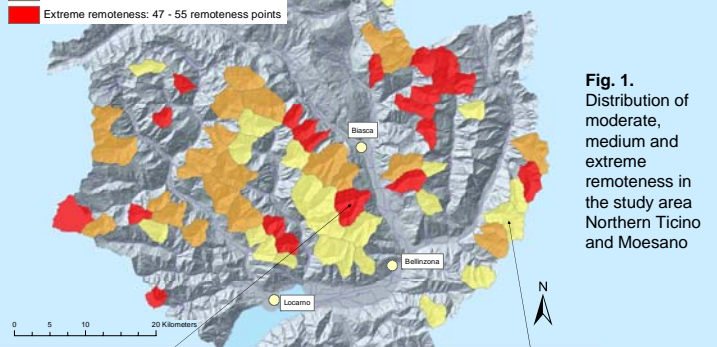
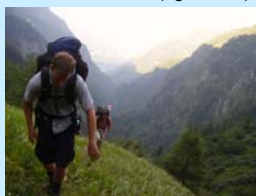


Fig. 1. Distribution of moderate, medium and extreme remoteness in the study area Northern Ticino and Moesano

Extreme remoteness:
Val di Lodrino (fig. below)



Moderate remoteness:
Val Cama (fig. below)



Determination of remoteness degree:

Temporal	Travelling time from the nearest city
	Walking time to the nearest one-day hiking trip destination
	Walking time to reach the end of the valley
	Level of difficulty of the path
Touristic	Presence of a gap without path
	Huts (number, size and comfort level of the huts)
	Google links
	Minimum comfort of path
	Huts on other side of the pass
Landscape	Passes to other valleys
	Disturbance (high voltage line, etc.)
	Area of the remote valley

Tab. 1. Parameters for the determination of the remoteness degree (moderate, medium and extreme remoteness)

More information: www.wsl.ch/wisoz/lehre/arbeiten/boller

Download of master thesis report (German) and abstract (German, English and Italian)

Methods

- **Register** of remote areas with GIS analysis
- **Survey of hikers** in two case study areas: Val Cama ("moderate remoteness") and Val di Lodrino ("extreme remoteness"). Written questionnaires in 13 mountain huts and 3 weather-resistant boxes adjacent to the hiking paths. July - September 2006. 230 questionnaires were sent in.



Fig. 2. Box with questionnaires adjacent to the path in Val di Lodrino.

Results (2): Survey of hikers in remote areas

The purism scale

The results of 18 questions regarding attitudes towards the preferred extent of human influence in remote areas, show that hikers can be classified into the three visitor types **purists**, **neutralists** and **non-purists** on a "purism scale" (Stankey 1973, Fredman 2000). Purists prefer as little human influence as possible while non-purists are looking for infrastructure and security rather than "pure" wilderness. The share of purists in Val di Lodrino (45%) was higher than in Val Cama (26%).

Soft promotional measures are generally better accepted than new infrastructures:

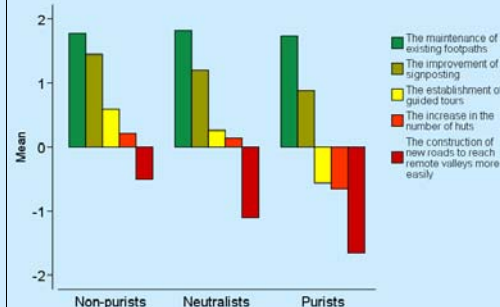


Fig. 3. Mean values of the valuation of measures to promote hiking tourism. A value of 2 signifies "very positive", 1 "rather positive", 0 "neutral", -1 "rather negative" and -2 "very negative". N = 185

The cultural landscape is preferred in remote areas:

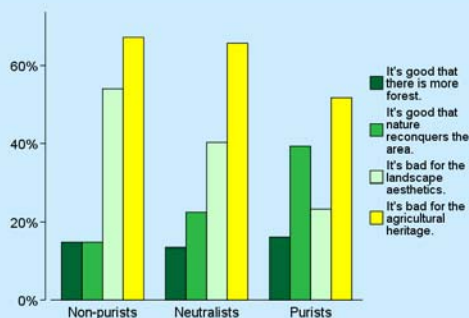


Fig. 4. Answers to the question "Many meadows and pastures in the valleys of the Southern Alps have turned into fallows, are partly bushed or have already become forests. How do you assess this development?" N = 184

High sensitivity towards crowding

The results showed that the sensitivity towards an over-use of remote areas is high: 74% of the visitors in Val di Lodrino and 53% in Val Cama prefer to **encounter fewer than 10 persons during a hiking day**.

Purists are rather urban, young and green

The analysis of the social backgrounds of the different visitor types revealed that a hiker is more likely to belong to the purists if he or she

- lives in an urbanized area.
- is between 20 and 40 years old.
- is member of an environmental NGO.