

## **MOUNTAIN WILDERNESS DECLARATION BEFORE THE WILD 10 WORLD-WIDE CONGRESS (Salamanca, October 4-10)**

In Western Europe one can really talk of “wild lands” in the Nordic countries and to a much lesser extend in other places,. The processes of urbanization, population and industrial growth, have come to extinguish in practice the original state of nature, a nature where the human footprint is not felt. The “wilderness” word lead us to think about remote and beautiful territories, not humanized, with great landscapes, whose great environmental value therefore deserves to be protected.

Nowadays the threats to wilderness in Western Europe are not so much the urban and industrial expansions, which are limited factors when compared with other areas of the planet, it is not not even the lack of consciousness regarding the necessity to preserve those environments, as it is possible to observe the proliferation of National/Natural Parks. The real threats come more from an excessive mercantilism and utilitarian notion of the protection. Indeed, many territories are protected only because they are great sources of tourism income, turning them into thematic spaces, similar to fun parks. Thus we see routes, resorts and all type of infrastructures built for mass access to the new supermarket of nature. The landscape, the wolf are all sold along with junk food, adventure, risks, healthy life, all in one package; it is wilderness “*pret to porter*”.

We must change this approach and try to protect the natural medium from any nontraditional intervention such as those aiming at exploiting its resources. We should return to an unaltered nature, free of human impact, full of its environmental, cultural, aesthetic, and climatic values To get there it is necessary to raise awareness and educate people, especially the new generations, about the non sustainability of the current consumerist model, which, with its train of growing disorders, is doomed to a general collapse. Enjoying a better quality of life will be the outcome of a slower development pace when planned with criteria of sustainability, distributivity, and even a partial decline. Recovering true wilderness territories, will contribute to improve people's quality of life and the planet sustainability.

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