



International Rafting Federation

Recreational Rafting and Conservation Report – Congress 2017 4 & 5 October, Myoshi City, Japan by Kianoosh Mehrabi & Emilia Begunova

As most of IRF members are focusing on sport of rafting, we have been try to improve rafting from the aspect of tourism and conservation. We spend most of our time to research and find ways how to improve recreational rafting and river conservation. We believe we have great potential to improve river tourism and conservation because we are connected (directly and indirectly) to professional river people, organisations, key persons, raft guides, rafting clubs etc. Also, we are working on gathering rafting tourism world wide globally and unite all aspects of the recreational rafting and IRF including rafting companies, rafting guides, ROC system, equipment gear, festivals and events. BUT we have a long way to achieve our goals. Our efforts was focused on the next outlines:

Researching, discussions and communications to find how to:

- Have festival like events (Rafting festivals focusing mostly on Tourism)
- Have scientific gathering regarding river tourism and conservation
- Have exhibition beside major rafting events (to have rafting operators, rafting organisations, rafting clubs, associations, etc to present their products and services)
- Develop River Ecotourism (for the benefit of local people and natural conservation)
- Make a new kind of membership for IRF: Rafting Clubs, Tourists, Organisations etc. (At the moment it is difficult because it needs lots of money and energy to create membership, improving website and a team to control and interact with the website and the members).

Proposals, negotiating and planning a festival and exhibition of rafting in Georgia during the Euro Champs 2017 for having rafting festival beside rafting events (unfortunately the organiser could not spend time and energy on it).

Proposal and communication to have a kind of festival in Japan during the WRC 2107, unfortunately no answer).

Organizing and testing having rafting festival in Bulgaria.

Organizing and testing Rafting Festival in Iran.

Planning to have “International River Ecotourism Seminar” in Iran in 2018.

Planning to have “International Rafting Festival” in Iran in 2018.

Communication, encouraging, helping for festival and events ideas, especially in the area of Balkans.

Promoting the idea and the system of IRF in general, Recreational and Conversation Rafting Committee, especially the ROC system and IRF guide training system everywhere and to everybody.

We are still working on optimizing and achieving the goals in the Agenda approved in the beginning of 2016 and the tasks are still in process:

Agenda 1. River classification

Agenda 2. Survey and initiative 10 Most Improved and 10 Most Threatened rivers in the world.

Agenda 3. Codes of Conducts.

Agenda 4. Creating Membership for IRF for Rafting operators and rafting lovers

Agenda 5. ROC.

Some of our further lines are:

- to improve rafting in an area/country with the help of IRF people
- to have International seminars regarding River Tourism and Conservation
- to have exhibition of river tourism and related equipment
- to explore new rivers and start rafting in new places