

ENVIRONMENTAL PERCEPTION AS STRATEGY FOR TOURISM IN PROTECTED AREAS

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The ecotourism is an activity in increasing expansion, for providing the leisure in contact with the nature that the urban centers are not capable to provide. This practice can be developed in protected areas, more specifically in units of conservation. The National Park Mountain range of Itabaiana is a unit of conservation that receives visitations in result from its historical, religious and cultural importance. In this context, the present work had as objective to know the environmental perception of the visitors of the PARNA Mountain range of Itabaiana. For this, a half-structuralized questionnaire was applied, being possible to trace the environmental perception of the visitors. One perceives that the visitors search only leisure and they do not perceive the ecological benefits of the area. It is suggested implementation of programs of environmental education that use techniques of interpretation of the nature to stimulate the sensitivity of the visitor to the environmental issues existing within the PARNA, as the elaboration of a visitation guide with an adequate language to the profile of the visitor.

KEY WORDS: ecotourism, visitation, environmental education