



Gerhard Leeb

"Faster, higher, further – but where are we going?"

With the World Winter Forum 2005 on the horizon we want to present to you some of the speakers who will feature at this expert congress focusing on the topic „winter sports“ which will take place from October 12 to 14, 2005 at the Austria Center Vienna. The session „Nature and Climate“ will be hosted by Gerhard Leeb, editor of the quarterly magazine „Planet Alpen“ (Planet Alps) and author of several books dealing with the nature and culture of the Alps, the biggest European mountain range.

„I have no problem when it comes to the compatibility of winter sports and the environment and especially environmental protection“, he emphasizes, „but I am totally against the development of new slopes and ski runs – especially considering the climate changes. The glaciers that have become the main targets for new ski runs must not be exploited. We have to build on quality not quantity! And we have to find a solution which will make the pleasure of winter sports financially affordable for everybody again.“ This is Gerhard Leeb's conviction and it is most likely that these statements will cause controversial discussions at the WWF.

Gerhard Leeb fully supports the congress's ambition of internationality and globalism: „Since the Alpine regions have done their homework and acquired a lot of expertise, the knowledge might as well be passed on to other regions which can benefit from it.“ In this context Leeb thinks especially of the „Alpine Convention“, an international agreement for the protection of natural habitats and the promotion of sustainable development in the Alps. Inspired by this model a „Carpathian Convention“ is to be elaborated. According to Leeb there are many service operators and businesses who are badly or not at all informed about the Alpine Convention. In Tyrol, for instance, two cable car lift projects were flatlined for this very reason. It is difficult for the operators that in this context not only residents but every citizen can present as party in the authorization negotiations.“

By and large, Leeb demands that commercial interests have to be brought in line with environmental requirements. „Both sides have to use their brains to find a solution. I consider myself as a kind of interpreter and mediator.“

The World Winter Forum 2005

Experts from the worlds of science, business and sports will discuss the topic „winter“ in all its facets within the

framework of a two-day congress themed: "Winter – Cult & Forms of Presentation in Sports and Tourism". The event, which will take place for the first time this year, will provide a forum for prominent figures of various walks of life who will present their thoughts and ideas the topic winter.

Top athletes, event organizers, future researchers, tourism experts, researchers in the field of climate and environmental protection and tourism service providers they all will have the opportunity to present and exchange their ideas beyond borders and across the various fields of expertise. Below you will find a selection of some of the speakers to underline the WWF's multidisciplinary approach:

Bode Miller, US ski champion

Hannes Jagerhofer, event organizer

Eike Wenzel, editor-in-chief of Germany's Future Institute

Gernot Patzelt, glacier researcher

Martin Freinadamez, former snowboard world champion, who now has a tourism agency in Romania

The congress will be divided into four thematic fields:

- Cult & Forms of presentation in winter sports
- Future Developments of Climate
- Chances and Challenges of New Markets (above all in Eastern Europe)
- Future Lab: Trends and Innovations, Media and Show, Design and Technology.

[Additional information on the congress program as well as pictures free of rights can be downloaded here...](#)



Expert Congress:

"WINTER – Cult & forms of presentation in sports & tourism"
October 12 – 14, 2005, Austria Center Vienna.

World Winter Exhibition:

"WINTER – Survival - Recreation - Spectacle"
October 12 – December 18, 2005 Vienna Art Center,
1010 Wien, Freyung 6.
Open from Wednesday to Sunday

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