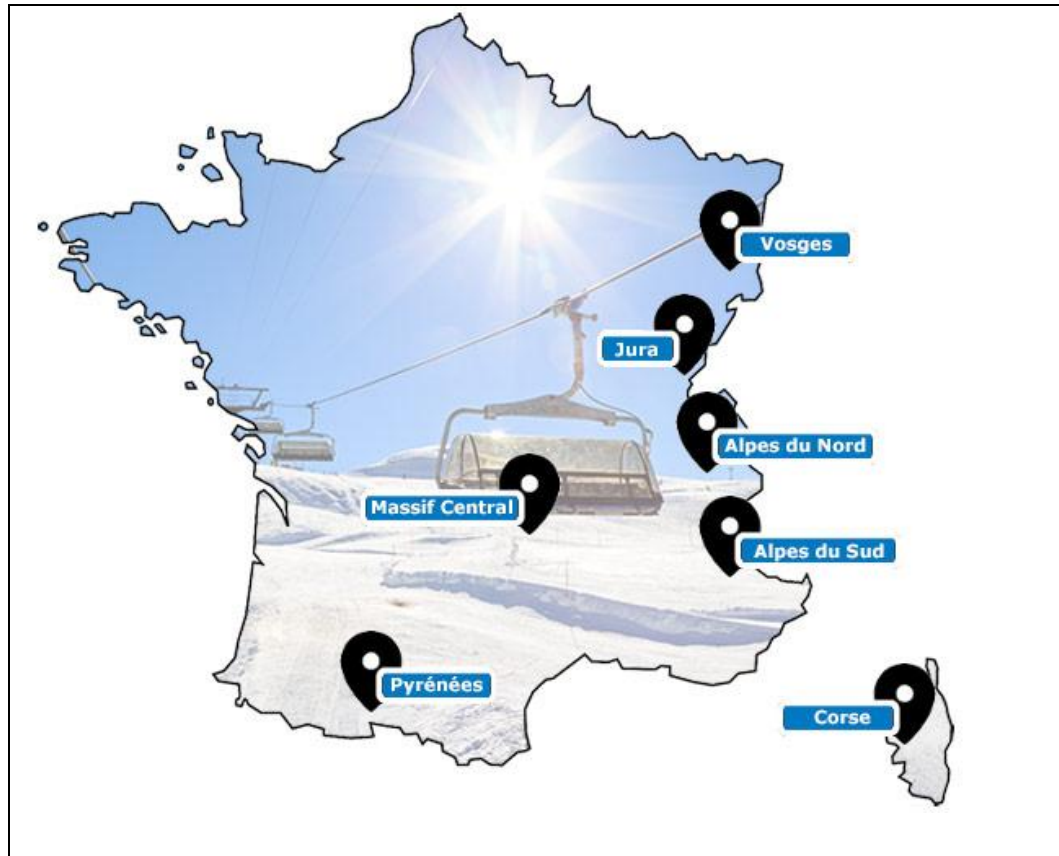


Winter tourism : an industry with an expiration date ?

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Winter tourism in France : a chance for all mountainous regions (the Vosges, the Jura, the Alps, the Massif Central, the Pyrenees , the northern Corsica)



A not inconsiderable economical profit

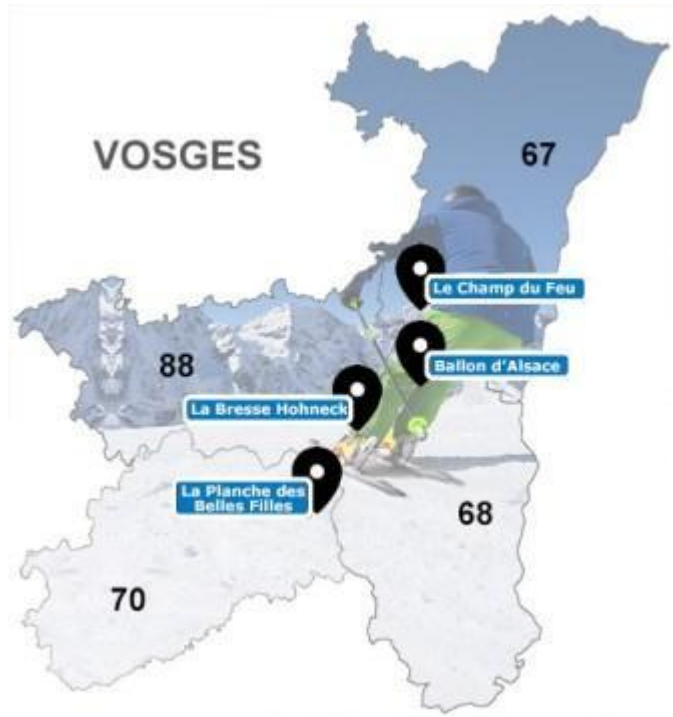
Expenses in the mountains (during a winter season)

10 billion
€
expenses

- Accomodation
- Food (shopping, restaurant)
- Skipass and equipment
(equipment rental and sport accessories sale)

(source <https://www.unionsportcycle.com>)

Winter tourism (in Alsace : departments 67 and 68) : the principal areas for skiing)



(Markstein – Grand Ballon : department 68)

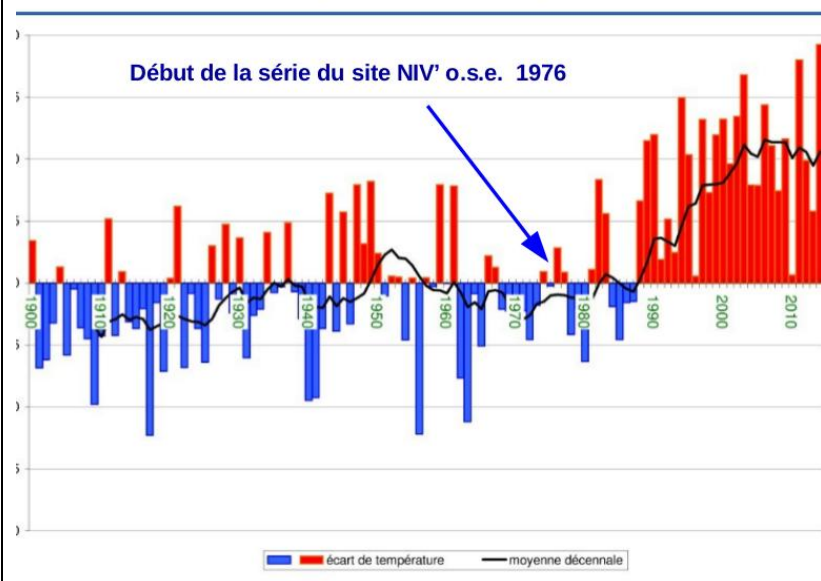
The activities



Photos : internet

The global warming, a reality in the Vosges ?

Warming ? Difference in temperature since 1900 in France

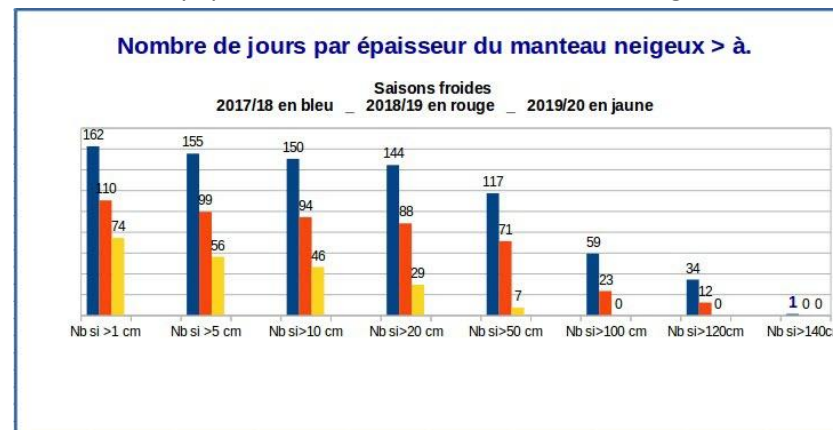


Source : internet Niv'ose

The difference of temperature regarding the average for the time between 1961 and 1990 is mostly negative till the years 1980, then the difference is quite positive and even always positive since 1988.

In the Vosges

Number of days per thickness of the snowmantle during the cold seasons >



Source : internet association Niv'Observations

« according to our observation there is a reduction of the period of snow cover of several days per year. We also have a reduction of the average thickness of the snow cover year after year, as if the Vosges became smaller, as if the plain came closer to the tops. The rain-snow limit, it means the altitude where it starts to snow went over the 900 metres high and reached 1050 metres high these last thirty years. » Pierre-Marie David, president of the association Niv'Observations (3rd of October 2020 – published on the website of the newspaper Vosges-matin)

The question is : « **Will alpine skiing still exist in 2050 ?** » (from the Newspaper l'Alsace on the 20th of December 2020)

The councillors worry and let's note the necessity to « fit France to the climate disorders until 2050 » (<https://www.senat.fr>) :

They notice the following problems :

- « the climate change weakens the pastoral activities » . The global warming has certainly a positive effect because it extends the duration of the vegetation, but the dry periods might become more frequent . Otherwise the periods of frost in spring and fall will have an impact on the resources of fodder crops.
- « The climate change threatens the skiing tourism » especially in the uplands.

And let's note the necessity to retrain and to diversify the tourism by doing an inventory to find out the trumps of each region and to make a « four seasons » offer, if necessary the current drag lift could be taken down. The state is ready to support the way of the diversification. An appraisal will happen with the comparison between the « number of overnight stay off snow » and the « number of snow – overnight stay » .

The answer of the Vosges for the global warming : a being prepared solution : the four seasons tourism

Definition : to propose many activities whatever the season or the weather may be to develop the tourism during the whole year with respect for the environment.

We imagine a weekend in the Markstein in March without snow.

Will we get the „four season“ label? To get the « four season » label with one star the region has to show a 200 beds accommodation and to propose a minimum of three activities in each of the following categories and within a radius of twelve kilometres :

- Sport and nature
- Leisure, relaxation and culture
- Arts and crafts and gastronomy

The activities (most of the photos come from internet)



Trip with the car via the city of Thann : visit of the collegiate church



Walk through the vineyard of the Rangens.



Arrival at the Markstein at the hotel Wolf (36 km from Thann)



Musical dinner with the « joyeux vigneron » (happy wine-growers)



Saturday : 8 km trek from the Markstein (1040 m) to the Grand Ballon (1424 m)



Visit of the dairy of the farm of the Grand Ballon (1100m) and cheese-tasting



In the night : observation of the winter starry-sky



Sunday : Mountainbike in the Bikepark of the Markstein (optional trips)



Alsatian dinner with blueberry tart



An other possibility on Sunday :



Alpine coaster ! (1,2 km, 13 bends)

Unfortunately we cannot yet get the four seasons label : we offer two days in the Markstein, we respect the radius of twelve kilometres and during these two days we don't use the car.

Sport and nature : We offer a trek and a mountainbike trip. We cannot propose a third activity : if there is no snow, we cannot propose a cross-country skiing activity or a snowshoeing hike. The hotel Wolf has space for horses , there is the possibility to organise a ride but the « centre équestre du Grand Ballon » is 40 km away from the Markstein ; there is also a treetop adventure course, but it is 22 km away from the Markstein !

Leisure, relaxation and culture: we propose three activities, a musical dinner, an observation of the winter sky in the night and a trip with the alpine coaster. If we don't want to go in the hotel, we can rent an apartment with sauna and spa in Oderen a village near the Markstein (3,7 km) !

Arts and crafts and gastronomy : We offer the visit of a dairy with cheese-tasting and an alsatian dinner with sauerkraut and blueberry tart (made with local produces), but it is not enough

And by bad weather we cannot propose any activity within a radius of 12 km in the category sport and nature. The Markstein-Grand Ballon area has not yet the whole necessary infrastructures to really become a place of four seasons tourism.

But it is possible to spend a nice weekend by good weather and without a car in the Markstein. See you soon in Aslace !