

THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH EXPEDITIONS COMMITTEE EXPEDITION REPORT FORM

This form should be returned by 1st November following the expedition to The Expeditions Committee Secretary Caroline Maloney via email (carolinemaloney25@yahoo.co.uk).

The information you provide will be used to show produce the Report to the University Court on student expeditions and will also be posted on The University of Edinburgh Expeditions Committee website. Please write the report using non-technical language which is accessible to a wide audience.

Expedition Name: Geo scientific, Mountaineering and Photographic Expedition to Cordillera Blanca and Cordillera Huayhuash of Peru	
Contact name and email address for Expedition: Sergiu George Jiduc; jiduc_sergiu@hotmail.com	
Expedition Location: Peru, Ancash, Huánuco, Lima and Cusco regions – Cordillera Blanca and Cordillera Huayhuash	
Dates of Expedition: 03/08/2012 – 20/09/2012	

Expedition background, members, team and partners: A group of three Romanian climbers, (one of which studying Bsc Environmental Geoscience at the University of Edinburgh formed this year's National Geographic Young Explorers team to carry a scientific and mountaineering expedition in Peru. The expedition was comprised of three members: Sorin Rechitan (expedition photographer), Aurel Salasan (mountaineering and safety) and Sergiu Jiduc (logistic leader). It was funded in part by the National Geographic Society through a Young Explorers Grant as well as private companies and individuals from Arad, Romania. Other organizations with whom we collaborate includes: The National Snow and Ice Data Center, Boulder, Colorado, USA (NSIDC), The Mountain Institute, Deutcher Alpenverein Club and Austrian Alpine Club.

Expedition aims: 1) to reproduce older photographs made by the 1932, 1936 and 1939 Alpenverein Expeditions to Cordillera Blanca and Cordillera Huayhuash of Peru. 2) to compare the old and new photographs and interpret the landscape changes that occurred in the last 80 years. 3) to identify such changes in glacial, vegetation cover as well as human impact evolution 4) to film and photograph the entire expedition, focusing on field activities such as research method, video interviews with local people, climbing etc. in order to create a high quality documentary and photographic exhibitions 5) to provide interested organizations such as the NSIDC and Mountain Institute with updated photographic and video material.

Brief Description of research/activities conducted during expedition: After our arrival in Huaraz, we met with our contact in Peru, Mr Christian Silva, mountain guide, with whom we identified the photo locations more precisely using his knowledge of the area, GPS coordinates and Alpenverein maps. After sorting out logistics we spent three days climbing above 4000m in Cordillera Negra to reproduce six panoramas. Next, we visited a few valleys such as Cohup, Yanganuco and Paron, where we looked at flooding, glacial and vegetation characteristics reproducing more Alpenverein photographs. We stopped the field research for a few days as Aurel Salasan and Sergiu Jiduc climbed Artensonraju 6025m via the South East Face, D+, 800m, 45-75°. The climb has been video recorded. Next, we moved to Cordillera Huayhuash, where we hired four donkeys, a horse and a donkey driver and trekked around Jirishanca, Yerupaja and Sula Grande for six days and reproduced a limited number of photographs. After two days of rest, Aurel Salasan and Sergiu Jiduc attempted a serious climb on Yerupaja 6617m, via the West Face 1000m level difference, the second highest mountain in Peru. This proved to be a very dangerous and demanding climb and due to the high objective hazards (avalanches, bergschrunds, overhanging seracs) we were forced to hide in a crevice for seven hours at 6200m. Eventually, we abseiled the west face using V-threads and snow picks. Back to safety, we left Cordillera Huayhuash and moved to Santa Cruz valley in Cordillera Blanca. Here, we reproduced more photographs and climbed the beautiful Alpamayo mountain 5947m via the French Direct Route 600m D+/TD, 65-90°. In Huaraz, we were involved in a social program with "Changes for New Hope" an organization preoccupied with the improvement of the lives of children living in the Peruvian Andes. During the last week, we visited Lima, Cuzco, Machu Picchu, Puno and Lake Titicaca with the Los Uros floating islands. On the 19th of September we left Peru and after 20 hours of travelling, we arrived in Arad, Romania

Expedition outcomes and benefits: The expedition has been a great success, managing to reproduce around 23 Alpenverein photographs, and taking hundreds more with great scientific importance. Interviews with local people have pointed out serious problems regarding the illegal mining and contamination of the areas visited. Preliminary comparison of photographs shows great changes especially those related to glacial characteristics. The expedition material is being processed by National Geographic Society and our team and will be transformed into scientific papers, travel journal, photographic exhibitions and probably a TV documentary. The NSIDC and the Mountain Institute are interested to update their database with our photographic material and last but not least, all expedition members have learned a lot about running a scientific research project and collaborating with science based institutions as well as people from a different country.