



## 2022 TOP 100 GOOD PRACTICE STORY

Title of the Story: Resilience, a new opportunity for tourism in Paracas

Destination Name: Paracas National Reserve

Country: Perú

Submitter name: Jorge Alonso Cabanillas Loza

Email address: [jcabanillas@sernanp.gob.pe](mailto:jcabanillas@sernanp.gob.pe)

Position: Paracas National Reserve Tourism Specialist

Submission category: *(Please check one of the boxes that indicates the focus of your story)*

*Please find detailed information for the categories below in the Top 100 training module 'Good Practice Story'.*

- Governance, Resilience & Recovery
- Nature & Scenery
- Environment & Climate
- Culture & Tradition
- Thriving Communities
- Business & Marketing

*Find detailed instructions for submitting good practices in the Top 100 training module "Good Practice Story".*

*Should you have any questions on your submission please refer to our FAQ page or contact [top100@greendestinations.org](mailto:top100@greendestinations.org)*





## DESCRIBE YOUR GOOD PRACTICE STORY

*Address each aspect of your good practice story in the different sections being specific including relevant quantitative and qualitative information.*

### Issues faced

*What was the problem/issue solved with the good practice?*

The Paracas National Reserve is the first marine-coastal area in Peru, created on September 25, 1975. It is a protected natural area that conserves a large representative sample of emblematic species such as flamingos (*Phoenicopterus chilensis*) and sea lions (*Otaria flavescens* and *Arctophoca australis*), endemic species such as the Peruvian Potoyuncu (*Pelecanoides garnotii*) and the Paracas Gecko (*Phyllodactylus angustidigitus*), as well as endangered species such as the Peruvian Tern (*Sternula lorata*).

Four economic activities are developed within the Paracas National Reserve: artisanal fishing (approximately 2,500 fishermen), mariculture (approximately 190 mariculturists), macroalgae collection (approximately 300 people) and tourism (annual growth of 14%, with the last important record of 487,000 tourists in 2019). This PNA is important for a large percentage of families in the Ica Region, due to the ecosystem services provided by the PNA and is used by the inhabitants of the region.

Paracas NR along with the Ballestas Islands are part of the Paracas destination, recognized for its high tourist demand due to its attributes and proximity to the capital of the country. 80% of the population of Paracas is dedicated to tourism, and until before the pandemic there was, unfortunately, a disorderly tourism within the northern tourist circuit of the RNP. The dynamics is as follows: in Paracas, they do a full day, which consists of visiting the Ballestas Islands very early in the day (starting at 7 am) and at 10:30 am they visit RNP, which is the time when they receive the largest number of tourists, especially through travel agencies. The other large group that visits the northern tourist circuit of RNP are families, most of them enter with their private vehicles.

Summer, which represents almost 50% of tourists registered in a year, is the time when the greatest impact on the landscape and the habitat of many species of fauna is evident. Since 2019, actions were implemented in order to preserve more effectively the spaces that were used by tourists, such as La Mina beach (RNP's main attraction), where camps were developed, which generated agglomeration, disorder and, above all, a large generation of solid waste on the beach itself. This same scenario was seen in Yumaque beach, a beach approximately 2 km long. In this place, tourists drove their vehicles onto the beach, and because there was no good control over the entry of tourists, it affected not only the landscape, but also displaced the fauna in the area and generated a large amount of solid waste.

### Methods, steps and tools applied

*How was the good practice implemented?*

Starting in the summer of 2019, the head of the RNP begins a process of recovery and regulation, in order to exercise better control of tourists, reduce the impact on the landscape and reduce the generation of solid waste. The most important action was the restriction of camping on La Mina beach,





which allowed a better enjoyment of the beach, improving the experience, there was more and better control over single-use plastic, alcoholic beverages, among other restrictions of an ANP.

Awareness-raising activities began at La Mina beach, which was carried out by volunteer park rangers through recreational activities in which tourists participated.

Through a technical analysis, the carrying capacity of the most representative and crowded beaches (La Mina, Raspón and Yumaque) was measured in order to control the number of people that can enjoy the beaches at the same time.

The work carried out at La Mina beach allowed for better control of the tourists and reduced the impact on the landscape, most notably the reduction of solid waste due to the prohibition of campsites.

Since the reopening of tourism in RNP, thanks to the actions taken during the paralysis of tourism due to the pandemic, the actions taken in La Mina beach started to be executed in Yumaque beach, added to the biosecurity protocols and the various regulations given by the government, a better control of tourists in this beach started to be achieved.

To begin with, access to the beach is pedestrian (vehicles no longer enter the beach as in previous years), there is control of the products with which tourists enter (alcoholic beverages, single-use plastic, prepared foods, pets, etc.), control is carried out by official park rangers and volunteer community park rangers (by 2022 the number of minor activity agreements increased from 23 to 30), and awareness-raising activities were carried out on the beach itself, where there was a large participation of tourists.

Thanks to the actions implemented and the cooperation of several volunteer park rangers, tourism is more orderly and controlled.

#### Key success factors

*What helped you tackle the issues?*

All this work was intended to be replicated in Yumaque beach, a beach that had no control over the entry of tourists, because being a wide beach and wide access, tourists entered with their vehicles to the shore of the beach, having in a summer weekend an approximate of 200 vehicles, which generated a great affectation to the fauna of the area (they displaced the *Haemantopus palliates* or oystercatcher). The generation of solid waste was also considerable, due to camping on the beach and its irresponsible use by visitors.

As a result of the establishment of total quarantine at the national level, due to the pandemic, the tourist activity was interrupted for seven and a half months in the RNP, which allowed the ecosystems





to recover naturally, the displaced fauna recovered spaces that had been affected by the tourist activity and several interventions were carried out in order to preserve the spaces that had been recovered.

This meant an opportunity so that in 2020, the head of RNP can plan and give continuity, through more concrete actions, to the process of landscape recovery and the organization of the tourist activity, such as improving the control of tourists, reducing the impact on Yumaque beach, reducing the generation of solid waste, among others:

- Expansion of a third lane at the Santo Domingo Control and Surveillance Post and maintenance of esplanades, in order to be able to attend to a greater number of tourists, especially in the summer season, reducing waiting time.
- Maintenance of the tourist circuit (viewpoints, restrooms), in view of the reactivation of tourism.
- Placement of signage in areas that had been affected, concrete signs were placed on trails in order to prevent the landscape from being affected by tourists.
- Maintenance of roads with salt road; 20 km of roads were maintained.
- Expansion of 4 km of bicycle lane made with salt road, for the transit of bicycles and ATVs, activities that, after the reactivation of tourism, increased within the northern tourist circuit.
- Expansion of the Yumaque beach parking lot, which increased vehicle capacity from 15-20 to approximately 100-120 vehicles.
- Placement of a 450-meter-long salt fence on Yumaque beach to prevent vehicles from entering the beach itself.

The last two actions mentioned have been very important in terms of the conservation of the fauna that had recovered this space for nesting, in addition to stopping a better control of tourists who enter this beach for enjoyment.

All the actions were considered taking into account: 1) to conserve the recovered spaces and, 2) to prepare for the reactivation of tourism.

#### Lessons learned

*While implementing the Good Practice what challenges were faced, and how were they overcome?*

During the time of the pandemic, we learned that RNP needed some time to recover and as a result, we were able to have a new opportunity to educate ourselves and the tourists who visit us.

It was not only the change in the lifestyle of the people in general, it was a change of mentality, of sensitization that the tourist noticed when visiting RNP. It was also a necessary change for tourists to understand that RNP is not only a place to enjoy, it is also a place where the preservation of ecosystems and biodiversity is a task that we must all carry out.





Although the pandemic caused by Covid-19 caused great havoc, being the tourist activity one of the most affected, this allowed us to plan the way in which we wanted the tourist to visit the northern tourist circuit. In adversity we found an opportunity.

We were able to strengthen control and vigilance within the northern tourist circuit, not only on the part of the official park rangers, but also on the part of the volunteer community park rangers, without whom we would not have been able to control tourists and ensure compliance with the biosecurity protocols that have been in place to date.

Consistency and commitment have allowed us to overcome the challenges, starting with us as ANP, as well as the various tour operators and tourists who, although it was difficult at the beginning, have allowed tourism that was disorderly to become an orderly tourism, which allows the tourist experience to be satisfactory.

#### Results, achievements and recognitions

*What were the qualitative and quantitative results of the good practice?*

For the reopening of tourism in the RNP, coordination was carried out with strategic actors, such as DIRCETUR Zonal Pisco, District Municipality of Paracas, associations of tour operators (travel agencies), representatives of artisans and representatives of major and minor hotels in this way, a joint working group was formed, called the Paracas Destination Management Committee, to reactivate the post-pandemic tourism activity, in addition to strengthening the principles of local governance and obtaining the SAFE TRAVELS seal.

From the reopening until December 31, 2020, 23,543 tourists visited RNP. In 2021, for the first semester 47,450 tourists were registered and for the second semester 231,547 tourists, 5 times more tourists than in the first semester.

In the first quarter of 2022 alone, 240,590 tourists have been registered, being 10% higher than what was registered in the first quarter of 2020 and 14% more than what was reported in the summer of 2019

Entering a new normality demanded hard work on the part of the RNP staff, which would not have been possible without the support of the community volunteer park rangers who were committed, at all times, to support and raise awareness among tourists visiting the RNP, likewise, there was a great commitment on the part of tour operators to ensure compliance with biosafety protocols.

As part of the tourist awareness strategy, a participatory mural was implemented in Yumaque beach, where tourists, mainly children, participated in painting the mural, whose main message is to show the impacts generated by a tourist who is not responsible with the surrounding environment and who





does not respect the habitat of the fauna in the area, which allowed a greater impact on the awareness and sensitization of the tourist.

All the efforts that have been made since the reopening were rewarded with the SAFE TRAVELS international seal, granted by the World Travel and Tourism Council as a result of the implementation of biosafety protocols, whose objective is to ensure that the destinations are recognized as biosafe and of high quality, both nationally and internationally.

The covid 19 pandemic has taught us that opportunities can be found in unfavorable scenarios, which has allowed us to achieve the organization of tourism activity in one of the most representative NPAs and with the greatest flow of visitors in the country. Likewise, nature has shown us that it has been resilient to adversity, recovering spaces that have always belonged to it and that are important to conserve since they are a source of sustainable development for local communities.

The most notorious results:

- Less solid waste on beaches.
- More and better control of tourists, taking into account the increase of tourists compared to previous years (278,997 in 2021, 240,590 in summer 2022).
- Less impact on the landscape (3 ha recovered, of which 2.5 ha were on Yumaque beach) and fauna (American Oystercatcher - *Haemantopus palliatus*).
- Greater commitment from more stakeholders involved in tourism activities.

Finally, joint management and coordination actions have resulted in compliance with SERNANP policies and guidelines, and tourism has been seen as a conservation strategy rather than an end in itself.

#### Additional references

*Provide links to further information. Pictures and videos should be available for download either from YouTube, Vimeo or other Cloud-based (Google/ One Drive) download URL (not WeTransfer).*

<https://www.gob.pe/institucion/mincetur/noticias/302098-ministra-barrios-paracas-sera-unatractivo-ancla-en-una-proxima-reactivacion-del-turismo-interno>

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