



2022 TOP 100 GOOD PRACTICE STORY

Title of the Story: The recovery of the Pómac Forest, a new opportunity for life

Destination Name: *(include any state, province or region)*

POMAC FOREST HISTORICAL SANCTUARY. Lambayeque, Ferreñafe

Country: Perú

Submitter name: Javier David Castillo García

Email address: jcastillog@sernanp.gob.pe

Position: Tourism Specialist - National Service of Natural Protected Areas - Ministry of Environment

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

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

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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 setting for this sustainable history is the Bosque de Pómac Historic Sanctuary, whose objective is to "conserve the Cultural Landscape Unit that makes up the Bosque de Pómac with the Sicán Archaeological Complex".

In this sense, conserving the dry forest of Pómac, its biodiversity, natural resources and cultural environment to contribute to the sustainable development of its local population has been the slogan in the management of the Bosque de Pómac Historical Sanctuary - SHBP, created on June 1, 2001, by Supreme Decree N° 034-2001-AG, over a total area of 5,887.38 hectares, where the greatest biological and archaeological richness is exposed. As a natural protected area - ANP, it is part of the National System of Natural Protected Areas - SINANPE and is administered by the National Service of Natural Protected Areas - SERNANP, which is an agency attached to the Ministry of Environment.

This Natural Protected Area has its own equatorial dry forest ecosystem, where the most representative sample of dry forest in the country is preserved and has managed to withstand and constantly overcome various anthropogenic threats such as: invasion, intensive and extensive cattle ranching, logging, introduction of non-traditional crops, unauthorized truck traffic, and land trafficking, among others.

Threats that threatened the conservation of the Pómac Forest:

- ❖ Until a few years ago, the Pómac Forest was mercilessly depredated, being the INVASIONS one of the threats that generated more damage; since they were illegal practices where the land was appropriated, producing changes in land use, loss of biodiversity and destruction of archaeological heritage. Organized mafias of land traffickers promoted the invasions, supported by a large and disorderly migration of foreign populations, weak legal norms and long trials to resolve these cases.
- ❖ In addition, the SELECTIVE AND ILLEGAL EXTRACTION of carob, sapote and faique opened roads into the interior of the Sanctuary for carts and mules that fragmented and degraded the ecosystem, causing biodiversity loss.
- ❖ Also, FIRE caused by the misuse and/or inadequate practices of the settlers to obtain charcoal led to a drastic loss of biodiversity and its environmental services.
- ❖ OVERPASTURING was another major problem that was combated. The clandestine presence of goats, sheep and cattle (more than 2,000 head of cattle and 200 head of cattle) inside the Sanctuary affected the sustainability of the forest's resources; the debarking of young trees increased the damage caused by drought periods and prevented the natural regeneration of the forest.
- ❖ We can see then that through the comparison of aerial photographs from 2000 to 2008, the advance and depredation of the Pómac Forest could be confirmed, taking it to the limit and endangering the integrity of the archaeological zones, as well as the natural quality of the tropical dry forest formation.





Methods, steps and tools applied

How was the good practice implemented?

The flagship experience, has an initial work, which is based or highlights the successful recovery of this natural protected area invaded, marking a milestone in the history at the national level, an event that took place on January 20, 2009 where the recovery of 1,706. 47 hectares (ha), which were illegally occupied by organized groups of invaders who for approximately eight years deforested and transformed a forested area into agricultural crops, housing and the construction of 70 tube wells, which represents approximately 30% of the total area of the ANP. This eviction was carried out with the support of 1,500 police officers whose social cost was the death of two (02) brave non-commissioned officers of the Peruvian National Police, Carlos Alberto Peralta Padilla and Fernando Hidalgo Ibarra, who gave their lives for the recovery of this protected natural area.

Once the site was recovered and the principle of authority was emphasized, the State, through a joint strategy between the National Government (represented by SERNANP), the private sector, Non-Governmental Organizations, the Academy and the local population, initiated actions to restore the degraded areas to recover the integrity of the 1,706. 47 ha of affected ecosystems, product of the invasion (change of land use), with the objective of rescuing the totality of this ecosystem, which is underrepresented in the National System of Natural Protected Areas - ANP.

This recovery process and especially the restoration has contributed to:

- ❖ Recovering the forest cover and functionality of one of the least represented ecoregions in the country (Dry Forests of Tumbes and Piura).
- ❖ Generate sustainable activities through the use of natural resources and ecosystem services of the Bosque de Pomac Historic Sanctuary as a strategy for the sustainability of the intervention itself, promoting income generation and economic development for the direct benefit of local community enterprises with cultural authenticity related to the Sicán culture, such as handicrafts, ecotourism, and natural products made from resources such as honey and carob, consolidating the Bosque de Pomac Historic Sanctuary as an axis of local, regional, and national economic development.
- ❖ Develop, strengthen, and position tourism activity in the Natural Protected Area, providing opportunities for recreation, outdoor recreation, and enjoyment of the Bosque de Pomac's natural and cultural values, as a key strategy to achieve the primary objectives of conservation, recreation, and education, and to promote the sustainable development of the local populations that live around the Sanctuary.

Key success factors

What helped you tackle the issues?

The key factors were the development of the Master Plan as a management tool for the PNA, the implementation of restoration strategies for degraded areas, the participation of local people as Community Volunteer Park Rangers, the strengthening and formalization of participatory management, and the implementation of alternative sustainable economic activities.





Bosque de Pómac Historic Sanctuary Master Plan.

The first Master Plan of the ANP was elaborated, which has been a basic and KEY management instrument that has ensured the conservation of the Sanctuary, promoting sustainable use through human activities compatible with the category of protection and determining the responsibilities and obligations of the different actors related to the SHBP. Likewise, the MASTER PLAN establishes the ANP's ZONIFICATION, which is understood as a planning tool that responds to the area's characteristics and management objectives, establishing land use levels and norms, and determining the existence of the following zones in the SHBP: Wilderness Zone, Special Use Zone, Recovery Zone, Historic Cultural Zone, and Tourist and Recreational Use Zone.

"Plan of Strategies for the restoration of degraded areas in the Bosque de Pómac Historic Sanctuary".

The implementation of the "Plan of Strategies for the restoration of degraded areas in the Pómac Forest Historic Sanctuary", was key in the recovery of the integrity of degraded ecosystems, achieve their proper functioning and maintain ecosystem services that provide human welfare, such as helping to mitigate climate change, recover endemic species of flora and fauna with different degrees of threat and vulnerable to Peruvian regulations (D. SN°004-2014 MINAGRI) as Critically Endangered - CE to the white-winged guan, plants such as sapote, hualtaco, palo santo; Endangered EN species such as the Peruvian Cortarrama, coastal boa, vulnerable species such - VS as the rufous tule, the spectacled bear, and the carob tree, allowing the restoration of the forest to resemble the original and to develop a structure in the successor plant community, uniform with the surrounding ecosystem.

Buffer Zones.

These are the areas adjacent to the Natural Protected Areas - NPAs. In these areas, a participatory strategy was implemented with the involvement of the organized population of the Buffer Zone (ZA) through the Community Volunteer Park Ranger Program (which at the time was part of the invasion processes), which is considered the largest of the National System of Natural Protected Areas - SERNANP, which has 280 local people, recognized and accredited through the SHBP Chief Resolution No. 0008-2019-SERNANP_JEF , who actively participate in the restoration practices and are implemented with public and cooperation resources; This experience and way of working is the one that will be scaled up in other interventions within the NPA and neighboring areas important for biodiversity conservation. The role of the local population is clear, especially the way in which the population takes ownership of the problem and feels the need to maintain the restored area in the future since it provides ecosystem services, on which their economy is based.

Participatory Management - Management Committee

Bosque de Pómac Historic Sanctuary promotes participatory management, which should be understood as the involvement not only of public and private entities, but also of the local population, as a key strategy to achieve the conservation objectives of the Natural Protected Area - ANP. In this sense, there is a Local Management Committee (Directorial Resolution N°059-2022-SERNANP-DGANP), composed of 03 Interest Groups: Tourism, Natural Resources and Culture, being the scenario of voluntary citizen participation of greater importance for the management of the ANP, currently formed by 101 actors, of which 44 are actors "Users of Natural Resources (Populations, Communities, Civil Organizations)", 33 from the public sector, 21 from the private sector and 03 are non-profit organizations and/or other cooperation institutions, where it is highlighted that 35 allies (35%) are part of the Tourism Interest Group. Thanks to this space, all these actors linked to the Sanctuary volunteer to support its management in close coordination with the Forest's management, in actions of surveillance, protection, conservation, environmental education, tourism, among many others, and their contributions and commitments are finally included in the Protected Natural Area's Management Instruments.





Responsible and sustainable use of the forest.

Another experience of the integral actions of restoration that has allowed the population of the buffer zone (BA) to continue to benefit from ecosystem services, corresponds to the responsible and sustainable use of forest resources and landscape resources. In this sense, it should be noted that the Pómac Forest has been implementing several grants of rights for the development of tourism, under the modality of AGREEMENTS, through which it has allowed the generation and economic development of various local enterprises for tourism purposes that, due to the type, frequency and scale of business involved, are developed by local populations of the Natural Protected Areas and are recognized by SERNANP. Likewise, another type of Right Granting modality that has been promoted with the private sector in the Sanctuary is the tourist service contracts, which have contributed to develop and strengthen tourism activity within the protected natural area as a competitive, profitable, and sustainable activity.

Lessons learned

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

The inhabitants of the Buffer Zone are the Sanctuary's living frontier, so the limitations established for access to the Natural Area are compensated by their participation and involvement in the diverse technical proposals that the Area's Management assists and accompanies together with the local population; This allows them to participate in various programs and competitive funds and thus strengthen their private enterprises based on the sustainable use of natural resources associated with the Pómac Forest and the entire Biological Corridor, thus contributing to the conservation of the last dense dry forest of carob trees in Peru and the generation of local economic development.

Through the planning and development of the tourist activity in the Pómac Forest, it has been understood and established how TOURISM can and should provide economic benefits to the Natural Protected Areas - NPA, to the local populations surrounding the area and to other interested groups related to the tourist activity or the NPA, as well as providing opportunities for knowledge and interaction between human beings and their environment, strengthening the interest in the conservation of natural and cultural values; This has allowed us to diversify and consolidate a competitive TOURISM OFFER, through the development of innovative tourism products and services, prioritizing those linked to culture, gastronomy and nature.

By eliminating threats from urban expansion and livestock, the ecosystem has been restored and has 6 dominant species in the original forest, which gives it resilience characteristics to withstand periods of extreme drought in the area (dry forest), also fulfilling its functionality with the presence of plants, animals and soil with organic matter. This has reestablished the nutrient cycle, decomposition, plant-animal interaction, trophic networks and spatial diversity of habitats, permanent recruitment of plants of different ages, providing environmental services, which are currently exploited through beekeeping by the inhabitants of the Buffer Zone who participate during the application of restoration strategies.

The participation of the local population has contributed significantly to conservation actions through the Community Volunteer Park Ranger Program, which has become an important ally for the conservation of the area. It is important to note that this local population (who were once part of the invasion processes) actively participates in restoration practices implemented with public and cooperative resources, actions that should be expanded within the natural protected area to include biodiversity conservation corridors for these strategic ecosystems.





Results, achievements and recognitions

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

The barriers to herbivory threats from extensive cattle ranching have been eliminated, with the installation of a 6 km 400m. live fence and the participation of the villagers who prevent their domestic animals from entering the area under restoration. The barriers to seed dispersal and insect pest attacks have been eliminated, because we have 71 bird species with 2,613 individuals on average, 124 mammals on average, 354 reptiles on average that feed on fruits and insects. The restored ecosystem presents the 6 main species: *Capparis scabrida*, *Prosopis pallida*, *Capparis avicenniifolia*, *Grabowkia boerhaaviaefolia*, *Acacia Macracantha*, *Pithecellobium multiflorum*, ensuring the continuity of the ecosystem.

Understanding that the Cultural Heritage of the Bosque de Pómac Historic Sanctuary is closely linked to the Natural Component, we can say that all the efforts made to achieve the conservation of the PNA, guarantees the preservation of the most emblematic sample of the typical plant formation of carob tree or dry forest of the Equatorial Dry Forest Ecoregion, which is unique in the world. Let us not forget that the Equatorial Dry Forest is the main habitat of the Tumbesian Endemism Region (RET), which gathers about 800 bird species (8% of all species worldwide) and 55 endemic bird species (16 of them threatened), and is one of the four most important bird endemism zones on the planet. It is also home to a unique biological wealth and is an important source of development for the country.

To date, the total restoration of 1,706 hectares has been successfully completed, which represents 30% of the Natural Protected Area, complying with the Master Plan 2017 - 2021. The restoration of this degraded Area has also allowed the population of the buffer zone (ZA) to continue to benefit from ecosystem services such as ecotourism and experiential tourism, handicrafts, forest products such as honey and carob, etc.; through Grants of Rights for the sustainable use of:

NATURAL RESOURCES. - There are seven (07) Minor Activity Agreements for the use of honey-producing flora (beekeeping).

NATURAL RESOURCE LANDSCAPE. - Six (06) Minor Activity Agreements and three (03) Tourism Services Contracts have been signed with the main operators in the region.

Thanks to this, more than 150 local inhabitants of the Buffer Zone have benefited, demonstrating that it is possible to coexist with the life of the forest as long as the activities are carried out in an organized and responsible manner in the authorized areas.

Finally, it is important to indicate that all these results are the product of the strategy of recovery and restoration of degraded areas and thus has allowed the generation of opportunities for the development of sustainable activities such as TOURISM, which has undoubtedly been a KEY AXIS, where in 2019, the last year that allows us to see a measurement of the benefits in the local economy until before the pandemic of COVID 19, a tourist flow of 20, 471 visitors was recorded, generating economic income from resources directly collected through the sale of tourist tickets, of S/. 103,410.00 nuevos soles (\$ 27,576.00 USD); and that in the year 2021 (Post Pandemic) has had the resilience to gradually reopen the various activities and services which has generated a flow of 10,392 visitors and a revenue of S/. 56,959.00 nuevos soles (\$ 15,189.00 USD).





In this sense, it has been possible to order and diversify the tourist and recreational activity in the tourist area of the Bosque de Pómac Historical Sanctuary, through an efficient management based on the control of environmental impacts, involvement of local actors and improvement of the visitor's experience, thus contributing to the conservation of the Dry Forest ecosystem and the historical and archaeological heritage, and on which the following recognitions have been obtained:

- ❖ The Regional Government of Lambayeque, through Regional Executive Resolution N° 403-2018-GR.LAMB/GR, delivered the CONDECORATION "CULTURA SICÁN", to the HISTORIC SANCTUARY FOREST OF PÓMAC, for being a model of participatory social management, in order to strengthen the natural and archaeological elements, promoting the economic and social development of the communities in the buffer zone.
- ❖ The Ministry of Foreign Trade and Tourism, through the National Tourism Quality Plan - CULTUR, implemented the QUALITY SEAL for the Management of Tourist Sites of CULTUR, which highlights the Bosque de Pómac Historic Sanctuary, being the only tourist site to achieve this outstanding certification and national recognition as GOLD LEVEL.
- ❖ The Ministry of Foreign Trade and Tourism awarded the SAFE TRAVEL International Seal to the Bosque de Pómac Historic Sanctuary as part of the Lambayeque Destination, which allows us to establish measures and actions for prevention and control in order to reduce the risks of transmission and spread of COVID-19 and thus contribute to ensure the development of a safe and responsible tourism activity for visitors, for the staff in charge of visitor management, as well as tourism service providers.
- ❖ The Ministry of Foreign Trade and Tourism awarded the TOP 100 GREEN DESTINATION international seal to the Bosque de Pómac Historic Sanctuary, for being one of the nine (09) tourist destinations in our country that are on the important "Top 100 Sustainable Destinations List", a worldwide recognition that rewards the most respectful tourist destinations with the ecosystem and the minimum impact on the environment and local culture.
- ❖ It is very important to highlight that the Bosque de Pómac Historic Sanctuary is currently in the process of being recognized worldwide by UNESCO for the declaration of MIXED WORLD HERITAGE OF HUMANITY: NATURE AND CULTURE, having already been selected in the Indicative List with the title: "Ceremonial Centers and Forests in the Valley of La Leche".

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).

Please, check documents in the drive link:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/123B4tzfcOctvxYZsq18gZah5Z6PRYVn3?usp=sharing>

Also, you can review the following video:

<https://twitter.com/MINCETUR/status/1462556431194865664?t=2E7MPFa6hh2iqcDEnfjDWQ&s=08>

