



2023 TOP 100 GOOD PRACTICE STORY

Title: "CONSERVATION UNION FOR THE HISTORIC SANCTUARY OF MACHUPICCHU"

Destination, Country: Machupicchu Historical Sanctuary - Perú

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In the category: Destination Management Environment & Climate Thriving Communities
 Nature & Scenery Culture & Tradition Business & Marketing

The Story in a picture:
Towards Sustainable Tourism without Plastic



Summary:

I would like to start with a phrase of my own "You can only love what you know and what you love you protect and preserve"; to mention that the Historic Sanctuary of Machupicchu is a beautiful piece of the planet that not only keeps mysticism and majesty by the presence of the Inca culture but by the species of flora and fauna that inhabit it, are unique and important in the process of balance of ecosystems and highlight that the Inca population has kept in the construction of their buildings, harmony and synchronism with nature and under that context today, together with tour operators we started this adventure of falling in love with nature, protecting it.





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GOOD PRACTICE STORY

Before 2016, in Caminos Inka, one of the Sanctuary's main attractions, there was waste dumped on the road, water sources and surrounding areas; this led to meetings with representatives of the tourism sector to promote the creation of the Committee of Environmental Promoters, identifying problems, solutions and those responsible for their implementation.

Based on the solid waste characterization study, the protocol for the minimization and reuse of containers has been implemented with the support of kitchen staff, which is being implemented under three pillars: Responsibility, commitment and articulation; achieving a reduction of 18.7% of waste generated by the tourism activity in relation to 2016 (77.13 tons). And between 2017 and 2019 we have managed to reduce single-use plastic by 30.42%; likewise, we managed to eradicate technopor and sorbet on Inka trails.



Good Practice Story:

Destination description

Brief background of the destination.

Machupicchu Historic Sanctuary is one of the 76 natural protected areas found in Peru, located in the district of Machupicchu, Urubamba Province in the department of Cusco, at an altitude between 1700 and 6200 m.a.s.l. It comprises three (03) ecoregions covering an area of 37,302.58 ha. It comprises three (03) ecoregions covering an area of 37,302.58 ha. In this area there are valuable cultural vestiges dating back to pre-Hispanic times, associated with a variety and important native fauna, of which many species are classified as endangered, such as the spectacled bear (*Tremarctos ornatus*), cock of the rock (*Rupicola peruviana*), Tanka (*Mazama chunyi*) and flora specimens among which the Filícineae and Orchideaceae families stand out. There are 14 ecosystem services (gas regulation, disturbance regulation, water quality, erosion control and sediment retention, soil formation, nutrient circulation, pollination, biological control, genetic resources, climate regulation, water supply, shelter or habitat, recreation and culture).

Issues faced

Problems/issues solved with the Good Practice Story.

Before 2016, the presence of solid waste was observed scattered in the Inka Trail system and its surroundings; as well as, the throwing of food for consumption in their original packages without being used. There was something that caught my attention, literally found in the resting points, small holes where it was up to 40 candy wrappers and / or cookies per hole and it was common to see plastic bottles, expanded polystyrene containers and 3/8 DOITE balls on the road, under the moss and stones; it was common to find watered alkaline batteries discharged at the train station at Km 107 (point where the support staff takes the train heading to Ollantaytambo). There was a segregation at the source that did not allow for any other destination for the waste because it was limited to separating organic and inorganic waste and to complement this, the final destination of the waste was the Haquira dump in the city of Cusco where it was not handled properly and all the waste was mixed together without having a better opportunity for transformation.

Likewise, it is worth mentioning that each year the generation of solid waste has been reported, observing for 2016: 77.13 Tn, 2017: 70.67 Tn, 2018: 68.60 Tn, 2019: 65.43 Tn, 2020: 4.64 Tn, 2021: 17.11 Tn, 2022: 62.71 Tn.

Additionally, in the post-pandemic stage during the process of reactivating tourism activity, for food safety measures and to reduce the probability of Covid 19 infection among users of the Inka Trail Network, tourism operators resumed the use of single-use plastic.

It is important to note that at the beginning of this experience with tourism operators there was not a very good relationship between the private company and the state, a fact that complicated in some ways the approach and implementation of lines of action to strengthen solid waste management.

At that time (2016) waste was observed scattered on the Inka Trail and surrounding areas, causing visual impact with a huge possibility of soil and water source contamination that could have damaged the ethology of the fauna species and affected the flora existing in the ecosystems surrounding the Inka Trail.

Methods, steps, and tools applied

Solutions implemented to address the sustainability problems or issues.

Due to the lack of a space for dialogue between private enterprise and the state to socialize the problem, legal representatives and/or managers of the tour operators (decision makers) were invited to workshops to socialize the environmental problem we had at that time, establishing with them short and medium-term lines of action.

1. In view of the visual impact of waste disposal, workshops were held on the problem of solid waste in the Inka Trail Network, which allowed us to show the situation at that time and, together with them, discuss the environmental problem, identify solutions and which entities or individuals would be responsible for implementing the solution, establishing time frames and responsibilities.
2. The tour operators were astonished when they realized the environmental problem that was occurring on the Inka Trail, feeling disconcerted and ashamed of the contamination that was observed; therefore, they decided to change this situation considering as an opportunity the formation of the Committee of Environmental Promoters of the Inka Trail System, which allowed them to give sustainability to the proposed solutions identified in the workshops, thus achieving the development of working meetings where the steps to follow were evaluated.
3. The private company implements environmentally friendly actions with the natural environment (minimization, segregation at the source, reuse, and no dumping of waste) and Sernanp commits to carry out the operational part with efficiency considering having trained personnel, constant verification of the implementation so that all operators join the change, training support personnel on issues related to proper management of solid waste, and improving the operation of solid waste.

Likewise, all this enthusiasm is summarized in the predisposition and initiative to develop environmental actions (clean-up days, forums, fairs of products friendly to nature, among others) events that are carried out under the tenor of co-organization, this has been strengthening the link between private enterprise, the state and civil society.

4. Recognition of the commitment of the private company who developed the change of its internal policies in the reduction of single-use plastic and alkaline batteries, eradication of the expanded polystyrene and sorbet, promote the minimization and reuse of packaging with the use of canteen or camelbacks, use of egg-holders, condiment holders, cloth bags, vegetable nets, among others.

Key success factors

Critical elements that led to successfully solving the issues.

The commitment and articulation between private enterprise and the state allowed the strengthening of alliances based on trust and co-organization, considering of importance the direct involvement of the legal representatives and/or managers of the travel and tourism agencies, as well as the involvement of the suppliers of the companies in the training workshops, allowing them to promote new forms of delivery of the products at the time of purchase under the knowledge of the process of minimization and reuse.

The involvement and commitment of the kitchen staff made it possible to update the protocol for the minimization and reuse of containers, since they are the ones who establish how the food products should be carried during the trip.

Likewise, the constancy in the development of training workshops allows the strengthening of the capacities of the administrative personnel, guides, support personnel and cooks, responsible for waste of the Travel and Tourism Agencies in topics related to the adequate management of solid waste; fact that, the change is recognized in all labor levels (office or field personnel), spaces (office or field) generating environmental culture among the personnel either of the private company or Sernanp personnel, making a multiplying effect with the members of their families.

Lessons learned

Challenges faced while implementing the Good Practice and their solutions.

Tour operators and Sernanp have learned that together we can conserve the Machupicchu Historic Sanctuary by identifying ourselves as protagonists of change, implementing our environmental commitments and being aware that a small action can achieve great results.

The change of attitude has a multiplying effect and this experience has allowed us to join efforts between the tourism sector and the environment, strengthening us over time under three pillars: responsibility, commitment and articulation, pillars that have been allowing a culture of sustainable environmental awareness; that the change is in us and that together we can reverse the negative environmental externalities that our planet faces.

Under the tenor of "You can only love what you know and what you love you protect and conserve" we began the implementation of environmental actions identified in the workshops and that together with the tour operators we set in motion. These actions allowed us to analyze that it is not only a tourist route, it is not only work, it is a majestic place with a wonderful natural environment where extraordinary species live, some only live in Machupicchu, other species are being violated in other places; all of us, the lovers of the Sanctuary come protecting and conserving what we love, this beautiful place is synthesized in one word, LIFE.

Achievements and Results

Direct and indirect results of the Good Practice.

- It was possible to strengthen the capacities on issues related to the proper management of solid waste to more than 4,000 people who work as support staff in travel and tourism agencies that allows environmental awareness in the participants. As well as, to 5,286 people from local populations settled inside the ANP. As of 2022, the reduction of solid waste generation has been achieved by 18.7% compared to 2016 where the amount of 77.13 Tn has been generated. Likewise, a per capita production of waste generation of 040 kg/person has been observed.
- Between 2017 and 2019, a 30.42% reduction in single-use plastic has been achieved.
- For the year 2022, due to food safety measures and to reduce the probability of contagion by Covid 19, an increase of 5.8% in the generation of single-use plastic was observed, which is being regulated again.
- Expanded polystyrene and sorbet have been eradicated from the Inka Trail Network.
- There are three types of materials: informational and awareness materials for tourism operators and/or visitors through an interinstitutional cooperation agreement between Yaw Runa Simi and Sernanp to promote conservation of the Sanctuary's ecosystems and flora and fauna species. Likewise,
- The illustrated story "El mundo de Yaw y Yamille" (Yaw and Yamille's world) is being jointly promoted for students. Likewise, the characters of this story are communicational pieces

with which informative and sensitizing infographics have been elaborated; and audio-visual material has been elaborated in reference to the rules of conduct for the adequate handling of waste during the visit to the Sanctuary.

Our goal for 2023 is to reduce single-use plastic to 75% and to reduce the generation of solid waste by 10% from tourist activity on the Inka Trail network; to this end, we plan to implement mechanisms to integrate the guides, considering that they are responsible for the organized group of the Inka Trail network and the integration of civil society made up of the local population of the Sanctuary and its buffer zone. On the other hand, identify and implement an important communication plan to ensure the strategy development to strengthen the solid waste management as part of the Natural Protected Area conservation.

With the actions developed, it was possible to conserve the ecosystems that had been damaged by the presence of waste, improving water quality, soil conservation and recovery, which contribute to carbon sequestration; they are also the main source of food, provide clean air and water, and are the habitat of millions of species of flora and fauna and their interaction, which makes it a unique place.

Likewise, these environmental actions have had the effect of self-regulation, a process that is being carried out by tourism operators who have been developing this strategy in tourist routes outside of the protected natural area; and therefore the application of the strategy is in the process of being sustainable in time and space.

Tips for other destinations

Your suggestions or recommendations for other destinations facing the same issues or implementing similar solutions

It is important to generate spaces for consultation where the voice of all is heard and identifying that the problem of inadequate waste management is a global difficulty due to the lack of responsibility of humanity on the waste that each one generates -use and throw-, that we make it our own by habit or custom, that we normalize irresponsible consumption and we are not even aware of the negative effects of our actions to the detriment of the natural environment and our own health.

However, when we listen to ourselves, we can identify situations and implement measures against irreversible or reversible events in a context of commitment to ourselves, to others and to the planet. United under a single t-shirt "I am a generator, I am responsible for my waste" we can develop environmental actions for the conservation of ecosystems and their inhabitants - in my opinion - is the beginning of the development of a culture of change and this constant change over time will strengthen our environmental awareness and at some point we will speak of this culture transcending from generation to generation.

Recognitions and Additional references

Recognitions and awards the Good Practice received and supporting evidence.

The Machu Picchu National Sanctuary is one of the most visited attractions in the country considering that by the year 2022, 155,064 users have visited it in the RCI and at the same time, it has several recognitions such as:

- On December 9, 1983, Machupicchu was declared "World Heritage Site" by UNESCO, recognition in which places of Natural or cultural transcendence are located for the common heritage of Humanity.
- In 2007 it was declared one of the seven new wonders of the world, after a contest organized by the foundation "New 7 Wonders", award given in a ceremony held in Lisbon.
- Machupicchu was recognized as a "CARBON NEUTRAL" destination. This recognition is a source of national pride and the result of a joint effort between local civil society and the public and private sectors on September 2, 2021, awarded by the Green Initiative certification company.

Machupicchu was chosen as the best tourist attraction in South America 2022 by the World Travel Awards. This important recognition was achieved for the fifth consecutive year, after obtaining it in the 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021 editions of the prestigious international contest. The Machupicchu Historic Sanctuary has carried out different activities and actions in favor of conservation, which are evidenced by the following links:

1. Large cleanup day at the Machupicchu Historic Sanctuary shows evidence of waste reduction on the Inka Trail: <https://www.gob.pe/institucion/sernanp/noticias/667641-gran-jornada-de-limpieza-en-el-santuario-historico-de-machupicchu-evidencia-reduccion-de-residuos-en-camino-inca>
2. SERNANP YAW Inca Trail: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0pedl8oCHyk>
3. SERNANP conducts a major cleanup of the Inca Trail network in the Machupicchu Historic Sanctuary: <https://www.minam.gob.pe/gestion-ambiental/2017/02/28/sernanp-realiza-gran-jornada-de-limpieza-en-la-red-de-caminos-inca-del-santuario-historico-de-machupicchu/>
4. Machu Picchu Sanctuary cleanup day reduces waste on the Inca Trail <https://andina.pe/agencia/noticia-jornada-limpieza-santuario-machu-picchu-reduce-residuos-camino-inca-917009.aspx>
5. Sernanp cleans Inca Trail network at Machupicchu Sanctuary: <https://www.inforegion.pe/237995/sernanp-realiza-limpieza-en-red-de-caminos-inca-del-santuario-de-machupicchu/>
6. TOUR IN PERU worked on the 2018 Inca Trail Cleanup and Conservation Campaign organized by SERNANP: <https://www.machupicchu-tours-peru.com/blog/tourinperu-campana-limpieza-camino-inca-2018>
7. The Ministry of Environment led the recovery of areas degraded by land use change or forest fires that have caused forest loss with the reforestation of the cinchona tree: https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=pfbid02eSiQFrLiTKLJGCRhC6cit7aNtZQ7cEtXFEkPcGuqQt7jXcx7WBpkHD83mUV2tJtJI&id=100064590286053&mibextid=Nif5oz
8. Inca Trail clean-up campaign 2017 - TOUR in PERU : <https://bit.ly/3NZtjAU>
9. World Water Day, the Headquarters of the Machupicchu Historic Sanctuary developed various actions for its celebration, in order to generate awareness and inform about the benefits that natural protected areas provide: <https://bit.ly/3NWNShp>
10. The Headquarters of the Historic Sanctuary of Machupicchu of SERNANP, together with the staff of the National Archaeological Park of Machupicchu developed the solid waste cleanup campaign in the Piscacucho sector in commemoration of the International #FreeOfPlasticBags Day, a date that seeks to raise awareness in people about the negative impact of use for the environment:



https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=pfbid0hoYoG3XR8jQWFz2nCTxty9Z4AEGcMLTiHKS2qzKT36SfjHwQVAMYLDc81TRGYG4al&id=100064590286053&mibextid=Nif5oz

11. Participation in World Recycling Day:

https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=pfbid033c7NkHB1NLDQ2jasZNZeSGN4S36U4XMYpHXh5hNnCeBma9kTke8EV2mWTdLnLDGXI&id=100064590286053&mibextid=Nif5oz

12. Forum: Sustainable Tourism through proper management of solid waste:

https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=pfbid027kGK1AjaHTGHpAyL93HVP8P4SmU3csieLF5BZtcRxqCFURJz7z4LfXGbjLbrQjtl&id=433924339980809&mibextid=Nif5oz

13. I Virtual Forum: Solid Waste Management in ANP: <https://fb.watch/IKR2gPMHo-/?mibextid=Nif5oz>

14. Solid Waste Management in Natural Protected Areas:

https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=pfbid0HZU9ehK6NuRN85Ge24Dj8jSjVqXWoATRfRqCdXCaHqno8XnxNudtgWCucZRMj4oFl&id=433924339980809&mibextid=Nif5oz

