



2023 TOP 100

GOOD PRACTICE STORY

Title: Titicaca National Reserve, preserving for the original populations of Lake Titicaca

Destination, Country: Titicaca National Reserve, Puno - Peru

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

The Story in a picture:

Uros Titino tourism entrepreneurs receiving their agreement for the formalization of tourism activity on their floating reed islands.



Summary:

Since the first expeditions to Lake Titicaca, the Uro's floating reed islands have fascinated visitors. The unplanned start of tourist visits to the floating islands and the social unrest of 2006, between native peoples and the Titicaca National Reserve, generated informality in tourism activities and distancing from the Protected Natural Area. With the strategy of rapprochement in the Ccapi Uros Titino sector, it was possible after 08 years to regain trust and mutual respect, and in 2016, the formalization of tourism activities was achieved, benefiting 40 families, the formalization of tourism associations and women artisans, capacity building, commitments for conservation, gradual increase of visitors, visibility before authorities and participation in tourism promotion events, and improvement of the quality of life by obtaining extra income from tourism.



Good Practice Story:

Destination description

Brief background of the destination.

The Titicaca National Reserve protects a representative sample of Lake Titicaca, where there are exceptional characteristics of wild flora and fauna and scenic beauty, as well as, peculiar traditional uses of natural resources by the circumlacustrine inhabitants in harmony with the environment in the sectors around the mouth of the Ramis River and between the Capachica peninsula and Esteves Island. It was created on October 31, 1978, with an area of 36,180 ha (DS N° 185-78-AA). Its creation objectives are: "To guarantee the conservation of its natural and landscape resources and at the same time the socioeconomic development of the surrounding populations through the rational use of wild flora and fauna resources and the promotion of local tourism.

In this unique natural area, nature and native peoples, descendants of the Quechua, Puquina, Aymara, and Urus, coexist.

The territory is located at an altitude of 3,810 m.a.s.l. between the provinces of Puno and Huancané in the department of Puno. As part of Lake Titicaca, the area is rich in endemic hydrobiological species such as 23 species of the Orestias genus, amphibians like the giant Titicaca frog, and birds like the Titicaca grebe. It is also part of a wetland of global importance, being considered a RAMSAR site since 1997, as it is a resting place for a wide variety of migratory bird species.

Issues faced

Problems/issues solved with the Good Practice Story.

Currently, the Titicaca National Reserve is the only form of conservation of the Lake Titicaca ecosystem and plays a fundamental role in the conservation of biological diversity in the Lake Titicaca ecosystem and for the Puno region. The cattails, conserved for 45 years, preserve a unique diversity of bird and fish species, of which 01 is endangered (Titicaca giant frog), others are endemic to the Altiplano of Peru and Bolivia (Titicaca grebe) and others are visitors from boreal and austral latitudes. Also, located in the ecoregions: Lake Titicaca and Punas húmedas del Titicaca with 36, 180 hectares and has as objectives: To guarantee the conservation of its natural and landscape resources and in turn the socioeconomic development of the surrounding populations through the rational use of the resources of flora and wild fauna and the promotion of local tourism.

In recent decades the tourism sector began to grow in Puno and with this, the floating islands of the Uros began to be visited more frequently by researchers, academics, religious and others. In this way, tourism on the floating islands began. At the beginning, visitors only left donations, but as time went by, families became organized and consolidated their organization in the eighties, with the ownership of a communal space in the area of Chulluni, Comunidad Campesina de Uros Chulluni. The organization and indomitable nature of the Uros people led them to take over the tourist administration of the area they occupy within the Titicaca National Reserve in the early 2000s. In 2006, a social conflict arose between the Uros, native Quechua and Aymara populations, and the Titicaca National Reserve, a representative of the Peruvian State, as a result of restrictive regulations on the use of totora reeds. The regulations at the time identified the cattail as a forest product and a fee had to be paid for its use, as well as disregarding the pre-existing rights of the surrounding native communities. This was detrimental to the pre-existing rights of the native peoples and generated social conflicts between the Park Rangers, who had to enforce the current regulations, and the native populations that used the totora for cattle feed, medicine, house construction, q'esanas (handmade mattresses) and others.

As a result of the social outburst, the Peruvian government established dialogue with the native Uro, Aymara and Quechua populations that use the natural resources of Lake Titicaca. The conflict ended with the creation of a law that recognizes the ancestral rights of the original circum-lacustrine

peoples (Uro, Quechua and Aymara) of Lake Titicaca. As a result, the Titicaca National Reserve began a process to improve social relations with the native populations. As a result, the local population that uses natural resources within the Natural Protected Area organized themselves into Conservation Committees, which in turn decided to form the Association of Native Conservationist Peoples (Asociación de los Pueblos Originarios Conservacionistas - APOC). These actions are carried out with the prior consent and at the request of the native population, with a favorable response from the Quechua and Aymara native populations. On the other hand, the Uro population chose to move away from the Titicaca National Reserve.

Faced with this sensitive social scenario and the growth of tourism in Puno, the increase of floating islands occurred without any type of planning or professional support.

Methods, steps, and tools applied

Solutions implemented to address the sustainability problems or issues.

According to Law No. 26834, Law of Natural Areas Protected by the State and its Regulations (Supreme Decree No. 038-2001-AG), regulate the management and conservation of Natural Protected Areas, in accordance with Article 68 of the Political Constitution of Peru. The aforementioned Law and its regulations promote the development of strategic alliances with local populations, such as peasant and native communities, respecting pre-existing rights, social and economic organization, which must be exercised in accordance with the objectives of the Natural Protected Area.

The objective of the Titicaca National Reserve is "the socioeconomic development of the surrounding populations through the rational use of wild flora and fauna resources and the promotion of local tourism," which is why biological monitoring, surveillance and control, participatory management, natural resource management, and landscape resource management (tourism) activities are being carried out, however, the latter had not been possible due to the Uro people's refusal to work with the Natural Protected Area and formalize their tourism activity. The Uro population is currently settled in 03 sectors: Huile River (known as Uros Chulluni), Ccapi Uros Titino and Ccapi Cruz. The Huile River sector is where tourism began and where it has become the main economic activity.

Since the social outbreak in 2006, the actions of rapprochement and recovery of trust with the Uro population have not ceased, obtaining resounding refusals.

In 2013, the expansion of tourism activity in the Ccapi Uros Titino sector was identified, so a strategy was planned to reach out to the community to prevent the uncontrolled growth of floating islands and the social problems that this entails.

The strategy consisted of formal meetings with community authorities, informal visits, fellowship visits and coordination with social programs.

Initially, formal requests for meetings to introduce Titicaca National Reserve personnel to the community were denied in their entirety.

In view of this situation, it was decided to make informal visits to the floating islands, which were initially rejected by the older members, but accepted with curiosity by the young people. With this first advance, they began with the visits of fellowship, which were to participate in their anniversary, championships and articulate with social organizations that provide support on dates such as Christmas, Mother's Day and other dates. This approach grew until the community accepted the formal presentation of the Titicaca National Reserve in 2014. During 2015, we applied the articulation with social programs that collaborate for the elderly, support for mothers and children, visibility of the San Pedro de Ccapi - Uros Titino community before local, regional and national authorities and began training to explain the advantages of conducting a formal tourism activity, orderly and in partnership with the Protected Natural Area.

In 2016, the outreach strategy was consolidated by getting the inhabitants of the floating islands of the Ccapi Titino sector to choose to formalize their activity and request an agreement for the

provision of tourism services. The AGREEMENT N° 001-2016-SERNANP-DGANP-RNT, is signed between the floating island sunrise Uros Titino and the Titicaca National Reserve, with the objective of carrying out activities of Experiential Rural Tourism inside the Natural Protected Area and where both parties acquire environmental and social commitments. Until this year, the inhabitants of the floating islands of the Ccapi Uros Titino sector remain committed to the Natural Protected Area, contributing directly to the conservation of the Titicaca National Reserve and benefiting from the articulated and formal work. This type of agreement has the great relevance of having achieved that part of the Uro population is a formal ally of the Titicaca National Reserve - SERNANP, contributing to the co-management of tourism in the Natural Protected Area.

Key success factors

Critical elements that led to successfully solving the issues.

The main success factor was the governance exercised by the Titicaca National Reserve - SERNANP to promote the sustainable development of the local populations that use resources in the Natural Protected Area. The Natural Protected Areas' management offices have functions such as preparing management documents that allow for the orderly use of natural resources and the landscape (tourism), as well as approval, implementation and monitoring. In this sense, the Titicaca National Reserve established guidelines for the development of tourism activities by the local population in order to grant rights under the Agreement for the Provision of Tourism Services and Temporary Activity Permits. Another important factor was the strengthening of the institutional presence in the sectors where the Uro population lives. The monthly visits established a relationship of trust and respect between specialists, park rangers and islanders, which helped raise awareness among the population about their rights as indigenous peoples, the benefits of formality and the conservation actions carried out by the Natural Protected Areas for the indigenous populations.

Lessons learned

Challenges faced while implementing the Good Practice and their solutions.

Initially, the Uro population of the three sectors were reluctant to join the Titicaca National Reserve due to the social conflict of 2006, lack of knowledge about the work of the Natural Protected Areas, bad experiences with other government institutions and the permanent neglect by the government. Therefore, the visits to the sectors with Uro population were intensified, in a cautious manner, seeking to regain the trust of the inhabitants. These actions had different results in each sector with Uro population: In the Huile river sector (Uros Chulluni), the minimum confidence to work together has not been achieved, but the transit along the Huile river was retaken, in Ccapi Cruz it was possible to carry out environmental education sessions in the elementary school and in Ccapi Uros Titino it was possible to carry out environmental education sessions in the primary and secondary school, as well as, work with the tourism and handicraft associations.

Upon entering Ccapi Uros Titino with greater confidence, a major difficulty was identified: the lack of associativity in the community and among the islanders with tourism plans, so work was done in parallel with the presidents of the floating islands and with the Community's board.

As a result of the confidence gained in the Ccapi Uros Titino sector, the Head of the Titicaca National Reserve decided to hire a tourism specialist to continue working on tourism co-management, request a larger budget for technical visits and assistance actions, and take advantage of the knowledge of professional park rangers (anthropologists).

Achievements and Results

Direct and indirect results of the Good Practice.

The main benefits obtained are: in 2017, formalizing the organization of the islanders with tourism initiatives forming the Ccapi Titino Association, composed of 06 floating islands and about 40 families benefited, and in 2022, the formalization of 02 associations of women artisans and about 40 families benefited.

It should be noted that the associativity problems identified were not a problem in themselves, it was understood that the associativity model is according to their traditions and idiosyncrasies and this does not fit the classic associativity of the peasant communities in the region, so the work has had a cultural approach, respecting their traditions and organizational system.

With the subscription of six (06) Agreements for the Provision of Tourist Services in the Ccapi Uros Titino sector, in an area of 489.38 ha. benefiting about 40 families directly, a mechanism for the conservation of the cultural heritage of the Uro ethnic group, traditions and ancestral customs of sustainable use of cattail is generated, reducing the pressure on species for human consumption and improving the quality of life of the inhabitants, by having an extra economic income.

The indirect benefits identified range from climate change adaptation actions, considering that the Titicaca National Reserve is one of the main Natural Protected Areas affected, to the enhancement of the region's tourism image and its main tourism product.

This work allows the tourism entrepreneurs of the Uro population of the Ccapi Uros Titino sector to assume responsibilities such as cleaning the cattails, safeguarding the tangible and intangible heritage of the Uro ethnic group, community surveillance actions and others, actions that result in 87% of the Titicaca National Reserve being in a good state of conservation, which directly benefits the native Uro, Quechua and Aymara populations. On the other hand, the Titicaca National Reserve has numerous recognitions that contribute to the conservation of biodiversity, such as being a hierarchy 4 tourist attraction, the highest level in the country, safeguarding the ancestral territory of the native Uro people, having the recognition of Green Destinations Top 100 - 2021 and the Safe Travel Seal as a safe destination to visit in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Tips for other destinations

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

Our main recommendation as the head of a Natural Protected Area that coexists with native communities of three important ethnic groups for the country and the highlands of the South American region is to observe, listen and have personnel who speak the languages of the area and have basic knowledge of social conflict prevention.

It is also important to assimilate and work in accordance with the organizational systems of each ethnic group or community, without imposing positions, in order to reach a consensus that allows for horizontal dialogue. It is also important to manage funds for initial outreach activities and to maintain institutional presence in the area. Finally, we must have the conviction, tolerance and respect for the community to continue with the approach, despite the refusals, only then we can be trusted by the native communities.

Recognitions and Additional references

Recognitions and awards the Good Practice received and supporting evidence.

Drive of information support

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1LDHmAzi7900CawYFwStiWzDYcMs72eUn?usp=sharing>

Law for the Creation of the Titicaca National Reserve

https://drive.google.com/file/d/19NFxB4gpNTfcRBTjRQKOwcyHbZ8pZuJ_/view?usp=drive_link

Recognition as a RAMSAR Site

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ZTQ7Nw5cb3EcUMKINOkvFSFkz8x3ksLm/view?usp=drive_link

Titicaca National Reserve Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/RNdelTiticaca/>

Press release: Top-ranking tourism resource in the world

<https://www.gob.pe/institucion/sernanp/noticias/492443-reserva-nacional-del-titicaca-recibe-maxima-categoria-como-recurso-turistico-en-el-mundo>

Press release: Formalization of the tourism business

<https://andina.pe/agencia/noticia-acuerdan-fortalecer-turismo-sostenible-las-islas-uros-titino-622508.aspx>

<https://www.facebook.com/SERNANPPERU/posts/desarrollo-sostenible-sernanp-e-islas-uros-titino-firman-acuerdo-para-la-actividad/1327224913954406/>

Press release: Participatory Management in the Titicaca National Reserve

<https://www.gob.pe/institucion/sernanp/noticias/78363-comites-de-conservacion-de-puno-reafirman-compromiso-con-proteccion-de-biodiversidad-y-recursos-de-reserva-nacional-del-titicaca>

Press release: Safe Travel Seal

<https://www.gob.pe/institucion/mincetur/noticias/504865-destino-puno-lago-titicaca-recibe-el-sello-internacional-safe-travels>

<https://www.regionpuno.gob.pe/gobernador-regional-el-sello-safe-travel-permitira-seguir-reactivando-el-sector-turismo/>

<https://larepublica.pe/economia/2021/07/07/mincetur-puno-lago-titicaca-recibe-el-sello-internacional-safe-travels>

Press release: Green Destinations Top 100 - 2021

<https://andina.pe/agencia/noticia-destinos-verdes-entregan-reconocimientos-al-titicaca-ruta-del-cafe-y-bahuaja-sonene-865170.aspx>

<https://radioondaazul.com/lago-titicaca-y-la-ruta-del-cafe-seran-promocionados-en-reconocida-pagina-de-turismo-sostenible-a-nivel-internacional/>