



**Good Practice Story Title:** Preserving our forests to enjoy their scenic beauty

**Destination:** Allpahuayo Mishana National Reserve

**Country:** Perú

**Submitting Organization:** Nydia Eléspuru Urro

**Category:**

Destination Management

Nature & Scenery

Environment & Climate

Culture & Tradition

Thriving Communities

Business & Marketing

**Destination description:**

The Allpahuayo Mishana National Reserve (RNALM) was established on January 15, 2004, by Supreme Decree N° 002-2004-AG, over an area of 58,069.9 ha, with the main objective of conserving the biological diversity and habitats of the varillal and chamizal forests on white sand, which belong to the Napo Ecoregion, as well as the black water flooded forests (“igapó”) of the middle basin of the Nanay River.

The importance of conserving natural resources is linked to maintaining the scenic beauty of the landscape in the protected natural area. The activities carried out in the area, as part of sustainable natural resource management, are a reference point for tourism and recreation, generating economic benefits for the communities living within the protected natural area. The communities take advantage of palm fruits such as aguaje, ungurahui, and huasai, as well as irapay leaves and round wood. They promote experiential, adventure, and nature-based tourism.

**Summary of Good Practice Story:** Before the tourist destination was established as a protected natural area, the local and foreign population overused the natural resources, using destructive harvesting techniques, which generated conflicts due to the progressive depletion of the main natural resources, which are the basis of the local economy.

Therefore, the establishment of the Allpahuayo Mishana National Reserve became the best way to defend the rights of the local people against illegal foreign extractors and, at the same time, an opportunity for the local population to learn how to sustainably use the natural resources through the implementation of management instruments, strengthening the population in the community management of natural resources. As a result, it has been the communities themselves who have seen tourism as an opportunity to take advantage of the natural resources of the landscape.





**Issues faced:** The populations settled within the tourist destination before its establishment as a Natural Protected Area were characterized by uncontrolled and illegal extraction of all types of forest and wildlife resources, mainly by outsiders; by the absence of management instruments or internal control in the communities, as a result of the prevailing practice in the region of “open regime” or “free access” to natural resources; by the generalized disorganization and fragmentation of the communities; by the general lack of information on management techniques and legislation related to natural resources; and by the general overexploitation of key natural resources of flora and fauna; disorganization and fragmentation of the communities; generalized lack of information on management techniques and legislation related to natural resources; as a consequence of all of the above, generalized overexploitation of key natural resources of wild flora and fauna; generalized use of destructive harvesting techniques (logging of fruit trees, use of toxins and explosives for river fishing, use of “tramperas” or “armadillos” for hunting, etc.); growing conflicts over the use of natural resources in the area; and the existence of a growing number of conflicts over the use of natural resources, such as the use of “armadillos” for hunting, increasing conflicts over resource use between communities and with outsiders; and deepening poverty as a consequence of the progressive depletion of the main wild resources, which are the basis of the local economy. Therefore, under this scenario, implementing tourism was impossible to happen.

**Solution:** The establishment of a nature reserve becomes the best defense of the rights of local people against illegal foreign extractors, who usually have no other interest than immediate profit, and plunder natural resources without thinking about the future, because once the natural resources of a particular place are exhausted, they continue looking for another site to continue their unbridled extractive activity. In addition to strengthening community management of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems, with emphasis on white sand forests (varillales), black water flooded forests (tahuampas) and lakes (cochas), along with diversification and support for sustainable production, in order to generate new sources of income and improve the socioeconomic wellbeing of the communities in the Allpahuayo Mishana National Reserve.

Allpahuayo Mishana National Reserve, not only guarantees the sustainable use of resources by local populations - which in areas of free availability are inexorably overexploited - but also allows for their recovery, which is unlikely to happen outside of a protected area. Between 2002 and 2003, the Master Plan for Allpahuayo - Mishana National Reserve was developed. The consultation process for the master plan has been one of the most participatory that has ever taken place in Peru. A total of 24 consultation workshops were held, including local workshops in all of the reserve's communities and its area of influence, as well as zonal and final workshops. Management instruments such as the Master Plans that have been in place since the reserve was established as a national reserve, the monitoring and control plan, the natural resource management plans for sustainable use, and the Tourism Use Plan have been key to raising community awareness in favor of conservation. With sensitized communities it is easier to promote sustainable tourism through planning and diversification. Therefore, we find that through awareness-raising in favor of natural resource conservation, tourism has been implemented as a valuable strategy.

**Methods, Steps, and Tools applied:** The Peruvian Amazon Research Institute, responding to its commitment to the Allpahuayo Mishana National Reserve, promoted the development of projects to work with local communities. In addition, the management of the Allpahuayo Mishana National Reserve joined efforts in a coordinated manner through surveillance and control actions to mitigate threats inside and outside the protected natural area. In order to promote sustainable natural resource use activities, potential resources to be used under management plans were identified. These management instruments lead to formalization through the granting of rights, which is an important axis for tourism to be considered a valuable strategy for biodiversity conservation, thus generating environmental, social, and economic benefits for the local





population. However, it would not have been possible to promote tourism as a conservation strategy without the alliance generated with the communities through participatory efforts for the development of management instruments, capacity building and environmental education.

SERNANP's policy is to achieve effective management in a natural protected area (ANP) by demonstrating, with reliable indicators, the good conservation status of the prioritized environmental elements of biodiversity, the sustainable provision of ecosystem services associated with these elements, and the generation of benefits that contribute to the wellbeing of the society committed to their conservation.

To achieve this effectiveness, ANP management must be carried out taking into account four approaches: ● The ecosystem approach, which seeks the integrated management of land, water, and living resources, promoting their conservation and sustainable use in a fair and equitable manner. ● The multilevel territorial integration approach seeks to integrate NPA management into the territory along with local, regional and national dynamics. ● The participatory approach, which seeks at all stages of the management cycle the effective involvement of different stakeholders to achieve conservation objectives of common interest. The adaptive approach is based on the premise that the management of a ANP is completely dynamic and, therefore, the variables in an initial planning scenario can change to different foreseen or unforeseen scenarios. In ANPs, the adaptive approach is implemented through the adaptive management cycle or management cycle, which has four stages: 1) the planning stage, which is carried out at the time of preparing the ANP Master Plan, where the objectives and respective strategies are established to achieve their success; 2) the implementation stage, where the activities planned in each strategy are executed; 3) the monitoring stage, where reliable information is generated for an evaluation of the effectiveness of the management carried out; and 4) the feedback stage, which allows planning to be fed back based on learning.

For natural protected areas to be of greatest benefit to society, they must also cover the conservation of aesthetic, cultural and spiritual values that provide inspiration and motivation. Over the past decade, much attention has been paid to the value of protecting areas for the conservation of biological diversity; however, considering the cultural and spiritual values associated with biological diversity allows a better balance to be struck between the emphasis given to the tangible and intangible aspects to be conserved in order to maximize their contribution to society.

**Achievements and Results:** The protected forests in the Allpahuayo - Mishana National Reserve, with its more than 58,000 ha, undoubtedly contribute to improving the quality of the environment in the city of Iquitos by being an important provider of environmental services: they absorb CO<sub>2</sub> and emit oxygen, mitigate temperature changes, and regulate humidity and water flow in rivers and streams, thanks to evapotranspiration and the gradual release of water precipitated by rainfall. The Nanay River, which supplies water to half a million inhabitants of Iquitos and satellite towns, and receives 100% of its water from rainfall, could run dry or be reduced to a stream of foul-smelling water in the summer if the forests in the watershed are destroyed. The reserve protects about 90% of its forests in good conservation status, helping to maintain a constant flow of good quality water for the city. There are 498 bird species registered in the national reserve, of which 239 species were sighted during the last Global Big Day. Therefore, well-preserved forests provide food and shelter for birds and generate opportunities for economic activities.

The long-term conservation and sustainability of the tourism destination is more feasible thanks to the active participation of the communities, both in the planning and management of the destination. Thanks to the communities' awareness of resource protection and sustainable use of the landscape resource, it has been possible to have conserved forests and, as a result, they have seen tourism as a sustainable economic





opportunity to generate benefits for the communities themselves, who have organized themselves into community associations to formally operate and provide tourism services.

**Lessons Learned and Advice:** Maintain the conviction that the conservation of Amazonian biodiversity will only be possible if local communities are protagonists and benefit directly from it; and that the development of Amazonian local communities will only be possible based on rational and sustainable management of biodiversity resources. The key to this is to raise awareness about the protection of nature and its forests.

Integrating and generating alliances with the communities in such a way that they can recognize the range of opportunities to be generated from the conservation of forests and natural resources and their sustainable use, through management plans without the need to destroy, has helped tourism activities to develop, taking as a basis the four guidelines of sustainable tourism management to consider tourism as a biodiversity conservation strategy, thus potentiating as a tourist destination.

## Recognitions and Additional References

SERNANP (2022). Allpahuayo Mishana National Reserve Master Plan.

<https://sis.sernanp.gob.pe/biblioteca/?publicacion=2563>

Site Plan for the Nanay Tourism Sector, the Biodiversity Route tourism sector and the Nueva Esperanza tourism sector: <https://foldersgd2.sernanp.gob.pe/index.php/s/Nxh4WaPKXXQrwqt>

Tourism and Recreational Use Plan for Allpahuayo Mishana National Reserve.

<https://sis.sernanp.gob.pe/biblioteca/?publicacion=1673>

Surveillance and Control Plan for Allpahuayo Mishana National Reserve.

<https://sis.sernanp.gob.pe/biblioteca/?publicacion=2338>

Institutional video of the Allpahuayo Mishana National Reserve. <https://bit.ly/436lNtX>

Video about the importance of conserving the forests of Allpahuayo Mishana National Reserve:

[https://fb.watch/stGXcMrh\\_6/](https://fb.watch/stGXcMrh_6/)

Alvarez\_documentotecnico\_2007.pdf:

[https://repositorio.iiap.gob.pe/bitstream/20.500.12921/279/1/Alvarez\\_documentotecnico\\_2007.pdf](https://repositorio.iiap.gob.pe/bitstream/20.500.12921/279/1/Alvarez_documentotecnico_2007.pdf)

GlobalBig Day2024 was a great success in the Allpahuayo Mishana National Reserve:

<https://www.facebook.com/share/p/ep61iocLPvzXCDDk/?mibextid=xfxF2i>

