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AQUA-PROGRAM TO PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE ECOTOURISM IN COLOMBIA MOORLANDS

RESUME

The tourist development of the CITARÁ moorland and its areas of influence is based on the sustainable use of its natural and cultural tourist attractions, as well as those of the hydrological environment, through the design and execution of programs for the management, installation of the adequate tourist plant and infrastructure to support the development of nature tourism, in accordance with the objectives of sustainability in its economic, environmental and cultural dimensions of the site and the connectors that form the tourist and recreational activities of the area. For this reason, it is important to highlight the participation of the communities in the development of tourist activity, which they can contribute as a valid alternative to improve local living conditions and undoubtedly help to conserve natural environments and, above all, cultural heritage. through proper planning and control of resources, where ecotourism activity can become an important source of income.

Keywords: Tourism development, management, ecotourism, community participation, sustainable tourism.

1. INTRODUCTION

Colombia is a country that possesses invaluable natural and cultural wealth, with unique characteristics due to its geographical position, the presence of the Andes Mountain range and the influence of marine currents that give rise to the existence of a wide diversity, not only in geographical and climatic terms, but also in biological, archaeological and cultural terms. The interest of visitors arriving in Colombia has varied significantly in recent years, with a tendency to carry out various activities related to the natural environment.

Ecotourism has become an activity in full development, aimed at generating new sources of work at the community level, and acts as a positive factor on local society.

The province of Cañar has enormous potential for the development of ecotourism, since it has a variety of resources of tourist interest. Such is the case of the CITARA moorland canton, possessor of a natural, cultural and archaeological wealth, resources that can be used for the rational and sustainable use in the development of this activity; This canton is considered a new sector of tourism development at the national level.



2. Theoretical framework

The current development of tourist activity is every day more demanding, competitive and of quality, and goes beyond mere technological, administrative, marketing and knowledge innovation (know *how*) that encourages current changes to be understood from the perspective of visitors and/or tourists and in the way they perceive their relationships with the geographical and cultural environment.

For this reason, the concept of alternative tourism is proposed as a new model that is based on the search for experiences and unique experiences, which are not repeated, in a quality environment.

The actions that local administrators must understand and carry out when planning tourism in their living space must consider that alternative tourism activities and sustainable development must go hand in hand, seeking the quality offered on three fronts: use of leisure time visitor, geographical environment of the destination and social environment of the receiving community. Therefore, the basic trend is that said tourism quality is achieved through some specific actions, such as training and education, the conservation of heritage and the environment, as well as the improvement of the image of the destination.

For this reason, if effective governance is desired, work must be done on the cooperative functionality between the public and private sectors, as well as on the involvement of local communities in the participation and decision-making and actions in their local management., in order to generate a culture of sustainable human development.



It is necessary to define the culture of human development of sustainability. According to Meadows (2015), "a sustainable society is one that endures through generations, sufficiently foresighted, flexible and wise not to undermine the natural or social systems on which it is sustained", which involves actions that the being development in its economic, social and cultural spheres. In this sense, it becomes necessary to understand that more than a way to improve the quality of life of man and achieve economic development, sustainability aims to find a way to preserve the environment for present and future generations.

To achieve this goal, work must be done to satisfy needs through the efficient use of local resources, the planning and development of an efficient sustainable infrastructure, the protection and improvement of the community's quality of life, the creation of companies that provide goods and services that protect the environment, the development of a natural ecosystem and the creation of sustainable communities.

One way to achieve this is through the alternative tourism approach, which should help the tourist and/or visitor to perceive differently their relationships with the geographical and cultural environment, with other tourists and with their hosts; that seeks sustainable development in direct and indirect, public and private actors, tourists and visitors through development and economic order, environmental sustainability and social equity, all with the idea of generating adventure tourism and ecotourism activities.

It is important to develop and design experiences and experiences that are unique, unrepeatable, personal, in a quality environment, as well as to generate recreational tourism and rural tourism activities characterized by quality in the use of free time, the quality of the geographical environment and the social environment.

At present, labeling any natural area as "ecotourism" is not enough to turn it into what it is not. For this reason, it is necessary to clarify that ecological tourism cannot be classified as that which takes place on land with a single environmental factor, such as sun or snow, etc., since they are places visited by people whose motivation is not to observe nature. In addition, it is worth keeping in mind that not every natural area is an ecological place, since for various reasons the experiences do not reach that level.

According to Bouillon (2003), four conditions are necessary for ecotourism activities to take place:

- A protected natural area whose environment contains biomes (places where living species of flora and fauna develop) of tourist interest.
- An administrative system that conditions the types of visits and instructs tourists about the characteristics of what they are going to see.
- The satisfactory experiences of the user to the knowledge of the visited ecosystem.

- A tourist exploitation that does not endanger the bases of its operation.

It is important to point out that projects and administrators responsible for conditioning a natural area must ensure the following:

- In any natural area, the best facilities and the best buildings are those that are not seen.
- When using construction materials, the use of cement, steel and plastic should be avoided.
- Use traditional construction techniques.
- Make simple designs, with quality, useful for the tourist operation and for the protection of its environment.
- Avoid monopolies by granting concessions.
- All concessions must contemplate an environmental plan.

Additionally, it is important to take into account the “tourist-ecology” relationship with the “permanent resident-ecology” relationship, which are different in several points, namely:

- The presence of each tourist is occasional, because once the stay has elapsed, they are replaced by another tourist who restarts the experience.
- Attacks on the environment by visitors are the product of carelessness, indifference or ignorance, but very rarely are they caused by the mere pleasure of harming.
- The use of natural space by tourists is occasional, therefore, the extraction of some memory occurs due to lack of information and surveillance.
- The permanent settlers are those who daily carry out irrational systems of exploitation of the land that deteriorate the ecosystem, as well as those who speculate with visitors and/or tourists.
- It is practical to indicate to tourists the behavior to observe when they enter a natural space and penalize when there is a place for it.

The UNWTO reinforces this vision, and in its publication *The British ecotourism market* (omit, 2001) states that ecotourism should include the following characteristics:

- It is a form of tourism in which the main motivation of tourists is the observation and appreciation of nature, as well as the traditional cultures prevailing in natural areas.

- Minimizes negative impacts on the natural and cultural environment.
- Supports the protection of the environment by generating economic benefits for local communities, organizations or authorities responsible for the conservation of natural areas, creating jobs and income opportunities for local people and increasing awareness on the importance of preserving natural and cultural resources.



In UNWTO terms:

Ecotourism is a form of nature tourism in which maximum attention is paid to the conservation of the environment, including biological diversity, wildlife and ecological systems, with an emphasis on educating tourists about the environment and how to keep it. (Unto, 1999a).

Ecotourism areas often encompass existing communities, with a traditional character; therefore, ecotourism planning should seek to preserve local cultural traditions and identities and bring benefits to these communities.

It is important to indicate that tourism is generally classified as conventional and alternative.

Conventional tourism is a rather passive type of tourism, which is carried out in different cities and different vacation centers that have the comfortable and necessary means for rest. It is subdivided, in turn, into two subgroups (OMT, 1993, p. 12): sun and beach tourism and cultural tourism (history and art).

Alternative tourism, also called active, is one whose means of action will be contact with nature, taking advantage of natural geographical accidents, to apply in this way the physical and technical preparation of man. This type of tourism is subdivided, in turn, into two subgroups: green or nature tourism and adventure tourism; It also considers rural tourism, agrotourism and ecotourism.



Rural tourism and agrotourism are forms of tourism that use the homes of farmers or ranchers to provide accommodation and breakfast to visitors. The structure of the rural space is based on small towns scattered throughout the territory and on estates, farms or haciendas; it is easy to allocate some rooms to accommodate tourists.

As nature is still present, these areas/zones are still ecosystems, but of a completely different class (cultural ecosystems) from those that serve as the basis for ecotourism. For this reason, more than observing nature, the traveler who is fond of rural tourism is interested in knowing the productive techniques and the peculiarities of the way of life and work in the countryside. These types of tourism allow you to enjoy a quiet holiday, without crowds, receiving family treatment, in direct contact with the rural environment and nature.

Agrotourism and “town tourism” are similar in terms of the environment in which they are developed and the social and economic impacts they can have on the communities; however, they have some aspects that differentiate them.

Agrotourism "is carried out on agricultural holdings (farms or plantations) that supplement their income with some form of **tourism**, generally providing lodging,

meals and opportunities for familiarization with agricultural work" (OMT, 1999d, p. 86).

An important limitation that arises for the development of this type of tourism is that the majority of people who live permanently in rural areas are of low and low average social status, therefore, much lower than that of potential visitors. Peasants are limited in their possibilities of developing this activity in their home, since it often does not have some minimum comfort characteristics (good toilets, showers, adequate beds, etc.).

Village tourism is a form of tourism consisting of “tourists residing in or near villages and [who] become familiar with the traditional ways of life of the population. The town can also serve as a base from which tourists explore the surrounding area” (WTO, 1999d, p. 85).

This form of tourism is quite similar to agrotourism, but there are two aspects that differentiate it from the former: visitors do not stay in the peasant's house and do not participate in the activities of an agricultural exploitation. For reasons similar to those of agrotourism, village tourism has been little developed in our country, and the peasants who want to take advantage of it require the same support as those who want to develop agrotourism, that is, they will have to be trained to provide services of quality and advise them to obtain the credits.

2.1 Evaluation of local tourism resources

Resource assessment in an area or community that is contemplating developing or expanding tourism activity should be carefully considered. This appreciation contributes to correctly deciding the necessary potential for the development or expansion of the activity, which, if so, will define the appropriate modality. This exercise is a study of the feasibility of developing the tourism activity in which its potential is verified and which contributes as a basis for detailed planning work.

In the study area, the following *attractions* and *activities* related to the evaluated tourism resources are considered:

Natural environment. Observation of wildlife, walks, exploitation or use of the different natural features, to determine adventure tourism activities such as hiking, rock climbing, mountaineering. The climate of the area must be analyzed in detail in relation to the characteristics of attractiveness.

cultural heritage. Opportunities to visit archeological sites, entire historic buildings or districts, monuments, industrial enclaves, picturesque towns and roads, ways and styles of life.

Other aspects of cultural heritage. Dance, music, theater, traditional costumes, cuisine, architecture and traditional urbanism; performing arts that offer opportunities for theatrical performances; fairs and festivals; production and sale of crafts and typical products; visits to towns and development of rural tourism.

3. Methodology

The realization of this research project follows the guidelines that the UNWTO determines in its *Agenda for local planners*, according to which the elaboration and application of a strategic plan for sustainable tourism development are specified in the chain of a series of phases and tasks that evolve and are consistent with each other, in which the success of each of them is derived from the correct development of the previous one, focused largely on the acceptance of their conclusions by the whole of local society where the tourist activity has its special section. The project seeks, among others, the following objectives:

1. The balanced and sustainable development of the town and its main attraction.
2. The rational and responsible use of the territory and its resources.
3. Administrative coordination.
4. Become an instrument that, in the hands of local public management, promotes the improvement of the quality of life of citizens.

The proposed methodology extends to five phases and eight tasks, outlined below (omit, 1999b):

Phase A. Secondary research and field visits

Task 1. Organization and management structure: collection and collection of information and data

Objectives: Collect data from natural and cultural tourist inventories of the gad, service records, maps, photographic files, CDs, books, magazines, brochures, management plans for protected areas, among other documents (establish a list in advance of a file documentary and bibliographic index).

Compile data and documentary files.

Phase B. Strategic diagnosis

Objective: To base the different strategies based on the results of the diagnosis in order to establish and sustain the chosen development model.

Task 2. External analysis – Study of tourism demand

Objective: Investigate visitors to the canton in order to establish their tastes, desires, motivations and needs, as well as determine the degree of acceptance of the services offered.

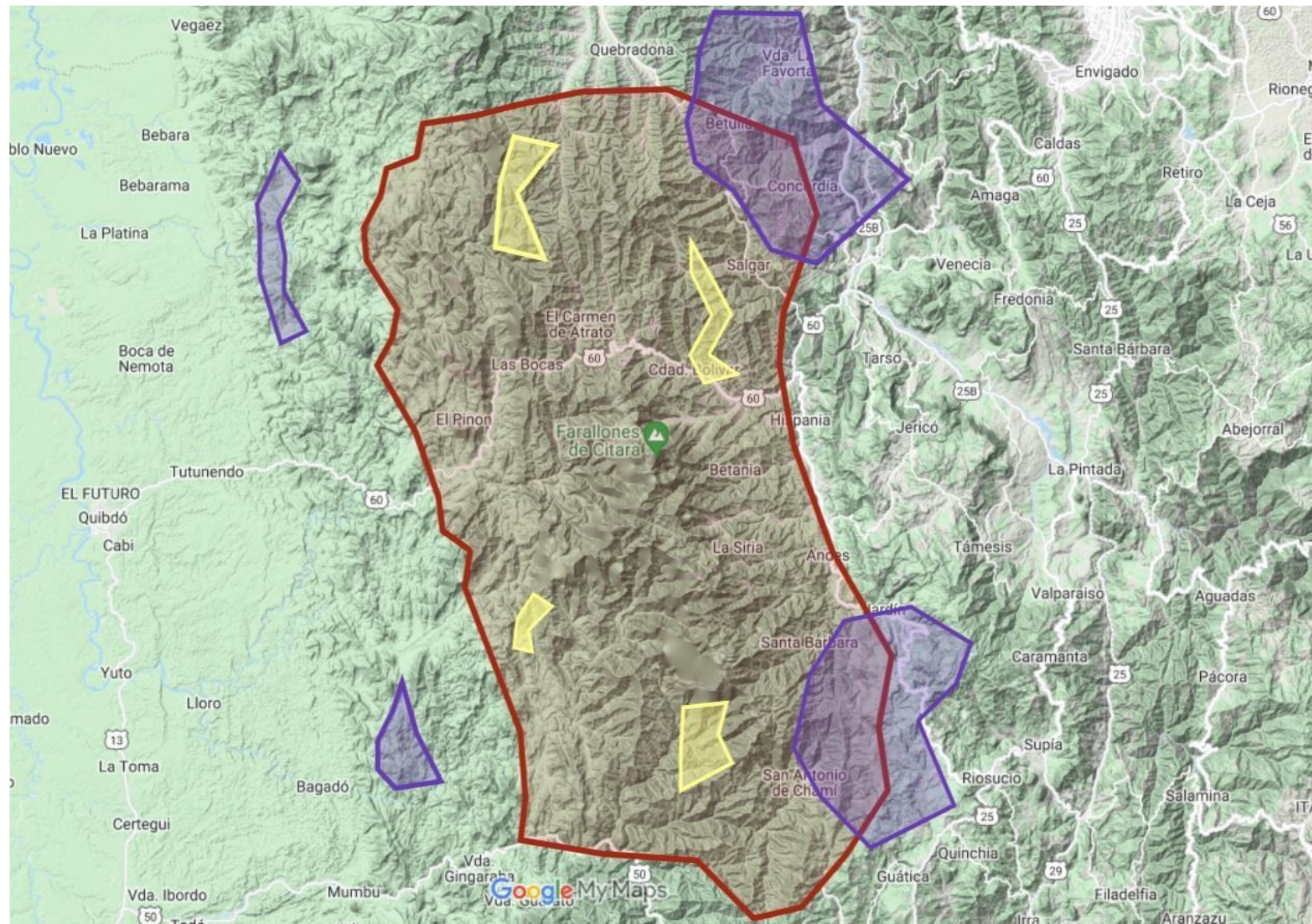
Task 3. Internal analysis – Provision and community tourism management

Objective: Analyze the operating capacities and the characteristics of the community to carry out tourist activities. For this, a study of the visitor is carried out by means of which their characteristics, tastes, desires, motivations, stay, activities, etc. are identified. A survey is applied to the local community –and the data is tabulated– to identify and treat the factors of the territory and the community (with greater control capacity by the community), emphasizing the strengths and weaknesses of the community. local tourism system with respect to the selected strategic issues. Among these internal factors could be those related to local fairs and festivals, if they are significant for the specific destination analyzed.



Task 4. Elaboration of the swot matrix

Objective: To know the current and potential situation of the tourist activity in the community. To carry it out, it is necessary to analyze its strengths, weaknesses,



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CONVENTIONS

	Project area
	Emberá indigenous cities
	Illegal mining hotspots

Elevations

	0m – 1,000m
	1,000m – 2,000m
	2,000m – 3,000m
	3,000m – 4,000m

Scale

1cm = 5,000m

Country: Columbia

Province: Chocó

144Km² in the Emberá indigenous territory

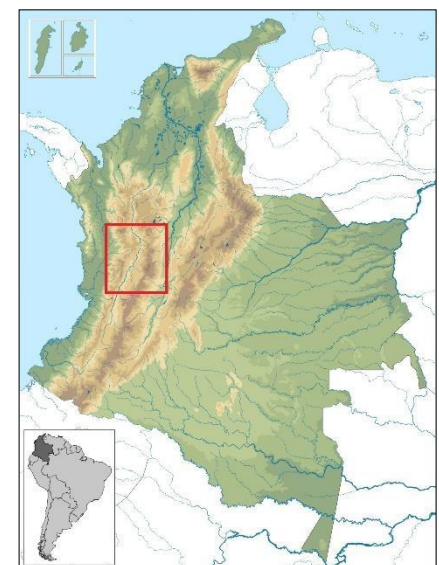
Geographic coordinates: 5°46'13.9"N /

76°03'57.5"W

CITARÁ moorlands

Sources:

- WOMEN FOR BIODIVERSITY ORG
- IMAP, wildlife information database
- Google maps



opportunities and threats (SWOT analysis). The analysis must be both explanatory and predictive, this means that the causes that explain the current situation (positive or negative) must be discovered. In addition, the SWOT analysis must provide elements that allow us to predict with some degree of certainty what will happen to tourism in the future if the current trend continues.

Phase C. Tactical phase, objectives, actions, projects

Task 5. Establishment of strategic objectives derived from the diagnosis

Objective: Establish strategic goals based on the results of phase B regarding external analysis (opportunities and threats) and internal analysis (strong and weak points at the local level), to achieve sustainable tourism development in this specific reality.

Task 6. Strategy design

Objective: To guide the public and private actions of a sustainable tourism model in the locality which allows the achievement of the established objectives and their achievement, making it necessary to prioritize the effectiveness of the design, taking into consideration two criteria: the different effects of your application and the resources available for it.

Phase D. Programmatic proposal: programs and projects of the plan

Task 7. Development of the plan

Objective: To guide the diagnosis made, the objectives set and the strategies selected. In this way, the document of the plan itself is obtained, which must be approved within the collective participation bodies, and whose publication, presentation and dissemination will be essential as another instrument of social pedagogy to support the proposed tourism model.

Phase E. Execution, evaluation, control and feedback mechanisms

Task 8. Instrumentation and feedback

Objectives: opt for a planning instrument and select the monitoring system, as well as the indicators that best adapt to each place. All this linked to destinations, indicators, sources of information and related institutions,

with the idea of limiting the possible negative impacts derived from tourist activity that can have a significant impact on competitiveness and sustainability.

To achieve the aforementioned goals, this process must be understood from an inclusive and long-term dimension of policies and cultural, social, economic and environmental aspects that concern the territory to be considered. Citizen participation must be counted on and it must be functional –in the sense of adapting to the different regional structures– as well as prospective, since it must take into account the trends that affect its dynamics.



The study is structured by phases that seek to consciously select an economic action alternative and consequently promote a certain tourist option for the Solano parish and CITARA moorland.

The so-called structuring of the tourist space is the basis for planning the sector in the future, which is based on the global vision of tourist destinations defined in the *planetary 2020* (Ministry of Tourism, 2007). The elaboration of maps by zones, areas, centers, corridors, tourist sites, as well as forms and types are proposed.

4. Results

The results obtained are:

- a) The situational diagnosis was based on the analysis and preparation of specific reports of the CITARÁ moorland (Solano) related to tourism capacity, the evaluation of impacts that tourism could generate, as well as tourism and recreational zoning. Likewise, a study of the tourist market was carried out and the regional socioeconomic conditions were assessed.
- b) The development proposal:

1. This proposal was based on the definition of the objectives that were identified during the preparation of the situational diagnosis and was developed in accordance with the following work scheme: basic action criteria and guidelines.
2. Once the basic criteria were defined and the action guidelines established, the following topics were developed to complete the development proposal: investment programs, management and administration, and implementation strategy.

4.1 Proposal for the tourist development of the CITARÁ moorland and the Fray Vicente Solano parish



The proposal for structuring the product and the tourist space of Kitara moorlands consists of developing and building a basic recreation infrastructure around the CITARÁ moorland, for example, docks, *camping areas*, trails, huts, signage, tourist facilities center, batteries toilets, picnic areas with kitchens, wood deposits, viewpoints, rest inns, food and handicraft sales, stables, garbage dumps, all of them built with typical materials from the area and that could even be built with labor and community support.

It is sought, in such a way, that visitors and tourists who visit the area have a tourist service center, a space for relaxation, recreation and the satisfaction of food and basic needs in appropriate places and under control. However, the possibility of developing community and rural tourism in a subsequent phase in the future is not ruled out, after interest has been generated in knowing the site and the tourist area in general, for which a manual has

been included. community and rural tourism development in the following sections.

4.2 Basic performance criteria

The tourist development of the study area requires the execution of a set of strategies, programs and projects that allow preparing services and adapting a minimum tourist plant, as well as the infrastructure and superstructure to support development. This set of proposals has been selected and prioritized according to the application of the following criteria:

- *For tourist activity*, keep in mind that attractions, by their nature, are fragile, that is, they can be affected and altered.
- *For tourism planning*, based on the fragility of the natural attraction, the planning of tourism activity in the territory of CITARÁ moorland must start on a concept of sustainability, so that it does not alter its three basic components: social, economic and ecological. For this reason, it is necessary to think that the services should be concentrated in spaces of the territory that have already been altered and that can be easily controlled. In this way, the tourist activity itself will be developed in the area of the lagoon and its rural spaces, following the route of the designed circuits, all based on a determination of the permitted tourist capacities.
- *The vision of tourism development* is constituted by a natural and cultural tourism destination that develops by applying the model of sustainable tourism. This area has increased its capacity to attract visitors by promoting itself together with the attractions of the area inserted in the tourist circuit made up of the provinces of Azuay and Cañar. It is intended that the surrounding populations benefit substantially from tourism, that families participate directly as providers of tourism goods and services and that they abandon activities that threaten the natural environment. The economic benefits of tourism will contribute significantly to the financing of the productive system of the canton.

4.3 General guidelines for tourism development in the area

Tourism development proposals must take into account the evaluation of the benefit/cost, both in the overall vision and in the detailed proposals, even in the case of small-scale services and facilities. Tourist services in the CITARÁ moorland and its areas of influence may be

provided in the following modalities: concession for the provision of tourist and recreational services; permission for the development of minor activities; agreement with local residents for the development of minor activities.

Tourism service providers must be duly personalized and meet the requirements established by the Colombian Minturn and its Regional Coordination, the Cañar Chamber of Tourism and the Municipal Government of Dele. Each provider must have the approval and operating authorization issued by the minter and monitoring services may be given by direct approval of the minter once the requirements indicated in the point regarding local guides have been met. Tourism services provided in the lagoon and its areas of influence must meet sustainability criteria in accordance with environmental and tourism regulations. In the same way, permits may be granted for the development of consistent minor activities, such as the case of guides, monitors, muleteers and other complementary tourist services that visitors may require and that are not provided by the concessionaires.



The inhabitants of the localities located in areas near the lagoon should have the preference to act as providers of tourist services, either individually or organized in specific groups, on behalf of the local population through their established bodies (community tourism).

In order to achieve the greatest and best participation of the local inhabitants, they will be suitably trained before starting the tourist operation of the services in which they participate directly. Training activities will then be carried out regularly to improve the technical-professional level and maintain quality standards. The participation of suppliers must materialize in accordance with the provisions of current legislation and its approved regulations.

4.4 Related to infrastructure and equipment

The infrastructure and equipment proposed in the CITARÁ moorland will be developed based on the tourism planning model that will be designed, after the Municipal Government of Dele draws up the ordinance that will regulate its land use.

The recreation and tourism services have been conceived as conditioned spaces, located on the inner edge of the limits of the lagoon, but trying to place them very close to the existing population centers, so that the facilities and services can be used. The services that these centers already have, mainly energy and water supply, as well as telephone services, security and health (medical posts), basic elements for the operation of these tourist service centers.

On the other hand, the service centers will facilitate the participation of the population in the management and/or operation of tourist services.

The location of the "recreation and tourism services" has been selected based on the accesses to the lagoon and the tourist importance of each of them.

There are three groups of tourist sites that deserve differentiated treatment:

- *First group:* CITARÁ moorland and the parish of Solano.
- *Second group:* the Inca Route and the Ruins of Yojimbo.
- *Third group:* the tourist corridor between the city of Cuenca and the city of Apogees, with its towns and picturesque roads.

The equipment –understood as the premises and facilities intended to provide tourist services– will have as a main requirement to harmonize with the landscape environment of the CITARÁ moorland, for which materials from the area, techniques and traditional construction styles will be used., procedures that have proven to meet the characteristics of functionality, thermal and acoustic insulation.

Likewise, the facilities must consider the following construction characteristics: the provision of foundations and sub-bases of cyclopean concrete, to guarantee protection against the weather factor and its structural stability; the walls must be built based on hardwood

pedestals crossed and embalmed, using construction materials from the area, locating pieces of bark from dry trees scattered in the area; these walls may be covered with mud from rotten clayey earth and combined with bituminous substances, in order to guarantee its waterproofing and consistency; the ceilings will be made with wooden beams and slats, with tile coverage.

It is convenient that the CITARÁ moorland site plan—and those that are in the process of being drawn up and/or executed—are adapted as much as possible, especially with regard to materials and cover treatment, so that a homogeneous tourism product is presented. The equipment must be conceived with a modular design, so that it can be adapted according to demand requirements and thus avoid unused spaces.

The area where the recreation and tourism services equipment are located must have a landscaping treatment, mainly considering afforestation, signage and the location of garbage dumps. The infrastructures must take into account non-conventional and sustainable systems, among which solar energy and water treatment must be considered, fundamentally. Infrastructure with environmental principles that has been previously approved and that is being used in other areas with similar characteristics will be taken as an example.

4.5 Relating to transport and travel

The routes of the tourist circuits defined in the plan are the following: on foot, in mules and tours in boats and canoes. The use of motorized vehicles will be allowed to access the starting points of the routes as long as the routes provided by the authority of the Municipal Department of Dele are used for this purpose. The authority in charge may authorize bicycle travel for any of the routes, depending on the results of the monitoring work for managing load capacity. After the definition of the routes and the degrees of difficulty, the type and characteristics of the vessels allowed in the CITARÁ moorland will be established, as well as minor works on the riverbank. The different types of routes must be subject to a behavior booklet.

4.6 Related to environmental interpretation and information

The environmental interpretation will be aimed at the local population, users and/or visitors. The interpretation and information topics will be of two types: direct (guided

tours, talks, orientation and complementary contacts) and indirect (signs, printed guides, plans, brochures, audiovisuals). This interpretation should be considered a priority service in all phases of the tourist process, from the design and execution of plans and programs to the provision of services during the tourist operation phase. The direct and indirect providers of tourist services must consider this provision throughout their particular process and comply with the specific provisions on interpretation in the design and production of informational and promotional materials, for which they must describe the meaning, importance, the characteristics of the natural, cultural and historical degree that the area has.



Visitors will take tours on foot, in mules or in boats, accompanied by local guides and monitors, in accordance with the provisions of the regulations for tourist use. The routes have been established according to the expected tourist demand modalities and based on the least impact they can generate in the tourist areas; For this, the determined load capacity will be taken into account.

The information (signage) is conceived as the set of strictly necessary messages that must be transmitted to the visitor in order to provide him with orientation and safety in his tour of the area. The information (signaling) contained in the signs may be of two types:

- *Start of the route:* necessary prior information.
- *During the route:* strictly necessary to locate oneself, orient oneself and point out outstanding elements of the route.

In the case of tours on foot, on mules and on boats, the guides in charge of the circuits are obliged to instruct visitors on the rules and recommendations for each case, for which they will use an instruction booklet that must be explained to the visitor at the beginning of the tour and

will be reminded during the journey when necessary. The signage of the area, both in the design stage and in the execution, must be carried out in accordance with the signage manual of the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of the Environment.

4.7 Relating to local tourism guides and promoters

The services of driving, information and monitoring of the groups of visitors will be in charge of local tourist guides. When the groups of visitors arrive accompanied by tour guides, the local guides will act as monitors, that is, they will accompany the groups to guarantee their behavior. Local guides are the people who live in the buffer zones of the area and who are duly trained and evaluated to carry out guiding and/or monitoring tasks for groups of visitors.

The condition of local guide is obtained by fulfilling two basic requirements: the first consists of the accreditation of a resident of the area, and the second requires the approval of the "Training of Local Guides" course, organized, directed and executed by the General Management of Tourism of the Austro, of the Ministry of Tourism of Colombia. The way to prove your status as a resident of the buffer zone will be through a letter issued by the president of the FV Solano parish gad.

4.8 Relating to the conduct and safety of visitors

The safety of visitors will be protected at the preventive level, in the provisions and indications of the legal framework on tourist sites, in relation to the rules of conduct and movement of visitors. The legal framework for tourist activities in the CITARÁ moorland area must be drawn up. The evacuation and emergency care places are planned in the populated centers near the Cuenca or Apogeos "service centers".

4.9 Related to the regulation and monitoring of activities

Access to the CITARÁ moorland by tourists and visitors in general will be conditioned by the carrying capacity of each of the entries. The access control will be in charge of the control entities or an employee or collaborator of these, who will have the means to disseminate the rules of behavior allowed to visitors and their regulations. The sale of tourist services may be given in the so-called "recreation and tourism services", where the different tourist facilities will be located. The activities of the tours and their interpretation may take place in the lagoon, in

the pre-established circuits, through the work of a local guide.

4.10 Related to the promotion, image and administrative coordination of the CITARÁ moorland and the tourist route "Los Caminos del Inca"



In the general planning of the tourist development of the "Los Caminos del Inca" tourist route and of the CITARÁ moorland and its areas of influence, the non-performance of any promotional activity to induce tourist demand towards this recreation service should be adopted as a basic policy. and tourism if the tourist product that is going to be offered is not ready for commercialization or if, at least, the control of the negative impacts that the induced demand could generate is not guaranteed.

The following actions are proposed:

- *Promotion and dissemination.* Position the CITARÁ moorland and the Ruta del Inca as nature, cultural and ecological tourist destinations.
- *Of interpretation.* Present the natural and cultural heritage in a systematic, encouraging and novel way, to deepen the tourist experience and make the visitor aware of conservation.
- *Of information.* Develop content that meets the requirements of users in terms of places and tourist attractions, services, security and visitor orientation.
- *Local management of tourism.* Promote and guarantee the effective participation of the inhabitants of the lagoon, of the route and its areas of influence in the tourist activity.

- *Tourist training.* Lead the training of residents in the management of tourist services with international quality standards.
- *Governance.* Identify and establish the channels of coordination with the institutions related to tourism to develop the activity in the CITARÁ moorland, the Inca Route and its areas of influence.
- *Infrastructure and equipment.*



called complementary regional markets in the area, such as the Inca Trail, the viewpoint and the archaeological remains of the Cojitambo and Pachamama hills, the towns and picturesque roads of the Déleg canton, the churches and chapels of the parishes of the canton, the temple to Luis Cordero in Suranpalti, the toquilla straw handicraft fabrics and the hats, which stand out. Due to this circumstance, the area is very little known in the tourist market (supply and demand), especially the CITARÁ moorland and the Solano parish.

Identify the infrastructure and equipment required to develop the tourist activity. Establish its characteristics and conditions.

- *Monitoring and evaluation:* Establish the systems or aspects that are going to be monitored as a result of the plan.

5. Conclusions

- Tourist activity in the form of ecotourism is difficult to develop and carry out, mainly because the study area and its areas of influence do not have local legislation that helps them in the sense of creating an environmental, ecological and heritage protected area. In addition to this, it is mentioned that the main activities carried out by the local population are agriculture and livestock, both intensively, which affects local endemic species and derives in the ecological modality of tourism.
- The community is not organized to provide tourist services in the community tourism modality, which results in its socioeconomic conditions. In addition, there is high migration and abandonment of properties.
- The tourist attraction of the lagoon area is of medium quality, which can be involved in the so-

- There are few services in the tourist modality because, by not having developed the attraction, the community does not see the real potential that can be worked on jointly in the future, enhancing the potential of the locality. It is highlighted that the tourist infrastructure is acceptable to access the CITARÁ moorland and the attractions of the entire canton.
- There is very little attention from public or private organizations in charge of preserving and promoting the natural and cultural tourist benefits of the area.
- The tourist site is more positioned in the international tourist market for its archaeological wealth, such as the Inca Trail and Cojitambo.
- The study of the visitor determines that the majority are Ecuadorians, young people between 18 and 28 years old, with average income and who visit the place for purely recreational reasons.
- The economic investment and the infrastructures that are carried out in the lagoon and its areas of influence have been considered for recovery due to the benefits that the community can obtain through the generation of services that it could provide to the visitor if it is structured. a complementary tourist product with the routes indicated in the previous item.
- There is inadequate local management by the parish gad, since there is an accumulation of waste, rubbish and debris, which directly affects the surroundings of the lagoon, the main attraction of the area and the community.

6. Recommendations

- Request that the Municipal Government of Déleg work on the land use ordinance with the aim of rescuing the main attraction of the area (CITARÁ moorland), in order to execute the projects and programs resulting from the research carried out in its strategic part.
- Carry out a limnological and hydrological study that determines the proposal for the natural recovery of the original level of the lagoon, which was two meters above the current height, to counteract the banks of earth and vegetation that are currently observed and that have reduced the total diameter of the water mirror.
- Work with the Municipal Government of Déleg for the relocation of the different families that are settled in the lagoon.
- Create a local body that supports and manages tourism and community activity, so that a process of gradual participation of the community is projected so that they are in charge of managing the activity in the future.
- Work must be done on the elaboration and creation of local infrastructures that support the development of the community, where tourism is a dynamic element of local production chains.
- It is important to integrate the attractiveness of the CITARÁ moorland and the parish of

Solano in a complementary way by meIt gave circuits and tourist routes, promoting it as a single destination, with the purpose of raising the level of integration of the community in a regional system.



- Rescue and preserve cultural manifestations as a form of proposal to create direct and indirect jobs, mainly assistance in handicrafts, with the idea of avoiding mass migration.
- Carry out intensive tourism promotion in the cities of Cuenca and Azogues and in the cantons of the region as recreation sites for weekends, and in this way, in the short and medium term, consolidate them as complementary tourist destinations.
- The infrastructure of tourist and recreational services must be elaborated in a rustic way with materials, forms and designs typical of the sector.
- Derived from the limnological study, work should be done on the proposal to generate sport fishing activity, with the idea of producing greater capacity for local development in the area.
- It is important to work with the gad of the parish in awareness and training campaigns so that visual contamination of the landscape can be avoided by the use of materials foreign to the natural environment, such as the presence of block and metal constructions, which distort completely the natural and cultural landscape of the surroundings of the lagoon. Additionally, we must work on the recovery of the environmental space.
- It is important to work on projects to recover the landscape and landscaping around the lagoon with species native to the area, with the

idea of creating natural spaces, environmental education and natural activities.

- Improve and execute the tourist signage plan with local materials, as well as adapt a tourist information and promotion booth.
- Work jointly with the community to create favorable conditions to design the rural accommodation network prior to a training plan and regularization of services: if the agrotourism activity is developed in this way, tourist accommodation services may be offered.
- Joint work must be generated with the different entities involved in the management of protected natural areas, such as the Ministry of the Environment, the municipalities, the Ministry of Tourism and the universities. In this way, you can give way to the conservation, protection and use of natural resources.

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