Title of the Story: Kuelap y Gocta imponent

Destination Name: Kuelap y Gocta, Provincia Chachapoyas y Bongara– Región Amazonas

Country: Perú

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Nomination Category: (Please check the boxes that indicate the focus of your story)

☐ Localizing the destination supply chain
☐ Decarbonizing the destination supply chain
☐ Culture & Communities
☒ Environment & Climate
☐ Nature & Ecotourism
☐ Tourism Reset & Recovery

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Address each aspect of your good practice story in the different sections being specific including relevant quantitative and qualitative information.

Issues faced

¿Cuál fue el problema / problema resuelto con la buena práctica?

Kuelap and Gocta are imposing scenarios of cultural and natural landscape, located in the Amazon region on the eastern flank of the Andes of Peru, with a civilization that dominates the rugged mountain and proudly displays the archaeological remains of its glorious past in harmony with its biodiverse natural environment.

In the Kuelap - Gocta destination, one of the greatest challenges was the management and implementation of environmental policies, associated with the protection, conservation and sustainable use of the heritage and its surroundings.

In summary, the following was needed:

a) Local organizations with clear and empowered policies, leading the administration and development of tourism activities.

In 2007, there were no community-based organizations related to tourism in Kuelap and Gocta. In the Valera district, in the communities of Cocachimba and San Pablo near the Gocta waterfall and in the districts of Tingo, Longuita and María near Kuelap, 63% of the population’s main economic activity was agriculture, livestock, hunting and forestry, and only 2% provided lodging and food services.

b) Define the intangible zones of the main tourist resources (Kuelap and Gocta) in order to protect and conserve the natural and cultural heritage.

In the communities of Kuelap, Cocachimba and San Pablo, the expansion of agricultural cultivation, grazing and timber extraction areas put the monumental archeological zone of Kuelap and the surroundings of the Gocta waterfall at risk, because its area as such and the buffer zone were not officially delimited.

c) Recognition and promotion of natural protected areas within the Kuelap - Gocta destination, in order to preserve biodiversity, ecosystem services and scenic beauty.

There was a need for private and community initiatives that would add concrete actions to stop the depredation of flora and fauna species, including endemic species such as the cinchona tree (Cinchona Officinalis), the cock-of-the-rock (rupicola peruviana), the hummingbird (Loddigesia mirabilis), the yellow-tailed monkey (lagotrix flavicauda), the night monkey (aotus miconax), among others. It was also necessary to publicize the benefits of protecting and conserving the environment in order to diversify the tourism offer.
d) Implementation of environmental policies by both the public and private sectors aimed at improving integrated solid waste management, the use of renewable energy, and environmentally friendly practices.

In the communities surrounding Kuelap and Gocta, 100% of the solid waste generated was collected and dumped in dumps, ravines, abandoned in open spaces or incinerated outdoors. The population used fossil fuels for electricity and transportation to Kuelap was only by land (144 km round trip), following the Chachapoyas - Nuevo Tingo - Choctamal - Longuita - María - La Malca route, in mobile units that emitted greenhouse gases on a daily basis. Lodging establishments and improvised restaurants were springing up, without environmental policies. There was a need to promote more environmentally friendly tourism activities such as trekking, horseback riding and cycling to reduce the use of motorized transportation.

Methods, steps and tools applied

How was the good practice implemented? Click to add your text

In reference to problem a)

In 2008, the Cocachimba Community Tourism Association was created, made up of 84 people (26 women and 58 men), followed by the San Pablo Community Tourism Association, integrated of 45 people (24 women and 21 men). In 2009, in the Kuelap area in the annex of the same name, the Kuelap Community Tourism Association was also created, made up of 72 people (43 women and 29 men). These associations emerged as managers and key actors for the sustainable development of tourism, who after being trained by public and private sector entities and NGOs related to tourism, assumed the leading role in tourism activities within their community.

To date, in the area of Gocta, the association manages and controls visits to Gocta Waterfall under an agreement with the District Municipality of Valera and under the direction and technical assistance of the Regional Directorate of Foreign Trade and Tourism - DIRCETUR; and through its members (local people), they provide tourist orientation, mule rental, lodging, and food services, among others. In addition, the Cocachimba association has hired personnel to collect, classify, recycle and properly dispose of solid waste generated along the route to Gocta Waterfall. In addition, through a collaboration agreement with the community of San Pablo, they carry out conservation work (care and reforestation) of 1040,812 hectares of the headwaters of the Gocta Waterfall watershed.

In Kuelap, the members of the association are dedicated to providing tourist orientation services, mule transportation, production and sale of handicrafts, food and lodging services, and in coordination with Kuelap's administrative entity (Dirección Desconcentrada de Cultura Amazonas), they maintain the pedestrian access road to Kuelap and clean up the waste generated by visitors to Kuelap.
In reference to problem b)
In the year 2021 was made the official delimitation of the intangible area of the Kuelap Monumental Archaeological Zone, as part of the legal physical sanitation, in order to protect and conserve the historical and cultural heritage. Similarly, in the area of the Gocta waterfall, the buffer zone of the waterfall was delimited, ensuring the protection and conservation of biodiversity of flora and fauna in the environment; also, access trails were opened for trekking and horseback riding to the waterfall (falls 1 and 2) with ancestral techniques (stone, gravel and earth), respecting biodiversity.

In reference to problem c)
Within the scope of the visit to Kuelap, 3 Private Conservation Areas - PCAs were recognized:
1. ACP Milpuj La Heredad, through R.M. 164-2011-MINAM, with 16.57 ha. Objective: conserve part of the forests and dry scrublands of the middle basin of the Utcubamba River through private conservation strategies and sustainable management of its resources.

2. ACP San Antonio through R.M. 227-2007-AG, with 357,3900 ha. Objectives: Conserve and protect dry and mountain forests near the city of Chachapoyas and Kuelap, which play an important role in the hydrological cycle for the region. Conserve and protect the habitat of Loddigesia mirabilis, a species categorized as endangered by the IUCN (2004), endangered by INRENA (Supreme Decree No. 034-2004AG), and a species of regional importance for Amazonas, officialized through Regional Ordinance No. 096-2005-GOBIERNO REGIONAL AMAZONAS.

3. ACP Huiquilla by R.M. 1458-2006-AG, with 1,140.5429 ha. Objective: Guarantee the conservation of flora and fauna species, some of them endemic, the purity of its water resources, as well as avoid the depredation of its numerous archeological remains found in its interior. It is made up of 70% montane forests and 30% jalca with grasslands. We identified 117 species of birds, 191 plants, 18 mammals and 10 amphibians; of all these species include mammals such as the spectacled bear, the puma, the night monkey and deer; in diversity of birds quetzals, hummingbirds, toucans, among others and in flora we have the cinchona tree (Cinchona Officinalis), grasses macollante, Distichia muscoides, Pycnophyllum molle and Azorella sp, Plantago tubulosa.

In the area of the Gocta Waterfall, in 2019 the community of San Pablo, managed and achieved the recognition of the San Pablo - Gocta Waterfall Communal Private Conservation Area, through Ministerial Resolution N°115-2019-MINAM, with an area of 2603.5732 hectares. The objective of the recognition is to conserve a representative sample of the Peruvian Yungas and Pajonal, as well as the water sources that supply the Gocta Waterfall and the existing biological diversity (flora and fauna species); promoting participatory management and the development of ecosystem-friendly economic activities within the San Pablo community. The ACP provides habitat for endemic and endangered species, such as the yellow-tailed monkey (Lagothrix flavicauda), the spatula-tailed hummingbird (Loddigesia mirabilis), and the spectacled bear (Tremarctos ornatus), Amazon Mountain Mouse (Thomasomys ischyrus), Johnson's Spatulilla (Poecilotricus luluae), Rioja's Glass Frog (Centrolene lemniscatum), Schulte's Cutin (Pristimantis schultei), among others.

These ACPs have a master plan and are currently being used in a rational manner, offering environmentally friendly tourism activities such as trekking, horseback riding, bird watching, flora and fauna, environmental education and reforestation, studies and research, lodging services and healthy food for visitors.

In reference to problem d)
To improve the management and integral handling of solid waste, the Amazonas Regional Government through the ProAmazonas Executing Unit, within the framework of the Program "Establishment of the Bases for Rural Development through Tourism in the Tourist Corridor of the Utcubamba Valley; Pedro Ruiz - Leymebamba Sector, Amazonas Region" implemented 4 sanitary landfills, benefiting 28 districts (39,026 inhabitants), generating 64 direct jobs. For implementation, operation and maintenance, 4 municipal associations were formed (Tilacancha, Chillaos, Valle de las Cataratas and Alto Utcubamba).
To date, each community manages a sanitary landfill. Thus, the Gocta area (Valera district) belongs to the Valle de las Cataratas community and the Kuelap area (Tingo, Longuita and María districts) belongs to the Tilacancha community. The landfills were built under the semi-aerobic method - FUKUOTA (Technological Innovation proposed by JICA). This design allows the supply of air to the waste cells, thus generating an aerobic condition around the leachate drains, which significantly reduces methane generation and improves the quality of the leachate.

According to projections for the year 2021, the solid waste generated by the Valle de las Cataratas community will be made up as follows: Household waste 1.804 t/day, waste from stores and restaurants 0.165 t/day, waste from educational institutions 0.010 t/day, waste from public and private entities 0.058 t/day, waste from markets 0.023 t/day, sweeping waste 0.002 t/day and waste from tourism 0.415 t/day, equivalent to 8.2 T/day; while, the waste generation of the Tilacancha commonwealth will be 6.4 t/day.

To guarantee operability and sustainability, the sanitary landfills were implemented following the stages:

1) Storage/Sweeping, 2) Collection/Transportation, 3) Final Disposal, 4) Technical, Administrative and Financial Management, and 5) Appropriate Population Practices. Within this framework, each commonwealth was equipped and trained together with the population for the proper handling and classification of their waste (reduce, reuse and recycle); thus, today, each commonwealth has a plan with collection, transportation and final disposal activities that are carried out as part of the solid waste management in each landfill.

The useful life of the sanitary landfills is 10 years, during which time the proper management of 100% of the waste that is expected to be generated is guaranteed. After this period, the municipal commonwealths are committed to continue implementing sanitary landfills to ensure the integrated management of solid waste.

In 2017, the Kuelap Telecabin System, a modern transportation system that initiates cable mobility in our country, was put into operation. It is an eco-friendly, safe, fast and comfortable solution, in whose construction and assembly high quality and safety standards were applied. It is a public-private partnership investment model, structured, promoted and awarded by the Private Investment Promotion Agency - Peru (ProInversión).

The cable transport system is 4 km long, from platform 1 to platform 2. It has 28 cable cars with a capacity for 8 people each, with a maximum speed of 6m/s.

The cable car is 100% electric and emits zero harmful gases to the environment and is even powered by solar energy for the cabin batteries. It uses electric motors that save up to 180,000 kW/h.

The implementation of the gondola system with solid foundations.

Civil works. It consists of 3 buildings through which users move: Boarding station, departure platform and arrival platform.

As environmental policies implemented by the private sector in the area of Kuelap and Gocta we have: Travel and tourism agencies that offer local, regional, national, and even international tours and travel packages with environmentally friendly activities such as trekking, horseback riding, biking, canoeing, bird watching, flora and fauna. Eco-friendly lodging establishments and restaurants; that is, with handcrafted construction techniques, using local materials such as soil, stone, natural dyes, dry natural fiber and wood; in addition, they use clean energy, with solar panels, LED lighting, solar hot springs, management of compost bins and cultivation of native products based on compost.

DIRCETUR Amazonas, as the governing body for tourism, defined the tourist carrying capacity of Gocta Waterfall. According to the latest sanitary guidelines for Covid-19, the effective carrying capacity of
Gocta’s CCE is 215 visitors per day, equivalent to 21 groups of 10 people per day (groups of 8 people + 1 guide + 1 muleteer) entering Gocta every 15 minutes, maintaining a distance of 270 meters between groups and 2 meters between each person. For its part, the Dirección Desconcentrada de Cultura Amazonas, as administrator of Kuelap, defined the CCE of 360 people per day, distributed in 40 groups of 9 people (8 pax + 1 guide), who will enter Kuelap every 10 minutes. This in order not to saturate the tourist site and avoid its degradation / depredation due to tourist overload.

Environmental education programs. The implementation of good environmental practices is undoubtedly thanks to the inclusion of the capacity building component in the projects and as a social responsibility of companies and NGOs, to generate and strengthen the environmental culture of public and private entities, tourism associations, community-based organizations and the local population. The public and private sector bet on massifying the use of renewable energy in the Amazon region, implementing a hydroelectric plant in the Caclic sector, using water from the Utcubamba River. This hydroelectric plant today supplies electricity to the entire Amazon Region.

Key success factors

What helped you tackle the issues? Click to add your text
¿Qué te ayudó a abordar los problemas?

• The public-private partnership for the development of impact works.
• The socialization of plans, programs and projects are important to generate a development of social, environmental, cultural impact and above all in harmony with the environment.
• Advice and permanent technical assistance to community-based organizations and local governments in the process of formalization, planning, management, and development of tourism activities.
• Political decision and perseverance to achieve impact projects such as the Kuelap cable car system.
• Search for strategic allies and financial mechanisms, as in the case of the external financing obtained from the government of Japan for the implementation of the 4 sanitary landfills.
• Involvement, participation, and benefit of the local population.
• Emergence of family initiatives for environmental protection and conservation, such as the Huiquilla ACP, San Antonio ACP, Milpuij - La Heredad ACP and San Pablo - Gocta.
• Support and promotion of formalized local enterprises/businesses with innovative initiatives and social responsibility.

The adaptation of the entire chain of service providers to the new Covid-19 standards implied an articulated and multidisciplinary work: 1) Socialization of the new regulations and guidelines with sanitary protocols for the different items. 2) Advice and technical assistance to the different service providers for the implementation and compliance with the sanitary protocols and thus achieve the progressive reactivation of tourism and the recognition of Kuelap and Gocta as a safe destination. This multisectoral work was led by DIRCETUR in coordination with MINCETUR, DIRCETUR, the health sector, the PNP, tourism associations, community-based organizations, among other allies. 3) The promotion of the destination and the enterprises under the new protocols of tourist visit helped in the process of reactivation of the tourist activity in the area of Kuelap and Gocta. The DIRCETUR Amazonas carried out promotional activities through digital media such as Facebook, Youtube, National and Regional TV; furthermore, the private sector also did its part through its social networks and website.

Lessons learned

While implementing the Good Practice what challenges were faced, and how were they overcome? Click to add your text
• Promote formalized, innovative and, above all, environmentally friendly enterprises.
• Community-based organizations and local people are the best allies to generate sustainable development and preserve the cultural and natural heritage.
• The idiosyncrasies of each community must be understood, respecting their uses and customs.
• Working in a coordinated and articulated way with all the actors involved in the tourism activity, leads to the achievement of more and better results.
• The socialization of regulations related to tourism and the zoning of areas for the development of eco-friendly tourism activities in the Kuelap and Gocta area, such as trekking, horseback riding, cycling, canoeing, bird watching - flora and fauna, helps a lot in the process of formalization of enterprises and sustainable development of tourism.
• The protection, conservation and proper use of the heritage, generates greater identity and pride in the local population, due to the recognition of the local people.

Learning and adapting to the reality of each place in order to meet the requirements of the local population, tourism associations and, logically, to satisfy new market trends.

Results, achievements and recognitions

What were the qualitative and quantitative results of the good practice? Has it received any rewards?

Click to add your text
Click or tap to enter text

Average annual growth of 22% in tourism demand to Kuelap. In 2010, 23,696 tourists arrived (74% domestic and 26% foreign) and in 2019, 103,083 tourists arrived (83% domestic and 17% foreign). Average annual growth of 26% in tourism demand to Gocta. In 2011, 10,203 tourists arrived (62% domestic and 38% foreign) and in 2019, 60,843 tourists arrived (61% domestic and 39% foreign).

Four sanitary landfills were implemented, whose operation and maintenance are in charge of municipal associations that guarantee adequate management of 100% of the solid waste generated in Kuelap and Gocta, ensuring sustainability over time.

The Kuelap Telecabin System was implemented and put into operation, a modern transportation system that initiates mobility by cable in our country. An eco-friendly, safe, fast and comfortable solution, 100% electric and emits zero harmful gases to the environment. Generated through a public-private partnership investment model, structured, promoted and awarded by the Private Investment Promotion Agency - Peru (ProInversion).

Recognition of Kuelap and Gocta in the Amazon region as safe destinations through the International Safe Travel Seal of the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) awarded by the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Tourism - MINCETUR, for the commitment to permanent monitoring of compliance with the terms and conditions set by the WTTC, the health guidelines before the Covid-19 for Tourist Destinations and sectoral health protocols by tourism service providers.

Kuelap was awarded as the 'Best Overseas Attraction' (Far & Away- Overseas Attraction) by the readers of National Geographic Traveller in the United Kingdom in 2017.

Kuelap was declared in 2008 as one of the new 7 wonders of Peru, by the newspaper El Comercio. In total, there were 28 nominations chosen through the El Comercio website. Voting took place for more than seven months and the contest obtained 155 million votes.

Kuelap is the most important archaeological legacy of the northeast of the country, declared Cultural Heritage of Peru in 1998; and in 2007 it was recognized as Monumental Archaeological Zone Kuelap by
National Directorial Resolution N°694-2007/INC, which also indicates the delimitation of the intangible zone.

The lodging establishment Gocta Andes Lodge in Cocachimba received an official certification by TourCert - Travel for Tomorrow, for the development of sustainable practices throughout its operations.

The creation and recognition of Private Conservation Areas (ACP) in the area of Kuelap and Gocta such as: the ACP San Pablo - Catarata Gocta, through Ministerial Resolution N°115-2019-MINAM, the ACP Huiquilla through R.M. 1458-2006-AG, the ACP San Antonio through R.M. 227-2007-AG and the ACP Milpuj La Heredad, through R.M. 164-2011-MINAM. These guarantee the protection of the natural environment (ecosystem services, water resources and species of flora and fauna).

**Additional references**

*Provide links to further information. Pictures and videos should be available for download either from Youtube, Vimeo or other Cloud-based (Google/ One Drive) download URL.*

**Implementation and operation of the cable car to Kuelap.**
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GQ_U42cWQUU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GQ_U42cWQUU)
- [http://telecabinaskuelap.com/es/el-proyecto](http://telecabinaskuelap.com/es/el-proyecto)
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8tS3Z_qXgrQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8tS3Z_qXgrQ)

**Implementation of sanitary landfills.**
- [https://www.facebook.com/page/114204479940792/search/?q=rellenos%20sanitarios](https://www.facebook.com/page/114204479940792/search/?q=rellenos%20sanitarios)
- [https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=353717862533486](https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=353717862533486)

**Videos of PCAs in the Gocta - Kuelap environment**
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kTlbrwzoXSQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kTlbrwzoXSQ)
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LbAPExUI9AM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LbAPExUI9AM)
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ouu6Wd0GrME](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ouu6Wd0GrME)

**Links de ACPs en el ámbito Gocta – Kuelap to PCAs in the Gocta - Kuelap area**
- [https://www.conservamospornaturaleza.org/area/huiquilla/](https://www.conservamospornaturaleza.org/area/huiquilla/)
- [https://redama.org/acp/huiquilla/](https://redama.org/acp/huiquilla/)
- [https://www.conservamospornaturaleza.org/noticia/acp-san-pablo-gocta/](https://www.conservamospornaturaleza.org/noticia/acp-san-pablo-gocta/)
- [https://www.conservamospornaturaleza.org/area/milpuj-la-heredad/](https://www.conservamospornaturaleza.org/area/milpuj-la-heredad/)
- [https://redama.org/acp/milpuj-la-heredad/](https://redama.org/acp/milpuj-la-heredad/)
- [https://www.conservamospornaturaleza.org/area/san-antonio/](https://www.conservamospornaturaleza.org/area/san-antonio/)

**Eco-friendly practices of travel and tourism agencies:**
- [https://kuelapbike.com](https://kuelapbike.com)
- [https://turismoexplorerperu.com/trekking/](https://turismoexplorerperu.com/trekking/)
- [https://viakuelap.com/#/tours](https://viakuelap.com/#/tours)
Eco-friendly practices of lodging establishments:
- [https://www.facebook.com/goctanatura1/?fref=photo](https://www.facebook.com/goctanatura1/?fref=photo)
- [https://www.mamaqtambolodge.com/huerta-y-jardines/](https://www.mamaqtambolodge.com/huerta-y-jardines/)
- [https://es.goctalab.org/](https://es.goctalab.org/)
- [https://goctalodge.com/es_es/nosotros/](https://goctalodge.com/es_es/nosotros/)
- [https://ekokuelap-hospedaje-ecologico-nuevo-tingo.hotelmix.es/](https://ekokuelap-hospedaje-ecologico-nuevo-tingo.hotelmix.es/)

Acknowledgments:
- [https://www.facebook.com/page/247256452882173/search/?q=SAFE%20TRAVEL](https://www.facebook.com/page/247256452882173/search/?q=SAFE%20TRAVEL)

Videos of Destination Kuelap - Gocta:
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GUBcfmNChvE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GUBcfmNChvE)
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FmtLv2OtHw&t=133s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FmtLv2OtHw&t=133s)
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qc4WudrkorI&t=52s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qc4WudrkorI&t=52s)
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FmtLv2OtHw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FmtLv2OtHw)
  [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YV8DRIeYmw4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YV8DRIeYmw4)