Title of the Story: Nahuelbuta: The enhancement of heritage in the oldest mountain range in Chile

Destination Name: (include any state, province or region)
Nahuelbuta, Araucanía
Country: Chile

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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
☐ Other

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Issues faced
The Nahuelbuta destination is in the Araucanía region and is made up of the communes of Angol, Traiguén, Los Sauces, Lumaco and Purén. On the surface, the Nahuelbuta territory represents 14.25% of the La Araucanía region, with 4,536.4 km2.

Nahuelbuta is recognized as a multicultural territory that offers expressions of Mapuche, peasant and Italian cultures.

The Regional Development Strategy of La Araucanía 2010-2022 has as a vision for this territory, that agricultural and tourist chains from the enhancement of its heritage and ethnic potential, including crafts and typical gastronomy, will be the solution with social inclusion to the prolonged economic and social crisis that Nahuelbuta is experiencing.

The main tourist attractions of the territory are the Nahuelbuta National Park and the Contulmo Natural Monument.

In accordance with the provisions of the Chilean National Tourism Service SERNATUR in the Action Plan for Tourism 2014 - 2018, the vocation of Nahuelbuta includes:

- Nature tourism, through the Nahuelbuta National Park and the Contulmo Natural Monument.
- Tourism of historical and cultural heritage, through the Forts of the Purén commune, the architectural legacy of the Swiss settlers in the Traiguén commune and Italians in the town of Capitán Pastene.
- Gastronomy tourism in the town of Capitán Pastene.
- Mapuche tourism or ethno-tourism, mainly in the communes of Lumaco and Purén.

According to the categorization of the Undersecretariat of Tourism, Nahuelbuta is categorized as a “potential destination”, with a basic level in the development of its offer and with evident gaps in various strategic areas.

At present we understand that the development of the tourist destination Nahuelbuta depends on a series of factors both exogenous linked to the regional environment and intrinsic to the activity. The former includes economic gaps and stagnation in some regional productive sectors, as well as low road and digital connectivity.

Regarding the intrinsic factors of tourist activity, the following can be mentioned:

1. Bad evaluation of tourist experience: according to information provided by the National Tourism Service SERNATUR, Araucanía regional office, a series of complaints due to poor condition or absence of regional tourist information.

2. Loss of business opportunities in regional tourism: the high concentration of tourist information from other
destinations in the Araucanía region, to the detriment of other territories with the same concentration of attractions and with the capacity to attract visitors.

3. Out-of-date tourist information: The information is available almost entirely in traditional formats, which causes a competitive delay of the destination.

4. Disintegration of tourist information from public-private management in the Nahuelbuta destination: The lack of an efficient integrated system for the reception and administration of information, associated with the existing asymmetry in regional tourist information, generates as a central problem the lack of articulation and dynamization of the offer.

5. Low levels of articulation of the tourism value chain: Disarticulation of services and circuits with a low level of coordination, benefits and information between companies, supports and public institutions.

6. Lack of identity of the destination: There is a low appropriation of the concept of the tourist destination Nahuelbuta by the business layer of the territory, which makes it difficult to implement actions or transversal coordination that allow analysis to improve the standards of products and/or services, or enable strategies to disseminate the destination.

Methods, steps and tools applied

To respond to the series of problems in the Nahuelbuta destination, is carried out the project “Integrated system for the management of tourism innovation for the Nahuelbuta Destination” SINTUR, which includes the communes of Traiguén, Lumaco, Los Sauces, Purén and Angol.

It is an initiative developed by the Ibero-American Institute for Sustainable Development of the Autonomous University of Chile and that has the financing of the Regional Government of La Araucanía. This project will run for one year, after which time it is expected to have a proposal that will position these communes and their attractions at a regional, national and international level.

The project SINTUR Nahuelbuta seeks to reveal the enormous gastronomic wealth; the immeasurable value of its natural spaces; the multiculturalism of the area and the great historical and patrimonial importance that the destination has, which could undoubtedly transform the territory of Nahuelbuta into a must-see.

To achieve this objective, work will be done on:

I. Technological multiplatform for the capture and delivery of Destination information

II. Management and Governance Team of Destination Nahuelbuta

III. Tourism Innovation Laboratory for the Destination

IV. Dissemination Plan

The articulation between public-private actors in the territory is the main obstacle to developing a destination or micro-destination offer for the territory that exceeds the individual offer of each undertaking.

The tourism sector generates positive externalities to the rest of the economy due to the indirect increase in
services, commerce and activities related to entertainment, its impulse affects the territorial image and gives rise to the development of initiatives that facilitate interaction between agents and that generates synergies more sophisticated to integrate new technologies, innovate and generate a more dynamic offer to the markets.

On the other hand, the associative and collaborative perspective between various agents can facilitate the reduction of the impact of these activities depending on the sustainability of the destination for all those involved.

Tourism in the Araucanía region has been spreading to other times of the year, where the flow of tourists can be taken advantage of by the region and the territory in particular, by expanding and enhancing its portfolio of attractions and destinations.

The implementation of a tourist intelligence system will allow to establish an active feedback process to the project participants, both in the private, public and municipal world, generating spaces for articulation allowing the use of information as an element of analysis for decision-making, by virtue of destination management and innovation development.

The project will contribute to solving the lack of information for decision-making in the field of tourism, both in the definition of policies on the part of the public sector and in the management of innovative initiatives aimed at the development of tourism at the local level, as well as for the private world, businessmen, entrepreneurs, researchers, trade union organizations, public and private academic entities, who require background information on the current state and projections of tourism at the provincial and communal levels, key information for market analysis, development of new products, services and as the development of investment and research projects on economic, labor, social and environmental impacts.

Key success factors

In order to identify and record the various tourist, cultural and heritage attractions and resources of the Nahuelbuta Destination, a group of professionals from the Institute for Habitat Studies of the Autonomous University of Chile works in the field in the communes of Lumaco, Los Sauces and Traiguén.

The objective of these actions on the ground is to develop associated work and promote the Nahuelbuta tourist destination, which lacks a special concern in this matter unlike the lake, coastal and Andean areas. We seek to work in an articulated way between the communes of the Malleco province, which will allow us to develop a process of tourism planning and innovation on the territory.

The team of professionals met with tourism service providers to analyze the advantages and disadvantages of the area, as well as visited the sites with attractive potential in these three communes, a tour that was accompanied by members of the respective departments of Tourism and the Tourism Unit. Local development of each municipality.

Each of these meetings allowed entrepreneurs and businessmen to hear their story about the projections they have towards tourism in the cultural, heritage, gastronomic and natural fields. It is necessary to develop this type of action since tourism today is experiencing a rather complicated process due to travel restrictions, but we hope that as soon as these are raised we can position and show what each micro destination has within the territory.

Training activities have been carried out continuously with representatives of each of the communes that make up the Nahuelbuta destination. An example of these actions are the governance workshops, meetings coordinated by facilitators from the Ibero-American Institute for Sustainable Development of the Autonomous University.
Entrepreneurs, representatives of trade union organizations, businessmen and municipal officials have been trained in these workshops, who enthusiastically joined in a collective work aimed at promoting this tourist destination.

The workshops consider reflections on important aspects of planning and management of the territory, such as identifying the rules of governance, including its legal structure, reviewing the brand image of the destination, identifying and eventually adding participants to make this a successful process.

Lessons learned

The ignorance of the variables of the tourist activity can generate a negative effect in the local economies, since an overload of the systems attracts environmental, social and economic problems.

That is why to give sustainability to initiatives related to tourism, it is necessary to have an information system that allows making appropriate decisions and thus consolidating the activity in a sustainable and complementary way without deteriorating tourism resources and ecosystems that sustain the population and others. economic activities.

The SINTUR project considers that for proper public-private management it is necessary to strengthen the destination team, on the one hand, in handling the required technical tools (hard skills), as well as in matters related to associativity and others (skills soft). For this, a training program has been arranged that includes both topics.

The development of this project for the tourist destination Nahuelbuta implies the consideration of two fundamental elements: on the one hand, the use of the destination’s own private public framework as a space for interaction between objects and the generation of information and, on the other hand, the creation of an integral solution as a framework for the development of platforms aimed at facilitating the integration of the visitor with the destination and improving the quality of their stay and experiences.

Finally, the Nahuelbuta destination will be able to compete with other destinations based mainly on its ability to differentiate, relying on information analysis.

Results, achievements and recognitions

Our work for months, articulating the communes and the actors of the territory is bearing fruit, and we have progressed at a firm step in the elaboration of a planning oriented to tourism innovation. The work of various actors such as the Regional Government of Araucania, the Autonomous University of Chile, the municipalities of Nahuelbuta, businessmen, academics, the National Tourism Service SERNATUR, is a pioneer in this area of the country.

In addition, a series of face-to-face activities and also online seminars have been carried out, where the local community begins to respect the authenticity of its territory and, therefore, provides greater protection to its heritage.
Additional references


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