Title of the Story: LAKE TITICACA, HEIRS OF A MILLENNARY CULTURE

Destination Name: DESTINATION “TITICACA, SACRED LAKE OF THE INCAS”: PUNO- PERU

LAKE TITICACA, HEIRS OF A MILLENNARY CULTURE

Country: PERU

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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**

What was the problem/issue solved with the good practice? What was the problem/issue solved with the good practice? Click to add your text

In the 60's tourism activity began in the region of Puno, what is now the destination "Titicaca, Sacred Lake of the Incas", it was based on economic activities such as artisanal fishing, agriculture, livestock, local trade, lived a reality of extreme poverty, and had an image that Puno was a forgotten department, where there was snow, a place of very cold, that was all. In other countries it was known by writings of our ancestors, the legend of Manco Capac and Mama Occllo, the origin of the Incas in Lake Titicaca, our Sacred Lake from which emerged the greatest civilizations that made possible the development of a great culture, our Inca culture and the Tahuantinsuyo, from there would be born the Runa Simi or Quechua and Aymara. The families on the lake lived from day to day, from agriculture, livestock, fishing, bartering, exchanging their products in the city for onions, wheat, rice, sugar and other products that could not be found in the communities. With the arrival of the train, American and European tourists arrived from Cusco and Arequipa in the railway company Enafer Peru, they arrived anxious and with the mystery, asking the locals: "there is in Lake Titicaca, some islands called Taquile, Amantani, Uros, where is it, how do I get there? There were people who volunteered to take these visitors to the islands and when they arrived to these islands they would ask a compadre, friend. - I have met some friends who want to meet and share with you your experiences, is it possible that you can host them in your house and provide food? The hosts, out of friendship and compadrazgo, accepted. Once the stay was over, the visitors offered to give a payment in exchange. The hosts refused, they said: how am I going to charge you if you are the friend of my compadre, the friend of my friend. Besides, I have only offered you my house and shared my food with you. There is no payment in return. At such insistence, they would leave some clothes or souvenirs for the family. This began to develop tourism in our destination, this was the reason to see tourism as an economic activity, a certain group of locals decided to train professionally for guiding, the first hotels were opened as the Railway Hotel, the Hotel de Turistas de Puno and others where they began to receive tourists, with the passage of time had a better organization and offered to visit the Uros, Taquile and Amantani in a non-conventional service. Tourism began to bring economy through the multiplier effect, generating direct and indirect employment.
Methods, steps and tools applied

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<th>How was the good practice implemented?</th>
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<td>It has been a very difficult path and at the same time of great commitment of the actors involved in tourism. The first local travel and tourism agencies that operated the Titicaca destination opened their doors, the process had to have the involvement of employees internally, it was necessary to master the English language, if we wanted to be competitive with other operators had to be very well prepared. The Professional School of Tourism was opened at the National University of the Altiplano de Puno, also began to open its doors for the training of professional guides in tourism at the Instituto Superior Technologic José Antonio Encinas from Puno.</td>
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They began to organize the itineraries measuring the time of permanence of the tourists, considering the profile of the tourists. The tariffs that would allow negotiations between local operators, intermediaries, wholesale travel agencies from other continents of the world and local tourism enterprises were put together. In the communities of the destination there was a notable concern in the organization of the enterprises to organize the service and provide a quality service oriented to hospitality, food and beverage preparation, restaurant management, how to receive and serve tourists, how to communicate with them, since in the communities only our native language, Quechua and Aymara, was used. At the beginning was the committed work of the travel agencies, they brought ecological kitchens that do not pollute the environment, solar panels, they also brought mattresses, sheets, blankets, quilts, plates, cutlery and they trained the communities on how to serve tourists. Taquile Island keeps its culture alive in its people and its colorful textiles that are proudly displayed throughout the island’s geography are scattered magical trails that lead to agricultural terraces and ceremonial sites such as the Quinuaqata. The traditional textiles of Taquile have worldwide recognition, in which they show their experiences, customs and feelings.

At the beginning in Amantani Island, tourism work was only focused on the communities of Ocosuyo, Ocopampa, Colquecachi and Lampayuni in Amantani, this was until 2012, where the local authority of the island decided by municipal ordinance that the whole island should be visited, so if travel agencies took tourists to Amantani, they had to respect the rotation. This gave rise to new enterprises that wanted to work in tourism: Luquina Chico, in the peninsula of Chucuito and Llachon Ccotos, Escallani, Paramis, Ticonata in the peninsula of Capachica. They have become competitive with each other. On the other hand, the community of Luquina Chico had some doubts about working in tourism, not all the community agreed, in fact there were only 3 families with 8 rooms that wanted to work in tourism and began to work with them. While the rest of the community saw how the quality of life of these three families improved, there were 9 more families who decided to join them and formed the Association of Rural Community Tourism of Luquina Chico, achieving insertion in handbooks and international tourism magazines such as Lonely Planet and others. Through this associativity, Swiss Contact, a Destination Management Organization, intervened with a project for the installation of rural houses for the development of community tourism. These families received free construction of rural houses with private bathrooms and installation of solar panels, as well as training in hospitality, restaurants, customer service and others. In addition, the Regional Directorate of Foreign Trade and Tourism of Puno, among others, financed the project. Currently, the community of Luquina Chico is proud of their work in tourism, as shown by the increase in the number of tourists who visit the island and the improvement in the quality of life of the community. The community’s effort and dedication have paid off, and they continue to work hard to maintain and improve their reputation as a destination for tourists. |
The Provincial Municipality of Puno and the National Rural Community Tourism Strategy of the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Tourism of the Government of Peru were involved. These 12 families put much of their part in strengthening their skills and technical capabilities, they did chores, communal work for the conditioning of roads, viewpoints and that their ventures are in line with the demands that tourists have. After that, the neighbors saw how the economy was growing in these 12 families, they wanted to register as beneficiaries of the Swiss Contact project, however it was too late, so they decided to invest their own money, some sold animals, others took out loans from banks and started their enterprise following the Swiss Contact model, which was sustainable because with the income generated by tourism, they paid their debts to the banks and grew year after year. Today Luquina Chico is a pioneer of Community Tourism in Peru, and its neighbors, Karina, Parina, Socca, and Luquina Grande have also opened their doors to tourism.

Key success factors
What helped you tackle the issues? Titicaca, the highest navigable lake in the world, has an incomparable scenic beauty, a varied microclimate, it is home to native peoples, whose inhabitants have preserved ancestral customs, traditions, ancient culture, myths, rites, folklore, stories, legends, gastronomy, crafts, traditional clothing, which are transmitted to our visitors in such a way that offers an authentic experience. The Uros Titino, live on ‘floating islands’ artificially made of totora reeds, and navigate the area in their traditional boats also made of totora reeds. Taquile and Amantaní are known for the friendliness of their inhabitants and for their ancestral weaving techniques, pre-Columbian constructions and marvelous landscapes. The Titicaca National Reserve (36,180 ha) protects extensive reed beds and diverse species of flora and fauna. The communities of Ccotos, Escallani, Paramis and Ticonata where adventure tourism is developed with the practice of rowing boats, sailing, artisanal fishing, as well as different forms of kayaking.

In the islands and communities on the shores of Lake Titicaca have prioritized initiatives that leave most of the benefits in the communities themselves, have the particular value that promote agrotourism, lodging houses managed by local people, allowing visitors a more direct contact with local cultures. Aware of the value that living culture has today for travelers from all over the world associated with the communities of Lake Titicaca, they have opened up to rural community tourism, both on the islands and on the peninsulas of Chucuito and Capachica. There are the enterprises of Taquile, Amantaní, Uros, Llachón, Ccotos, Escallani, Paramis, Ticonata, Chucuito, Plateria. These undertakings are combined in a peculiar way with those located south of Cuzco, their proximity allows the existing diversity in the southern Andean corridor of Peru.

For birdwatchers, birdwatching in this area offers unique opportunities, especially for observation of high Andean, endemic and migratory birds, both on its shores, islands and most notably in the Titicaca National Reserve, declared a Ramsar site by UNESCO.

The Taquile people lived relatively isolated from the mainland until the 1950s, and the notion of community is still very strong among them. This is reflected in the organization of community life and collective decision-making. The weaving tradition on the island of Taquile dates back to the ancient Inca, Pukara, Lupaca and Colla civilizations, so it keeps alive elements of pre-Hispanic Andean cultures. The weavings are made by hand or on pre-Hispanic pedal looms. The most characteristic garments are the chullo, a knitted cap with earflaps, and the belt-calendar, a wide belt that represents the annual cycles associated with ritual and agricultural activities. The calendar-belt has attracted the interest of many researchers, as it represents elements of the community’s oral tradition and history. Although the design of Taquile textile art has introduced new contemporary symbols and images, the traditional style
and techniques are still maintained. Taquile has a specialized school for learning local crafts, which contributes to the viability and continuity of the tradition. Tourism has contributed to the development of the community economy, which is mainly based on the textile trade and tourism. While tourism is seen as an effective way to ensure the continuity of the textile tradition, the growing demand also translates into significant changes in terms of material, production and meaning.

The Virgen de la Candelaria Festivity, celebrated every year in February in the city of Puno, the festivity of the Virgen de la Candelaria includes religious, festive and cultural events that are rooted in Catholic traditions and symbolic elements of the Andean cosmovision. The festivities begin at the beginning of the month with the celebration of a mass at dawn, followed by an ancestral purification ceremony. The following morning, after a liturgical act, an image of the Virgen de la Candelaria is carried in procession through the streets of the city to the accompaniment of traditional dances and music. Then, the festivities continue with the celebration of two contests in which some 170 groups from all over the region compete, totaling approximately 40,000 dancers and musicians. The main participants in these competitions are ethnic Quechua and Aymara inhabitants of the rural and urban areas of the Puno region. Many Puno natives who emigrated from the region return to the region for the Candelaria festivities, which helps to reinforce a sense of cultural continuity. Three regional federations of practitioners of this element of cultural heritage collaborate in the organization of the festivities and the preservation of traditional techniques and knowledge related to dance, music and mask making. All this knowledge is passed on to younger generations through the organization of musical and choreographic rehearsals, as well as through the creation of mask-making workshops. The festivities end with a ceremony in honor of the Virgin, a concert and farewell masses.

Today, we are a competitive tourist destination, diversified, we develop different types of tourism: cultural tourism, ecotourism, mystical tourism, agrotourism, adventure tourism and its activities. Tourism has become an activity of involvement of the communities, the effort of all those involved has placed us as a destination in the eyes of the world. Our majestic Lake Titicaca has Hierarchy 4 and our destination Titicaca already has the Safe Travel seal, which certifies that we are a safe tourist destination, we continue working to develop better experiences, making use of our resources without altering future generations, we expect our tourists with all the enthusiasm, with the joy of always. "Destination Titicaca, Sacred Lake of the Incas”.

Lessons learned

While implementing the Good Practice what challenges were faced, and how were they overcome? Achieving tourism awareness and developing tourism culture in the local population and tourism entrepreneurs, making them understand that tourism brings to the economic development of the communities was a whole process in which travel agencies, tour guides, Destination Management Organizations and the state sector intervened. This challenge was overcome procedurally, those who dared to bet on tourism and promoted private investment, were seen by those who did not want to understand this economic impact, those who finally joined and today Puno is a national power in Community Tourism.

The relegation of tourism in the budget allocation and in the institutionalism of the sector was crucial, this was overcome with the allocation of a Ministry of Tourism, a Regional Directorate of Foreign Trade and Tourism, the creation of Sub Tourism Management, Tourism Units that now have local governments and through goal 38, the development of Local Tourism Development Plans and the implementation of tourism staff in local governments, who can now manage budgets, In addition, National Tourism Programs and Strategies were implemented, such as Community Tourism, To the Tourist What is Ours, From My Land a Product, Social Tourism, Tourist Culture, Safe Tourism. In addition, functions were transferred from Mincetur to the Regional Government of Puno to regulate the environmental control of hotels, restaurants and travel agencies, regional and municipal ordinances were implemented in favor of tourism so that our activity is developed in a sustainable manner.
The Pandemic has left an unprecedented footprint worldwide, many businesses, enterprises, artisans, tour guides and all involved in tourism suffered the consequences. On July 8 the destination has received the Safe Travel Seal which certifies the Titicaca destination as a safe destination, in addition to the Hierarchy 4, a distinction of higher thanks for this achievement, Lake Titicaca is placed as a tourist resource of national importance, of great significance for the international tourism market and capable of motivating a significant flow of visitors, provided that health conditions permit. In addition, the Titicaca Destination has a Reactivation Plan, aligned with the National Plan for the Reactivation of the Tourism Sector to 2023. In addition to the insertion of central government programs such as Turismo Emprende, Trabaja Perú, Reactiva Perú, Innovate Perú and Procompite, others have served to provide financial support to Mypes and entrepreneurs in tourism and handicrafts.

The first civilizations developed in the communities of Lake Titicaca, we are heirs of an ancient culture, which has been transmitted from generation to generation, our customs, respect for the Pachamama (mother earth, Mama Qota (mother lake), sharing with our family, friends, neighbors has become a tradition, the wise teachings of our grandfathers and grandmothers, how to produce food from the land for our children and the work shared with our families have made the Ayni (today for you, tomorrow for me), a tradition that we also pass on to our children, lovingly raising our herds to give warmth and shelter to our families. Our cultural manifestations are reflected in the iconography of weavings, aguayos, uncuñas, which we proudly share and show as heirs of a millenary culture.

We learned as our ancestors did to care for and preserve our natural and cultural heritage, they also inherited it from their grandparents and it is the legacy that we must respect and leave to our grandchildren and future generations.

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

The Ministry of Foreign Trade and Tourism (Mincetur) awarded the international seal “Safe Travels” to the destination Puno-Lake Titicaca, after evaluation of compliance with strict protocols to ensure that tourists visit a safe destination, in response to the enactment of Law No. 31103, which declares of national interest the revival of the tourism sector and establishes measures for sustainable development.

Lake Titicaca, obtained Hierarchy 4, the highest distinction that a tourism resource holds worldwide, Unesco considers Titicaca as the highest freshwater lake in the world and the largest in South America. Hierarchy 4 was given specifically to the Titicaca National Reserve (RNT), which covers an area of 36,180,000 hectares. It is located in the inland waters of Lake Titicaca, at an average altitude of 3,810 m.a.s.l. Its presence seeks to conserve the lake's flora and fauna, support the socioeconomic development of the region, and maintain the cultural traditions that inhabit its surroundings.

Due to its geographical location, it was named the highest navigable lake in the world. In 2008, during the XXXIII Ordinary Session of the Andean Parliament, held in the Chamber of Deputies of Chile, it was agreed to recognize Lake Titicaca as a natural wonder of the world, for its "incalculable historical and archaeological value". With Ramsar No. 0881, on January 20, 1978, the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance certified the designation and management of Lake Titicaca as a Ramsar site - Ramsar Wise Use Handbook. Within the classification of wetlands proposed by the RAMSAR Convention, Lake Titicaca is considered as a complex of inland wetlands of type 4 (riparian plains), type 5 (permanent freshwater lake), type 5 (permanent freshwater lake), and type 6 (freshwater lake). The Titicaca National Reserve was established on October 31, 1978 by the National System of State Protected Areas (SINANPE) through Supreme Decree N°185-78-AA. The Titicaca National Reserve is the habitat and breeding ground for the Titicaca grebe (Rollandia macroptera). It is the habitat of the Uros ethnic group with its floating islands.
It is one of the most splendid sources seen from space and has the mythological form of the Titi or Puma patron of the Columbian time, immortalized with the name of Titicaca or Stone Puma in Quechua language. In Inca mythology, the lake represented the birthplace of the Sun, the Moon and the stars by the will of Wiracocha. It was here, after the great flood, that human culture was restarted. According to legend, from its waters emerged the mythical couple Manco Capac and Mama Ocillo, founders of the Inca Empire. The objectives of the Titicaca National Reserve are to conserve its flora, fauna, and scenic beauty, preserve its natural resources, support the socioeconomic development of the population, and promote tourism while respecting cultural traditions. On July 7, 2021, Mincetur awarded the SAFE Travel Seal to the Titicaca destination, thus accrediting us as a safe tourist destination.

Unesco declared this traditional Virgin festivity as Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity on November 27, 2014.

With National Directorial Resolution No. 655/IN, declared Cultural Heritage of the Nation to the "Festivity of the Virgin of Candelaria" of Puno, expression of the traditional manifestations of the living culture that characterizes the communities settled in the Southern Highlands of Peru, which contributes to the regional and national identity. WITH VICE MINISTERIAL RESOLUTION N° 000099-2020-VMP/CIC/MC To declare the Pachatata Pachamama Ritual of the district of Amantani, province and department of Puno Cultural Heritage of the Nation, for being a cultural expression that evidences the close relationship between the sacred entities of the Amantani Island and the population of the ten communities that populate it, for being a manifestation of the complex Andean duality that persists to this day and is visible in the distribution of territory, activities and reciprocal relationships between communities, for recognizing the work of Campo Varayoc as an important system of traditional authority, all of which demonstrates a deep knowledge of its history and environment, which strengthens the memory and identity of Amantani.

The textile art of Taquile was inscribed in 2008, in the representative list of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO (originally proclaimed in 2005).

The RAMSAR Convention, on January 20, 1997 recognizes it as a Wetland of International Importance, habitat for waterfowl, it is considered as a complex of inland wetlands of types 4 (riparian plains). 5 (permanent fresh water lake) and 10 (herbaceous marshes: shrubby) - By means of D.S. No 185-78-AA. October 31, 1978. The SERNANP - National Service of Protected Areas, creates the Titicaca National Reserve, located in the continental waters of Lake Titicaca.

The Santo Domingo de Chucuito Temple was declared Cultural Heritage of the Nation by R.S. No 2900-72-ED dated December 28, 1972.

The textile art of Taquile was proclaimed Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO in 2005 under No. 66.

The main square of Chucuito was declared Cultural Patrimony of the Nation by the National Institute of Culture by means of R.S. N505-74-E, October 15, 1974.

Additional references
- https://busquedas.elperuano.pe/normaleslegales/apruyen-la-estrategia-nacional-de-reactivacion- delsect-resolucion-vice-ministerial-n-0004-2021-minceturvmt-1940284-1/