

Sustainable Tourism Assessment and Mitigation Strategies for the protection of their natural and cultural assets, of two Ashaninka Communities in Peru

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Aerija and Sapani are two indigenous communities located in the upper Ucayali river basin, in Peru. These two communal territories are the most immediate to Atalaya, one of the main cities in the Ucayali region, in the Amazon Rainforest. The emergent urban expansion of Atalaya and the most important touristic attraction, Quebrada Sapani (located in Sapani Community), are threatening the cultural and natural assets of the Ashaninka people and their forest's biodiversity, respectively. It's urgent to regulate the touristic activity in the midst of the accelerating urban development.

To do this, I will begin by (i) studying the area: species distribution, life zones, forest types, natural resources that could additionally be given a tourism use; and both communities' social and cultural features; to understand what needs to be preserved, and in what order of priority. I will then (ii) analyze the social acceptance of tourism activity in both communities; the (iia) tourism impacts and the actions that should be taken for the current disorganized tourism activity; and (iib) define the touristic area and to establish the rules for visitors to follow while visiting the communities, in order to define how interested are the local residents in ameliorating, and expanding the touristic activity in their communities. Finally, I will (iii) study the current touristic activity supply and demand in Atalaya city.

The result of this research will grant the first baseline registered in the Atalaya province, that will allow a better usage of tools based on existing data (results from this project), and underpinned decision making for the local authorities. This research will be executed in collaboration with the local stakeholders, including the indigenous groups, residents of Atalaya, private business, local public authorities, and the regional authority, as well as with support of the Ministry of Tourism and Commercial Trade. This is a one year-based research that will be useful for all kind of investment's interests, research purposes, new registries for the Peruvian national database, and other uses for the civil society.