

# **Tourism in rural societies: a window to prosperity?**

A study on the social and economical impact of tourism on community level in Madre de Dios, Peru.

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IIPT – Leeuwarden

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# Content of Presentation

- Introduction to Community Based Tourism
- Research Question
- Region of Research
- 3 Community Based Tourism 'Projects'
- Findings: Social and Economic impact
- Conclusions
- Recommendations

# Introduction to Community Based Tourism

*CBT is “tourism that takes social and economical sustainability into account. It is managed by and for the community and generates economic benefits for local communities.”*

- Holistic Approach
- Community Development
- Empowerment of local population

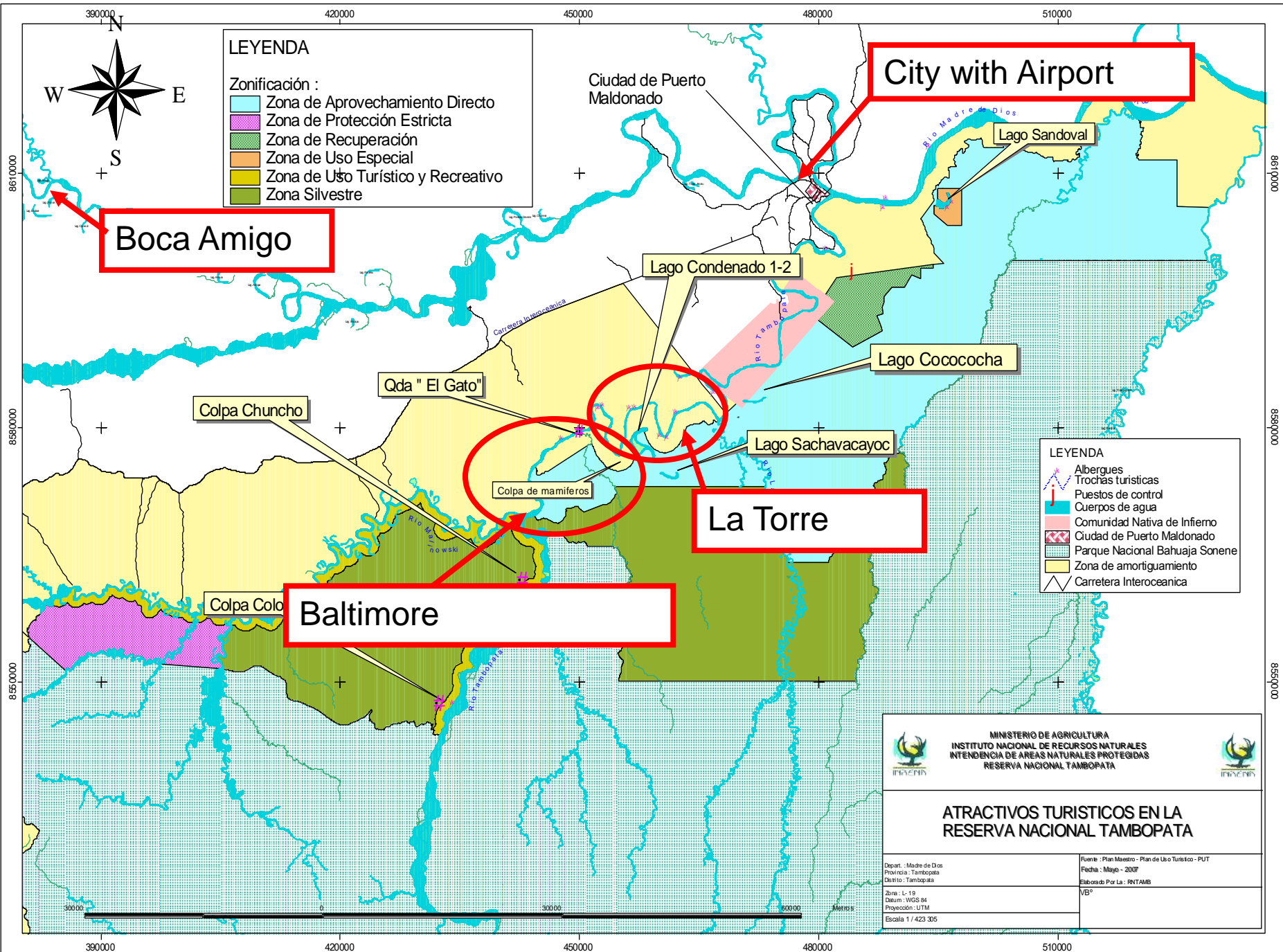
## Research Question:

*“To what extent does the CBT development in communities benefit the population of the communities?“ hereby focusing on the social and economical factors.*



## Region of Research: Madre de Dios

- Peruvian Amazon (border region)
- Nature Based Tourism
- Jungle Lodges
- High growth rates in tourist arrivals (10 % Annually)
- Community Based Tourism Projects



**LEYENDA**

Zonificación :

- Zona de Aprovechamiento Directo
- Zona de Protección Estricta
- Zona de Recuperación
- Zona de Uso Especial
- Zona de Uso Turístico y Recreativo
- Zona Silvestre

**City with Airport**

**Boca Amigo**

**La Torre**

**Baltimore**

**LEYENDA**

- Albergues
- Trochas turísticas
- Puestos de control
- Cuerpos de agua
- Comunidad Nativa de Infierno
- Ciudad de Puerto Maldonado
- Parque Nacional Bahuaja Sonene
- Zona de amortiguamiento
- Carretera Interoceánica

**MINISTERIO DE AGRICULTURA**  
**INSTITUTO NACIONAL DE RECURSOS NATURALES**  
**INTENDENCIA DE ÁREAS NATURALES PROTEGIDAS**  
**RESERVA NACIONAL TAMBOPATA**

**ATRATIVOS TURISTICOS EN LA RESERVA NACIONAL TAMBOPATA**

Depart. : Madre de Dios Provincia : Tambopata Distrito : Tambopata Zona : L-19 Datum : WGS 84 Proyección : UTM Escala 1 / 423 305	Fuente : Plan Maestro - Plan de Uso Turístico - PUT Fecha : Mayo - 2007 Elaborado Por La : RNTAMB VS <sup>o</sup>
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# Boca Amigo (10 families, mining community)

- Nature Based Home-Stay Tourism
- NGO ANIA initiated tourism project
- Situated at distance of Airport in Puerto Maldonado (1 day travel)
- Attractions are lakes, rainforest, visit mining activities
- The entire population participates
- NGO Managed
- Number of tourists hosted is very limited. In 2006: 2 groups of approx. 15 tourists for overnight stays + 180 daytrip visitors



# Baltimore (38 families, agriculture community)



- Nature-Based Home-Stay Tourism;
- 4 families initiated tourism initiatives, but encountered difficulties;  
→ Now an NGO supports the tourism project of the community
- Physically dispersed and socially divided community: cooperation between families is poor. Tourism development stagnates;
- 12 out of 38 families participate;
- The project hosted 80-90 tourists in 2006
- 1 hotel is present, little contact with community





# La Torre (agriculture community, 16 families)

- Nature Based Home-Stay Tourism
- Tourism project initiated by local family together with hotel owner, now it is an association: AMTUSET
- Apart from the project: 2 private run hotels are located in the community
- Families live dispersed from each other
- Their own terrain for tourism developments
- Project is in initial stage
- Difficulties with attracting tourists
- Number of tourist arrivals so far is limited to occasional 'volunteers' and 'biologists'

# Economic impacts

- All communities: economic impact of tourism projects: very or extremely limited.
- No single person has tourism as primary occupation, rather it is seen as income diversification (or investment for the future). Income generated by tourism forms approx. 1/4 of total household income.

	La Torre	Baltimore	Boca Amigo
<b>DOES TOURISM BENEFIT THE COMMUNITY?</b>	%	%	%
<b>No</b>	<b>66,7</b>	<b>83,3</b>	33,3
<b>Not yet</b>	0,0	0,0	<b>50,0</b>
<b>Yes, but very limited</b>	22,2	12,5	16,7
<b>Yes, because farmers can sell their products to the hotels</b>	11,1	0,0	0,0
<b>Yes</b>	0,0	4,2	0,0

# Social Impacts

## **Positive consequences:**

- Boca Amigo: tourism project leads to environmental concern and care.
- In all communities: Increased interest in other cultures/ways of life by contact with tourists.
- Contact with tourists leads to an increased self esteem.

## **Negative consequences:**

- Partial disillusion with respect to tourism, because promises have been made by NGOs. But without economic benefits so far!

“If only they (the NGOs, a.o.) could just leave us alone, and let us do our work!”.

# Empowerment

The capacity building programs organized by the NGOs do lead to an increase in skills: delivering tourism services. Management maintains in hand of NGOs: no real empowerment has been achieved

# Conclusion & Recommendations

- CBT did not lead to sustainable tourism development (yet) because:
- Economic benefits for the local residents are limited because of a lack of tourists;
- Social tensions within communities can hamper tourism development.

## **Recommendations for external actors planning to start with CBT:**

- Identify clear goals & population;
- A study on the characteristics of the community
- A plan has to be made and managed by and for the community members;
- Every resident has to be informed about the activities
- Do not promise too much!
- Be aware of what the consequences of change might not be sustainable
- Practicing tourism demands knowledge of industry;
- **A sound plan of commercialization is needed!**

# Commercialization! But how?

## **Case: Starting a Community Based Tourism Project!**

The residents of Community X and the Non Governmental Organization (NGO) Y plan to jointly initiate a Community Based Tourism Project. The tourism will be characterized by its nature based activities (bushwalks and bird watching) and tourists will be hosted by the local residents. The residents are very enthusiastic about the opportunity to learn new skills and host foreign tourists!

There are some limitations to take into account though: The community is very isolated and the budget is limited: no funds are available for an extensive promotion campaign. The local residents do not speak English but Internet and English speaking staff is available at the office of the supporting NGO.

If you would be in charge of attracting a continuous flow of tourists in order to make the project viable on the long run, what would be your first steps?