



# CONSERVATION POLICY IN BRIEF

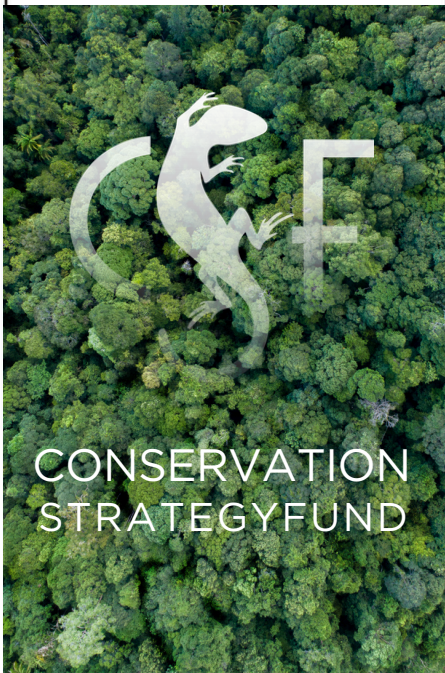
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## HOW DO NATURAL PROTECTED AREAS CONTRIBUTE TO PERU'S NATIONAL ECONOMY?

Peru's Natural Protected Areas (NPAs) play an important role in contributing to employment and the national economy. The National Service of Natural Areas Protected by the State (SERNANP) has identified a financial need for the effective management of Peru's NPAs that exceeds the allocated budget (SERNANP, 2024). Closing this gap requires an understanding of the real and potential economic contribution of NPAs, to better understand and justify the importance of investing in them, as is the case with any other economic activity that contributes to the national economy. To help close this funding gap, Conservation Strategy Fund (CSF) conducted a study to evaluate the economic contributions of Peru's Protected Areas.



*Lago Sandoval. Reserva Nacional Tambopata. Foto: Shutterstock.*

The study "Contribution of Natural Protected Areas to the National Economy and Human Well-being" focused on three aspects:

1. Identify investments in NPAs that increase their tourism potential and estimate the economic impact of these investments on the national economy.
2. Estimate the current and potential economic contribution of the following activities in NPAs to the national economy: tourism activities, the use of forest, flora, and wildlife resources through small-scale commercialization, REDD+ projects (Reduction of Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation), and MERESE (Ecosystem Services Payment Mechanisms) water-related projects.
3. Determine the economic impact of increased public investments in tourism activities and tourism concessions in the NPAs.

### **1. Results: ECONOMIC IMPACT OF INVESTMENTS TO INCREASE TOURISM**

A strategic investment in physical infrastructure of between S/403 and S/571[1] million would increase the number of NPA visitors by an estimated 158% to 418% when compared to visitor numbers from 2023. This investment would generate an economic impact of S/2,026 million in added value, S/828 million in salaries, and more than 62,000 jobs.

Sixty-seven percent of this impact could result from an investment in only a few NPAs - the National Reserve of Paracas, Tambopata, and the System of Islands, Islets, and Punta Guaneras (Ballestas Islands). Investments and strategic planning will be needed to implement these changes according to the capacity of each NPA.

## 2. Results: CURRENT AND POTENTIAL ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION OF THE NPAS

In the NPAs in 2023, tourism activities; forest, flora, and wildlife resources; and the REDD+ and MERESE water-related projects generated more than 38,000 jobs, with remunerations that exceeded S/490 million and a value-added of more than S/1,187 million[2] for the Peruvian Economy. In addition, it is estimated that for every sol invested by the public sector in 2023 on these activities and projects, there was an average return of S/10.31 to the Peruvian economy. That's a 900% ROI, which reflects the high degree of profitability of these investments. Notably, 98% of this contribution came from tourism, resulting in a return 20 times higher than the investment made by the State (Figure 1), which is equal to a 2000% ROI.

When considering tourism activities, with investments in physical infrastructure, and the use of all forest, flora, and wildlife resources[3], as well as the implementation of the REDD+ and MERESE water-related projects in all the NPAs with the potential to subscribe these projects[4], it is estimated that the employment contribution to the country would exceed 157,000 jobs, while remunerations would exceed S/2,011 million and the total value-added would amount to more than S/4,945 million. This value-added contribution would account for 0.56% of the national GDP, exceeding the

contribution to national GDP from activities such as fishing, whose contribution is equivalent to 0.3% of the national GDP.

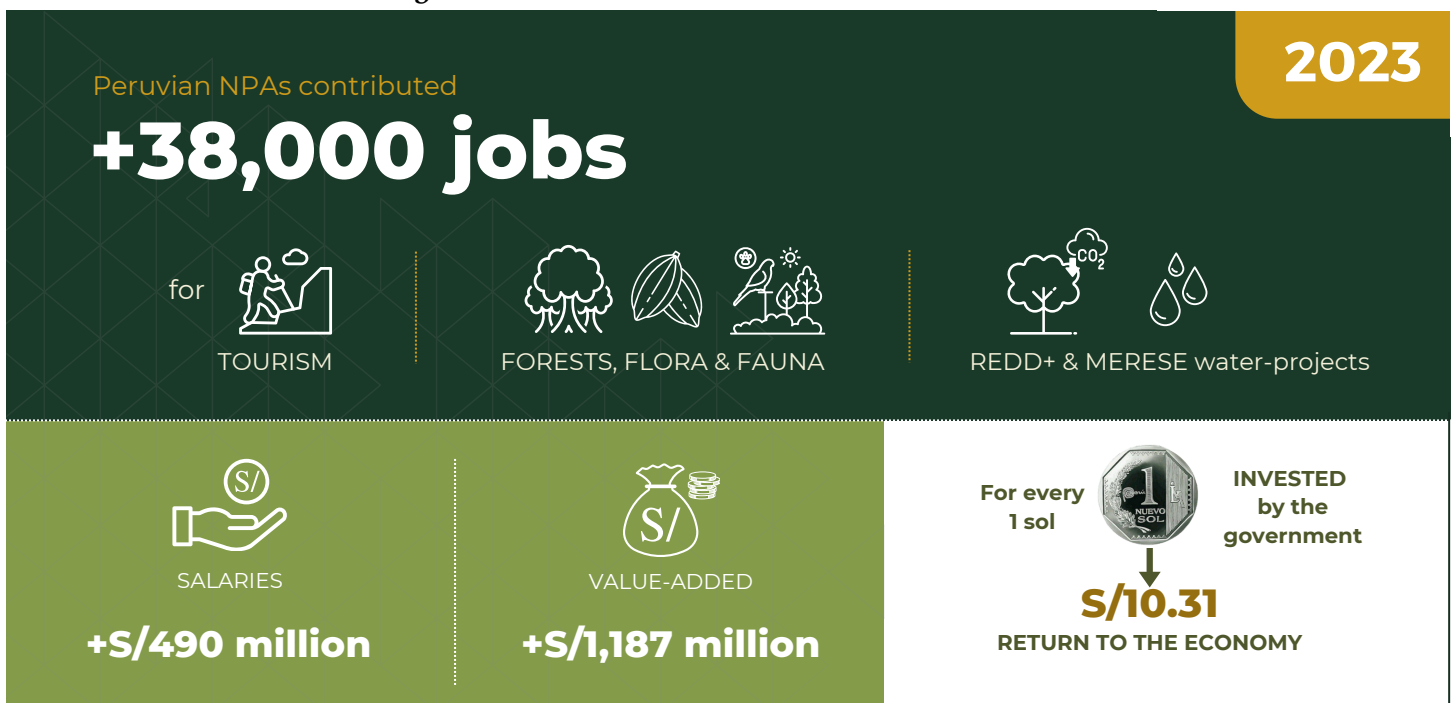
Although the estimate of the economic return of each sol invested by the State in the management of the NPAs would decrease from S/10.31 to S/6.49, due to the increase in investments in infrastructure, a notable increase in the economic return is observed due to the benefits of the total forest, flora and wildlife resources (S/0.88); subscribing to REDD+ projects (S/3.15); and MERESE water-related projects in NPAs with potential (S/1.59); compared to 2023 (Figure 2).

It is estimated that the contribution of tourism activities within the NPAs, would then exceed 26% of tourism-related GDP (S/ 18,000 million), according to the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC, 2024), while the use of forest, flora and wildlife resources could contribute an additional 0.11% to the GDP of the agriculture sector (INEI, 2024).

## 3. Results: ECONOMIC IMPACT OF TOURISM CONCESSIONS AND PUBLIC INVESTMENTS IN NPAS

The seven tourism concessions analyzed (in Manu Natural Park, Tambopata National Reserve and Huascarán Natural Park) contributed S/820,000 annually to the national value-added, by generating 464 jobs and contributing S/234,000 in salaries. Completed public investment projects[5] have injected S/33 million into the national value-added, adding more than S/11 million in salaries and creating 836 jobs. Current and viable tourism projects show enormous economic potential: it is estimated that they could generate S/186 million and S/8 million in value-added, respectively; along with more than 4,800 jobs and a significant increase in wages (Figure 3).

Figure 1: Economic contribution of the NPAs in 2023



**Figure 2: Potential economic contribution of NPAs**



**Figure 3: Economic impact of tourism concessions and public investments in NPAs**

PROJECTS	CONTRIBUTION			RETURN TO THE ECONOMY PER SOL OF PUBLIC EXPENSES
<b>CULMINATED</b>	836 jobs	S/11 millions salaries	S/33 millions value-added	S/5.28
<b>IN EXECUTION</b>	4,000 jobs	S/56 millions salaries	S/186 millions value-added	S/6.5
<b>VIABLE</b>	207 jobs	S/2 millions salaries	S/8 millions value-added	S/0.22
<b>TOURISM CONCESSIONS *</b> (7 in 3 ANPs)	464 jobs	S/234 thousand salaries	S/820 thousand value-added	S/0.32

\*The return to the economy in value-added is related to the operating expenses of the tourism concessions.



In conclusion, increasing investments in the sustainable management of tourism activities, as well as in forest, flora, and wildlife resources, alongside the implementation of REDD+ and MERESE water-related projects, have the potential to strengthen the Peruvian economy.

These activities contribute to ecosystem preservation, job creation, and the improvement of local communities' quality of life, thereby reinforcing NPAs as strategic pillars for economically and environmentally sustainable development in Peru.

The financing of NPAs is a strategic investment option for the State. Integrating private capital in the management and conservation of these areas will enhance job creation, income generation, and the protection of Peru's natural resources.

### Recommendations

1. Prioritize investments in physical infrastructure to enhance tourism activities within high-impact NPAs.
2. Implement specific economic support programs for the use of forest, flora, and wildlife resources.
3. Expand and secure financing for REDD+ and MERESE water-related projects.

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[1] It is key to align this growth with strategic planning that takes into account the carrying capacity of each NPA. As of October 2024, 1 USD = 3.8 PEN (Peruvian soles).

[2] In 2023, 37 NPAs recorded visits; 44 different forest, flora, and wildlife resources were exploited in 31 NPAs; 3 REDD+ projects were underway; and a MERESE project was underway in the Salinas and Aguada Blanca National Reserve. Remunerations were payments workers received for their work, such as wages, salaries, or other benefits (bonuses or additional compensation). The value-added is the wealth that a company, industry or sector generates in the production process. It is equivalent to the sum of the income from the factors of production: remuneration, rents obtained by the owners of the resources, interest on financial capital, and corporate profits.

[3] It is estimated that the forest, flora and wildlife resources with potential for use would be 86 resources distributed in 51 NPAs.

[4] There are 17 NPAs with the potential to subscribe to REDD+ projects and 13 with the potential to subscribe to MERESE water-related projects.

[5] The projects analyzed have an implementation period that varies between 1 and 3 years.

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*Puerto Pizarro, junto al Santuario Nacional Los Manglares de Tumbes.*

*Foto: Shutterstock.*