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Influence of the: Serrania Regional Natural Park  
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# RURAL COMMUNITY TOURISM FOR THE AREA OF INFLUENCE OF THE: SERRANIA REGIONAL NATURAL PARK OF LAS QUINCHAS IN OTANCHE, BOYACÁ, COLOMBIA

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**Abstract:** After the declaration of the Serranía de las Quinchas Regional Natural Park, there were effects on the community of the area of influence, altering the habitual development of economic activities, causing an increase in poverty, creating new limitations, as well as phenomena of displacement from the rural areas towards urban areas, in addition to the development of illegal activities such as extensive deforestation. When determining the lack of economic alternatives with a sustainable approach in the area, an alternative of sustainable economic activity is proposed for the buffer zone of the Natural Park in Otanche, based on the implementation of community rural tourism, with which it is intended to minimize negative challenges in both natural ecosystems and the general population since the implementation of cooperative processes. Initially, the environmental, social and economic diagnosis of the area is generated and in the work together with the community the tourist inventory of the region is consolidated, where the main environmental and social criteria capable of consolidating the supply of goods and services are identified of tourist order of the zone, giving rise to the design of the Community Rural Tourism plan, with the consolidation of a tourist map where all the points, routes and activities to develop in the area are located. Finally, the Community Rural Tourism plan was socialized with the community, identifying weaknesses, opportunities, strengths and threats recognized by the community.

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**Index terms:** Rural tourism, Cooperativity, Environmental Heritage, Tourist Attraction, Protected area.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Protected areas constitute a portion of the territory dedicated to the preservation and conservation of the environment. These are seen as both political and environmental tools, and are a way of seeing, understanding and producing from the natural environment and from the socio-cultural perspective (West & Igoe, 2006). They have been established as an alternative for the improvement, control and balance between the environment and human beings. More and more countries have initiatives for the development and declaration of protected areas this in order to

preserve and conserve nature and thus achieve mitigation and adaptation to climate change, depending on the policies implemented in each country; In the case of Colombia, there is great diversity, which is reflected in the number of protected areas, which when declared cause a direct impact on the community, because the traditional productive activities developed in the area of influence must be transformed to give them a sustainable approach, evidencing an oblivion on the part of the territorial entities when not providing solutions or alternatives of economic order for the populations of these protected areas, generating an increase in the illegal works and

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in the migration of the rural population towards the urban areas.

The buffer zones of the protected areas are those areas of transition between the anthropic landscape and the conservation zones, these areas contain stubble or secondary vegetation and may be exposed to agricultural and extractive activities, of regular intensity (Decree 1996, 1999, art .4) as is the case in the Las Quinchas, in which agricultural activities are mainly carried out. After the declaration and alignment of the Serranía las Quinchas, a conflict of land use and a great impact of social, economic and environmental nature were generated, so it is necessary to generate, for the local population, economic development alternatives that are consistent with the vocation of the soil and the principles of sustainability according to its environmental importance.

The people of the study area does not have productive alternatives with a sustainable approach, due to the absence of processes for the valuation of cultural and environmental assets, the low participation by the community in the processes of conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, This is due to the lack of access to environmental education programs, technological developments and traditional ways of life without innovation processes in addition to wasting the social and environmental heritage of the area.

In this way an environmental, social and economic diagnosis of the Las Quinchas in Otanche, Boyacá was carried out, which allowed consolidating the tourist inventory with the environmental and social attractions that constitute the offer of tourist goods and services to finally consolidate the Tourism plan under the approaches of sustainability and the conditions of the protected area, consolidating itself as an alternative solution for rural communities through cooperative processes, achieving the conservation of environmental and social heritage, increasing the economic income of the community from the empowerment and knowledge of their culture and territory.

## II. METHODOLOGY

This research is participatory-descriptive.

“(Castro, 2017) mentions that descriptive studies seek to specify the properties, characteristics and profiles of people, groups, communities, processes, objects or any other phenomenon that is subjected to an analysis” (Danhke, 1989).

For the realization of the project, strategic phases were determined in which the determined objectives were developed; Initially, a primary information collection was carried out, following the methodology established by Orlando Fals Borda, Research, Action,

Participatory (IAP) and the Participatory Rural Diagnostic. For the development of the methodology of the IAP methodology, parameters established by Pastor-Alfonso, M in 2015 were followed, where it recommends for the development of workshops with communities:

1. Promote community participation in the design and decision of the activities to be developed through collaborative processes that allow understanding the needs of all agents and avoid possible intra-community conflicts, (Laverack & Thangphet, 2009; Weiler & Ham, 2002; p. Cited by Pastor-Alfonso, M (2015).
2. Adapt the contents to the cultural and social contexts of the working group, building on the traditional knowledge, local resources and skills of individuals (Giampiccoli et al., 2014; Manyara & Jones, 2007) cited by Pastor-Alfonso , M (2015).
3. “Pastor-Alfonso (2015) mentions Training local trainers with the aim of prolonging the effects of external action” (Weiler, 2002), which although not always correct, is valued by local agents (Sosa Covarrubias, 2013); (Manyara, 2007).

For primary information collection in community workshops and to support the feasibility of research, primary sources were managed such as:

Surveys, interviews and observation: surveys were conducted that yielded information where the viability of the CRT in the Las Quinchas village was verified. With the visits and field work, the paths were registered to observe the population's quality of life and the places where CRT activities can be carried out.

With the information obtained, the logical framework matrix was built, which facilitates the process of conceptualization, design, execution and evaluation of projects. Its emphasis is on goal orientation, orientation towards beneficiary groups and facilitating participation and communication between stakeholders (Ortegón E. P., 2005).

Through this matrix, the necessary activities for each component were identified, and in this way to comply with the component, which is defined as the specific objectives established in the project, each component responds to a purpose, which is unique and focuses to solve the general objective of the project, if the fulfillment of the purpose is achieved, it will contribute to the achievement of the goals, which are the goals proposed in the project (Ortegón E., 2005).

Through this information an environmental, social and economic diagnosis of Las Quinchas village was made, being corroborated with the data found in the surveys and in the Management Plan of the Regional Natural Park Quinchas. The community workshops allowed the collection of the necessary information to develop the Tourist Resources Inventory which constitutes a registry and an integrated state of all the tourist elements that, due to their natural, cultural and human qualities, can constitute a resource for the tourist, so it represents a valuable instrument for tourism planning, since it serves as a starting point for evaluations and establishing the necessary priorities for national tourism development (MINCETUR, 2006)

## III. CONDITIONS OF THE AREA

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Boyacá is one of the thirty-two (32) departments that make up the territory of the Republic of Colombia. It is located in the northeastern center of the country, in the eastern mountain range of the Andes it crosses it from south to north forming a varied topography with diversity of thermal floors. It has an area of 23,189 km<sup>2</sup>, which represents 2.03% of the national territory (Municipality of Otanche, 2009). Its capital is the city of Tunja and is politically and administratively divided into 123 municipalities (Boyacá, 2012). Among these municipalities is the municipality of Otanche, which is located in the province of the West in the department of Boyacá.

The great part of the territory is located in humid tropical zone of irregular topography, the main geographical points are: the mountain range of the Quinchas, the high one of the Cuy, the cairn of Seville and the hills of Animatum and the Carcha among others (Municipal mayor's office of Otanche, 2009).

The development of Otanche has been accelerated and little planned over the years, growth that has been conditioned to the mining development of the region, an activity that was responsible for linking a defined trade and dependent on the bonanzas of the emeralds. The local economy is fully articulated with the regional economy and leadership in its strengthening can be observed, mainly in the supply of cattle for meat and the supply of non-renewable natural resources (Otanche, 2001).

The municipality of Otanche, is located, to the west of the Department of Boyacá, Province of the West, on the western flank of the Eastern Cordillera, limits by the East with the municipalities of San Pablo de Borbur, Pauna, Raquira, Tinjacá, Sutarmarchán and Santo Sofia, by the West, serves as a natural limit to the Magdalena River, which separates it from the Caldas and Antioquia Departments, bordering Puerto Boyacá, by the North with the Department of Santander, with the municipalities of Florián, La Belleza and Bolívar and by the south with the municipality of Yacopí, Cundinamarca (Municipal Mayor's Office of Otanche, 2009).



Figure1.Otanche Location

#### IV. ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL DIAGNOSIS OF THE STUDY AREA

Based on the methodology of the logical framework, a diagnosis was established at the economic, social and environmental level of the area. Establishing environmental activities such as: development of plans for efficient use and saving of water, environmental awareness of tourists, solid waste plans, environmental protection, knowledge of the flora and fauna of the area, through the development of the TRC will give the formation of the community in environmental issues, conservation, and environmental education, these activities were established through the community workshops, where the community stated that the fulfillment of these activities would carry out the established in the components, purpose and purposes , which are determined under a single criterion, these activities have indicators, in which were defined: increased environmental awareness for the use and care of natural resources, increased biodiversity in the area, and knowledge of environmental heritage, which allow to measure the progress of the project in the environmental part and the achievement of the objectives, and These indicators are evaluated and monitored by the means of verification which are defined by the following aspects: source of information, method of collection, method of analysis, frequency of collection and the person in charge. The main means of verification consist of lists of assists, records and historical data, which will have a monthly collection frequency, their method of analysis will be simple verification and statistical analysis, with the representatives of the associations responsible for the development of the project being responsible and the municipality. For this development, a series of assumptions were taken into account, which are those conditions or factors that are considered true and are sufficient to guarantee the success of the project at each of its levels (purpose, purpose, components and activities).

Assumptions that are not fulfilled are assumed as risks, for the formulation of the project, assumptions were contemplated as: timely assistance from the community to the programmed trainings, generation of new sustainable economic activities in the area, existence of a commercial ally that guarantees a stable market in the area, in this way the risk factors were evaluated, where weakness was found in the political part, since strategies are not guaranteed in the departmental and national development plan that ensure the satisfactory development of the activities, another evidenced risk is generated in the social factor, because it is not possible to guarantee the total

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participation of the community, so that the development of all activities will not be the desired one. With the fulfillment of everything required for the development of the activities, the components are fulfilled, which are the specific objectives of the project, in the same way it was performed in corresponding analysis of each factor, identifying the indicators in the same way, means of verification, and assumptions, this analysis leads to the development of the purpose, which describes the general objective, thus finally fulfilling the established purposes. For each analysis, what is established in the components, purpose and purposes is maintained, since they are general characteristics of the project.

With this analysis, it was identified that in the village of Las Quinchas there is a great risk due to the lack of support and accompaniment to the community in the development of activities for the conservation and preservation of the environmental heritage; it is evident that the necessary policies to develop activities with a sustainable nature are not presented, leaving the community without alternatives. The Serranía de Las Quinchas being a protected area, established by Corpoboyacá, does not present the necessary support for the identification of new economic alternatives with a sustainable approach, leaving the community as the only alternative illegality and omission to the regulations, giving rise to the degradation of environmental heritage.

In the same way, it was identified that some of the biggest environmental problems are that it presents itself: a high percentage of deforestation of forests, burning of forests for the implementation of agricultural work (extension of the agricultural frontier), logging of native forests and planted for indiscriminate commercialization of wood, logging of forests for domestic use such as the combustion of food and housing in the area, in the same way due to the lack of adequate wastewater management systems, the main ravines in the area are contaminated, these problems were identified through community surveys and the identification of problems through community workshops, which were verified in the Management Plan established for the Serranía de Las Quinchas. As a result of the anthropic pressure of the Serranía, many species of animals have had to migrate from their natural habitats, which generates that the species are at risk since they are hunted or die due to lack of habitats of optimal conditions (CORPOBOYACA, 2015).

There is a high concentration of settlement of producing and sawing families in the area of the conservation area, which have crops that they market and use for consumption. Likewise, the Serranía is also affected due to its potential in terms of environmental services, in which mining of coal and emerald is usually found, which generates loss of water sources

in some sectors and cause of intensification of armed conflict in the zone (green war).

At the economic level, activities such as: increased publicity of the TRC, conformation of a stable trade in the area, generation of sustainable economic alternatives, formation of associations in order to increase economic activities favoring the entire community, search for alliances, Commercial activities focused on the development of the TRC, these activities were established through community workshops, where the community said that the fulfillment of these activities would comply with the provisions of the components, purpose and purposes. In the village of Las Quinchas at an economic level, it was established that there are several difficulties at a financial, political, social and legal level, because financially the village does not have the necessary budget and support both local and regional, which prevents development. In the same way, a perceived problem is that the community has low economic income due to the lack of commercial allies that allow for stable trade, the activities currently developed are not sufficient to meet basic needs and maintain quality of adequate life, since the main economic activity developed by the community is the butterfly zoo, which is not a profitable activity, since it does not compensate the investment made with the profits received, this is because it is not counted. With good business allies.

Taking into account data established by SISBEN in the Management Plan of La Serranía de las Quinchas, there is a high precariousness in access to public services and poor housing materials (CORPOBOYACA, 2015).

Through the surveys it was corroborated with the Development Management Plan that the population of the paths that are part of the park have a high dependence on a single income, which constitutes a problem for the economic security of families. These activities are not developed by means of a technical capacity being developed empirically, which limits the possibility of productive reconversion of the population to activities other than traditional ones.

Through the surveys and community workshops, weaknesses were determined for the social factor, since the population does not have confidence in government entities, because in the declaration there was no adequate socialization and there is high uncertainty about the limits. Exact zoning (conservation zone, buffer and influence), likewise there is a lack of clarity or disagree about the internal procedures for the delivery of environmental licenses. Considering education, the population has a large percentage with low levels of schooling, the percentage of young people with school dropouts is also notable.

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Due to the armed conflict, there is a migration of the population to the high areas of the park as the conservation zone, which generates an increase in negative impacts to the ecosystem.

The population of the villages has high unmet basic rural needs and if it shows a high precariousness in access to public services and efficient housing materials, which means that there is a high concentration of poverty in the families of the area; Currently there is great fear because the declaration of the park worsens this situation (CORPOBOYACA, 2015).

The new projects generated to the population by government entities are focused on associations, but a great problem is that they do not have the necessary experience of unionization, which causes informal and disorganized processes to be developed, which in turn causes fragility in the processes.

Evidence was achieved for the lack of knowledge before the environmental services offered by the park to be used in a sustainable manner, also a large percentage is presented to the knowledge of the environmental and cultural heritage of the area

## **V. TOURIST INVENTORY AND COMMUNITY RURAL TOURISM PLAN**

For the development of the tourist inventory, the Manual for the Formulation of the Inventory of Tourist Resources at the National Level of the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Tourism was used, where the definition of the categories, types, subtypes and elements of information to be included for each resource is recorded tourist.

Through cooperative processes with the community the main attractive points of cultural and environmental character were identified, and in this way giving their location and their main characteristics, in the same way their current state was established, and the possible activities to develop in this place, each established point is controlled by its owners or people who manage it and in this way guarantee excellent service and protection to the environment.

Taking into account the tourist inventory, the packages were classified according to the possible activities to be carried out in each place, the time required to make the tour, the market segmentation, as well as the necessary conditions to guarantee the security in each place, such as clothes to wear, shoes, physical conditions; Finally, the goods and services offered in each place were specified.

Tour package No. 1. Route of the Quinchos: In this tourist package the main attractions are characterized by being religious, cultural and natural, among which are: The Virgin, Salinas, Dungeons, Quebrada la Cobre, Cajones, Cascadas and Quebrada la Honda, these places

constitute the Route of the Quinchos, this name is constituted because these places were part of the frequent route of the Quinchos Indigenous at the time of the Colony; Among the activities that can be carried out in these sites, the following stand out: The observation of fauna and flora of the area, ecological walks, taking photographs, religious activities and water recreation, as the people who can do this route apply to all the ages (children, young people, adults and older adults) with physical conditions without major requirement, the time needed to make this tour is 1 day.

Tour package N ° 2. Green route of the butterfly In this tourist package the main attractions are characterized by being of natural type among which are: Mirador, Mariposario and Sendero del Zipa, these places constitute the Green Route of the Butterfly, this Name is constituted due to the great biodiversity of flora and fauna present in the route, where the observation of different species of butterflies along the route is highlighted, among the activities that can be performed in these sites, the following stand out: fauna and flora of the area, ecological walks, photography, purchase of handicrafts, cycling, camping and cultural activities, as people who can do this route apply for all ages (children, youth, adults and seniors) with physical conditions without major requirement, the time needed to make this tour is 1 day, or 2 days if you want to camp in the area.

Tour package No. 3. Green route of the butterfly and orchid to shark fin: In this tourist package the main attractions are characterized by being of a natural type among which are: Mariposario, Alto del Zipa and Shark Fin, these places constitute the Green Route of the Butterfly and the Orchid until Shark Fin, this name is constituted due to the great biodiversity of flora and fauna present in the route, which highlights the observation of different species of butterflies and orchids along the route, within the activities that can be done at these sites include: The observation of fauna and flora of the area, ecological walks, taking pictures, buying crafts, cycling, camping, cultural activities, and rock climbing, as people who can do This route applies to people with high performance physical conditions (youth and adults), the time required to make this tour is 2 days, incl. using the time of the lodging in camping.

Tour package No. 4. Green route of the butterfly and orchid to crystalline births: in this tourist package the main attractions are characterized by being of a natural type among which are: Mariposario, Alto del Zipa and Births of Crystalline, these places constitute the Green Route of the Butterfly and the Orchid until Births of Crystalline, this name is constituted due to the great biodiversity of flora and fauna present in the route, where the observation of different species of butterflies and orchids along the route is highlighted, within the

activities that can be done in these sites include: The observation of fauna and flora of the area, ecological walks, taking pictures, purchase of handicrafts, cycling, camping, cultural activities, as the people who can make this route applies to people With high performance physical conditions (youth and adults), the time needed to make this tour is 2 days, including the time of the lodging in camping.

Tour package No. 5. Green route of the butterfly and orchid to the births of martyrs: In this tourist package the main attractions are characterized by being of a natural type among which are: Mariposario, Alto del Zipa and Nartires de Martyrs, these places constitute the Green Route of the Butterfly and the Orchid until Births of Martyrs, this name is constituted due to the great biodiversity of flora and fauna present in the route, where the observation of different species of butterflies and orchids is highlighted along the tour, within the activities that can be done in these sites, the following stand out: The observation of fauna and flora of the area, ecological walks, photography, purchase of handicrafts, camping, cultural activities, as the people who can do this route applies to people with high performance physical conditions (youth and adults), the time needed to make this route and s of 2 days, including the time of the lodging in camping.

With the established routes a map was designed in which all the sites of tourist interest are appreciated, in this way the Green Route of the butterfly was established, because the main tourist attraction is the great wealth of species of butterflies present in the area and highlights the characteristic color of the sector, emphasizing the great natural heritage present in the area. The large vegetation cover present along the points of tourist interest:



Figure2. Green Butterfly Route Map

## VI. SOCIAL AND HUMANISTIC IMPACT OF RESEARCH

Through cooperative processes, communities can encourage the development of CRT, which is characterized as a profitable and sustainable economic alternative for rural communities, in addition to generating income from the daily economic activities carried out; The development of this activity seeks the conservation and preservation of the cultural and environmental heritage of the territory.

Taking into account the situation experienced in western Boyacá, which was a time of violence, generated by the so-called "green war" and the presence of armed groups outside the law, created an environment of desolation, fear and terror of the local population; which is why this region currently has a social stigmatization due to its past; Another factor by which great problems are generated is the lack of commitment by the territorial entities, where it was evidenced that the great majority of the population lives in precarious conditions; In addition to this, with the declaration as a protected area La Serranía de las Quinchas, many activities such as agriculture and livestock, were banned in the area of buffer and influence of the park, so the population is left without an economic activity with which to survive , generating displacements towards the urban area, or generating illegal factors in the area. Rural Community Tourism, helps to solve the problems mentioned above as it generates development alternatives, which are directly related to peace processes, which have been implemented by different entities, thus strengthening the development of these processes, likewise seeks to promote improvement in the quality of life of the community, since it allows the social inclusion of people and the appropriation of their territory; This type of tourism allows the articulation of territorial entities, institutions and the community.

Rural Community Tourism generates spaces for the coordination of activities that promote the conservation of cultural heritage, generating the communities to recover their cultural values, strengthening their cultural identity

## CONCLUSION

The Serranía Las Quinchas is a strategic ecosystem which provides goods and services to the entire community due to the great biodiversity it has, for this reason it is important that the population has clarity in the zoning established by environmental regulatory entities with In order to guarantee the conservation of the ecosystem, it is necessary to socialize the policies determined for the three established areas: protection zone, buffer zone and zone of influence; It was possible to show that the community does not have the necessary tools to develop economic activities with a sustainable approach because the correct socializations by the environmental authority have not been carried out to the people who live in the buffer and influence zone. The Community Rural Tourism Plan is a sustainable productive economic activity, which must have adequate planning this in order to generate the least impacts on environmental, economic and social factors, it must also be focused according to the needs

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of the community and be a dynamic activity of the local economy from the communities.

The Community Rural Tourism brings economic, environmental and social benefits to the communities of the buffer and influence areas, in the economic factor the income of the local community is increased due to the payment they receive for the tours they take, for the tourist guidance, for accommodation, food, sale of handicrafts and products grown in the area, thus improving their quality of life, in the same way at the social level there is the possibility of forming associations or cooperatives to make sustainable tourism, in this way work and make decisions together in order to achieve the greatest benefits for the community and to be able to count on domiciliary public services, other benefits that are obtained is that culture, customs and traditions are tourist attractions that are valued by travelers, which generates that the community appreciates and conserves its cultural heritage; By carrying out the tourism plan in a structured and organized way, it does not generate any negative impact on natural resources, the preservation and conservation of environmental heritage is directly achieved.

Regarding the environmental diagnosis, it was possible to determine that Las Quinchas village presents a great risk due to the lack of support and accompaniment to the community in the development of activities for the conservation and preservation of environmental heritage, without neglecting the economic development of the path, generating that the alternatives taken by the inhabitants is the illegality and the omission to the normativity, giving rise to the degradation of the environmental patrimony. It was identified that some of the biggest environmental problems are incurred: a high percentage of forest deforestation, forest burning for agricultural work implementation (extension of the agricultural frontier), logging of native forests and sown for indiscriminate commercialization of wood, logging of forests for domestic use such as the combustion of food and housing in the area, also due to the lack of proper wastewater management systems, the main ravines in the area are contaminated. As a result of the anthropic pressure of the Serranía, many species of animals have had to migrate from their natural habitats, which causes the species to be at risk since they are hunted or die due to lack of habitats of optimal conditions.

Taking into account the economic diagnosis, it was established that there are several difficulties at the financial, political and legal level, because the path does not have the necessary budget and support, this prevents the economic development of the community, it is also important to highlight that The community has little economic income due to the lack of commercial allies that allow for a stable market, which

guarantees a source of fixed income. As for the economic activities currently carried out, it was evident that the butterfly zoo is not a profitable activity, since it does not compensate for the investment made with the profits received.

Socially, the village has not been able to properly articulate with the government entities in the proposed projects for the conservation and preservation of the park, because in the declaration there was no adequate socialization and there is high uncertainty about the exact limits of the zoning (zone of conservation, cushioning and influence), likewise there is a lack of clarity or disagreement about the internal procedures for the delivery of environmental licenses. Considering education, the population has a large percentage with low levels of schooling, the percentage of young people with school dropouts is also notable.

The people of the villages has high unmet basic rural needs and if it shows a high precariousness in access to public services and efficient housing materials, which means that there is a high concentration of poverty in the families of the area; Currently there is great fear because the declaration of the park worsens this situation.

Through the data collection sheets for information on the inventory of tourist resources, 11 points of environmental and cultural attractions were established, identified through community workshops with the inhabitants of the area, through these activities the population involved in the area Las Quinchas, due to the great tourist potential that the entire region has. Through this inventory the formulation of the CRT Plan was carried out, in which a map was established where the determined points were identified and classified into tourist packages, taking into account the places, the possible activities to be carried out, goods and services offered, time required for the tours, the necessary conditions to access the places and market segmentation.

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