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DESIGNING ECO-ENGAGEMENT AT SOQTAPATA

A personalised platform for eco-travellers to connect with nature and people that perpetuates community.

by

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UNIVERSITY OF THE ARTS LONDON

MA. SERVICE DESIGN 2023-24

MAJOR PROJECT

Soqtapata is a 9,816-hectare conservation area in the rainforest of Cusco, Peru. This remarkable project is managed by Herpiro, a family-owned B Corp founded and run by Rafael Pilares and Ana Cecilia Robles, along with their sons and daughters.

soq
pa

CARLOS PILARES ROBLES

MAJOR PROJECT
MA. SERVICE DESIGN 2023-2024

Soqtapata

"Soqtapata" means "six life zones" or "floors" in Quechua, one of Peru's indigenous languages. This unique feature makes it one of the most biodiverse areas in the world and a critical site for conservation.

Image 1: Landscape of Soqtapata cloud forest.

Disclaimer: This report is the original work of the author. All sources and contributions from others have been duly acknowledged and appropriately cited. This work has not been previously published or submitted elsewhere.
The findings and analyses presented in this report are based on research framed within specific contexts and parameters. It is not the intention of this study to address every aspect or particularity of all conservation areas or ecotourism activities. The conclusions drawn are specific to the scope of this study and should be understood as such.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This project would not have been possible without the support, inspiration, and collaboration of numerous individuals, for whom I am immensely grateful.

I would be remiss if I did not begin by expressing my profound gratitude to my parents, Ana Cecilia Robles and Rafael Pilares. Their unwavering dedication to Soqtapata has served as the foundation for this work and has provided me with a constant source of inspiration. I would like to express my gratitude to my siblings, particularly to Pepe, for their unwavering commitment to advancing Soqtapata and for their continual encouragement to innovate and think beyond the obvious.

Furthermore, I would like to acknowledge the significant impact of my grandfathers, whose detailed accounts of the rainforest not only reinforced my connection with the natural world but also motivated me to persist in this pursuit of conservation and exploration.

I am immensely grateful to the biologists, visitors, and conservationists who have engaged with Soqtapata over the years, and especially to those who have actively participated in the process of this project. Your willingness to share your knowledge and experiences with me has been of immense value in the development of this work.

I would like to express my gratitude to Dr. Maria Lujan Escalante, my supervisor, for her guidance, valuable insights, and for challenging me to continually expand the boundaries of this work.

I would also like to express my gratitude to my fellow cohort members and supervisors, with whom I have had the privilege of sharing this learning experience. I would like to express my gratitude to my partner, Belen Molina, for accompanying me on this academic endeavour, pursuing the MA in Service Design, and for providing me with unwavering support throughout this transformative period and our life in London.

I would like to express my gratitude to all those who have been a part of this remarkable experience and who have contributed to making this journey a reality.

Image 2: Soqtapata drone view

GLOSSARY

Benefit corporation (B corp): The certification is awarded to organisations that demonstrate exemplary standards of social and environmental performance, accountability, and transparency. The certification is issued by the nonprofit organisation B Lab, which requires companies to demonstrate their commitment to achieving a balance between profit and purpose. This entails emphasising positive impacts on society and the environment alongside financial success.

Concession for conservation: In Peru, the term refers to a legal agreement granted by the Peruvian government, which allows individuals, organisations, or private entities to manage and protect a specific area of land—typically forested land or areas with rich biodiversity—in the interest of conservation. In contrast to the emphasis on extractive activities typical of other forms of land tenure, these concessions are designed with the objective of preserving the natural environment and supporting biodiversity. This is frequently achieved through collaboration with local or indigenous communities.

Herpiro S.A.C. BIC: It is the private social company that created and managed the area of Soqtapata. This company was created and directed by the family Pilares Robles. They became a B Corp. in 2020 and won “Best of the World” for environment in 2021 & 2022.

Hotspot: A biodiversity hotspot is a region with a high proportion of endemic species (species found nowhere else) that is under significant threat from human activities. Protecting these hotspots is a priority for conservation efforts because of their rich biodiversity and vulnerability.

Key Biodiversity Area (KBA): It is a designated region identified as being of critical importance for the global conservation of biodiversity. A KBA is defined as an area that supports species and ecosystems of high conservation value, including endangered species, unique habitats, and ecologically significant communities.

Soqtapata: Its a concession for conservation of 9,816 ha located in the district of Camanti in Cusco, Peru. "Soqtapata" means "six life zones" or "floors" in Quechua, one of Peru's indigenous languages. This unique feature makes it one of the most biodiverse areas in the world and a critical site for conservation.

Image 3: Rainy morning at Soqtapata

CARLOS PILARES ROBLES
MAJOR PROJECT
MA. SERVICE DESIGN 2023-2024

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Image 4: Upper part of the waterfall at Soqtapata.

SERVICE DESCRIPTION

A service platform was designed for Soqtapata with the goal of **facilitating connections and community building** between eco-travellers and a range of stakeholders, including biologists, conservationists, local communities, and other eco-travellers.

The platform eases immersive and sustainable engagement with conservation efforts, enabling **meaningful interactions before, during, and after a visit**. Those engaged in eco-travel are enabled to gain knowledge, contribute and form connections with Soqtapata's conservation objectives, thereby enhancing both their personalised experience and the impact of the conservation work.

Image 5: A professor biology taking a break after an expedition at Soqtapata.

I.
BACKGROUND

Image 6: Transparent leaf at Soqtapata.

1. Research problem

The Tropical Andes hotspot, which is predominantly located in Peru, is recognised as one of the most biodiverse regions globally, playing host to an extensive variety of flora and fauna. Despite its ecological significance, this region is subjected to considerable threats from fossil fuel extraction and mineral exploitation (Myers et al., 2000; Martinez-Gugerli, 2017; Bax & Francesconi, 2019). It is imperative that urgent conservation measures be implemented to safeguard biodiversity. In response, the Peruvian government introduced the Ley de Flora y Fauna Silvestre in 2011, setting up the Concession for Conservation scheme with the goal of encouraging private land conservation (MINAM, 2011).

Soqtapata is the first private conservation concession in the Cusco region. Spanning 9,816 hectares, it is part of the Tropical Andes hotspot and is situated within the Key Biodiversity Area 75 (KBA75), which has been recognised as a crucial environmental system by the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF, 2021). The Soqtapata conservation area is managed by Herpiro S.A.C. BIC, a B Corporation dedicated to environmental preservation and community development. This initiative exemplifies private sector involvement in conservation that extends beyond traditional corporate responsibility (Herpiro S.A.C. BIC, 2024)



Image 7: Founders of Soqtapata: Ana & Rafael. Sign read: “Follow your ideals”

As the largest conservation initiative in Camanti - Cusco, Soqtapata aims to protect the environment from illegal gold mining, logging and un-regulated agriculture expansion, and to promote sustainable economic activities within the community. The Research & Development Centre of Soqtapata (CIDS in Spanish) provides support for scientific endeavours aimed at elucidating species diversity and the impacts of climate change, and facilitate social development.

The success of Soqtapata is of vital importance not only to the company itself, but also to the governmental concession scheme, B Corps initiatives, scientific community efforts, other conservation areas that follow the lead of Soqtapata, and, most crucially, the flora, fauna, and communities in and around the area.

Therefore, the four main stakeholders of the conservation efforts in Soqtapata are the conservationists (Soqtapata's team), biologists, local community and eco-travellers, all united by a simple and fundamental element with their relationship with nature: care. It is their care for nature that motivates them, in diverse ways and levels, to interact, engage and fund nature.

Although the interactions and relationships between eco-travellers, conservationists, biologists, and local communities in biodiversity protection are well-established, they often lack genuine reciprocal engagement and synergy. This one-sided dynamic constrains the potential for a more collaborative and impactful eco-tourism experience, particularly in conservation areas such as Soqtapata. By rethinking the role of eco-travellers and extending their involvement beyond that of passive participants to that of active contributors, Soqtapata and similar initiatives can unlock greater value.

The involvement of eco-travellers in more meaningful activities, such as deeper engagement with conservation efforts, participation in research projects and support for local communities, can facilitate a more immersive and sustainable experience. This approach not only increases the economic contribution of eco-tourism but also extends the traveller's connection to conservation beyond their visit, thereby driving ongoing support for environmental initiatives and amplifying awareness on a global scale.

These are the key contributions of this project:

Enhancing the eco-tourism experience: The project's aim was to provide an enhanced eco-tourism experience that aligns with the expectations of eco-travellers, facilitating a more profound connection with nature through direct involvement in conservation initiatives.

Addressing sustainable funding: The project aimed to establish a positive feedback loop by enhancing the value proposition for eco-travellers, thereby generating added income for conservation projects and strengthening their economic sustainability.

Fostering a collaborative conservation model: Through a co-design process, the project promotes a collaborative model that encourages participation from conservationists, biologists, local community, and eco-travellers, thereby easing mutual understanding and shared goals.

Developing a scalable framework: The insights and methodologies derived from this project can serve as a template for other conservation areas, extending the impact beyond Soqtapata and contributing to global conservation efforts.

2. Positioning and interest

This project is of particular interest to me on a personal and professional level, given my academic background in Tourism, Environment, and Development (MSc), my enthusiasm for conservation, and my role as a co-founder of Herpiro, the managing entity of Soqtapata. My continued involvement in the project was intended to enhance the scope and impact of Soqtapata.

Soqtapata was initiated by my father approximately fifteen years ago, and over the intervening period, my entire family has become involved, fostering a profound appreciation for nature and a unified vision for sustainable conservation management. Thus, it is important to enhance the experience of those who engage in ecotourism, both for the benefit of the company and for my own personal reasons.



Image 8: Picture of myself (Carlos) at Soqtapata in 2018, celebrating Peruvian independence day

Potential biases

I was aware of the potential for bias to affect my perspective on this project, given my involvement. Awareness of these biases enabled me to reflect on them and consider ways of mitigating their impact. For example, while there is a clear business necessity to focus on eco-travellers due to their economic contribution, it is also important to recognise the limitations and challenges that Soqtapata faces.
Additionally, it is relevant to mention that most of the project's participants, including biologists, eco-travellers and proxies, have experience working in other conservation projects like Soqtapata, which will provide valuable information that will mitigate my bias, based on sharing knowledge dynamics.

Furthermore, most of the participants had already established a connection with Soqtapata, visiting or working on research projects, and, in many instances, with me. The pre-existing relationship between the research team and the participants introduced the possibility of risks to the research methodology and data collection. Nevertheless, an awareness of these potential issues enabled me to implement more robust measures to mitigate them. One pivotal action I undertook was to engage in an open dialogue with both me and the management team of Soqtapata.

Mitigating biases

It was agreed that this project would be an academic endeavour, with the goal of broadening our perspective and exploring new possibilities, rather than presenting a solution that would be immediately applicable to our current reality.

To further mitigate bias in this research, a co-design method was employed, enabling the joint creation of solutions and reducing the potential influence of the researcher. This approach afforded participants greater scope for meaningful contribution. Furthermore, I engaged in transparent and candid conversations with participants about the project's expectations and implications. This was done to ensure that no undue pressure or unrealistic expectations were placed on those with ongoing relationships with Soqtapata.

It is noteworthy that some interviews were conducted in Spanish to facilitate communication with participants, while workshops were conducted in English, despite the fact that not all participants were native English speakers. Nevertheless, as the participants demonstrated a satisfactory comprehension of both English and Spanish, they were at liberty to articulate their opinions in the language of their preference. To ensure effective communication, we took measures to guarantee that all participants could comprehend the statements made in their respective languages. Such decisions inevitably entail certain risks. The translation of interviews from Spanish to English for this report could have resulted in the introduction of subtle shifts in meaning, while the engagement of participants in workshops in a second or third language could have hindered their ability to fully express themselves.
To mitigate these risks, interviewees were offered the opportunity to review the information used in the report and my analysis to ensure accurate interpretation. During the workshops, I encouraged participants to pose questions and request elucidation whenever any terms or information were unclear, thus facilitating a more informed and engaged discussion. This enabled all participants to engage fully and contribute to the discussions.

Finally, by focusing on Soqtapata with the mindset that this project could be replicated or serve as an inspiration for other conservation agents, I kept an academic approach, reducing my bias and minimising potential risks. This approach ensured that the project remained grounded in research and open to diverse perspectives.

3. Knowledge gap

The project's objective is twofold:

01
to enhance the eco-tourist experience.

02
to improve the economic sustainability and conservation outcomes for projects such as Soqtapata.

A significant knowledge gap remains regarding the potential for collaboration between stakeholders in eco-tourism. While existing literature and practices have explored the individual roles of conservationists, biologists, and eco-travellers, there is a paucity of understanding regarding how these stakeholders can collectively enhance the eco-tourism experience. The prevailing models are characterised by unidirectional interactions, which constrain the scope for more profound engagement and the realisation of mutual benefits. The goal of this project is to address this knowledge gap by employing a co-design approach with the intention of creating a more interconnected and reciprocal relationship among these groups.

II.

PROJECT FOUNDATION

Image 9: Picture of Rafael Pilares (founder) taking a deep dive with a friend at the Mystic Pool at Soqtapata.

4. Context

My country of origin, Peru, has a profound historical and natural significance that serves as an exemplar of the complex and multifaceted characteristics of human and ecological wonders. From the ancient civilisations that constructed Caral, (the first civilisation in Peru) to the Inca Empire's sophisticated societal structures, including Machu Picchu, Peru has long been a cradle of cultural and historical discoveries (Barrón et al., 2009; Tantaleán & Díaz, 2014; Quinlan Cutler et al., 2015).

In addition to its historical significance, Peru is distinguished by its remarkable natural diversity, encompassing a vast array of ecosystems and species. Historically, the concept of wilderness and the natural world were often perceived as desolate, savage, and wasteful. To illustrate, the Bible, one of the most widely read books in history, often depicts the wilderness as a place to be avoided (Cronon, 1996). However, by the late nineteenth century, during a period of significant social change, this perception began to shift. As leisure time and financial resources increased, there was a concomitant shift in perception of nature, becoming more positive.
A pivotal event in environmentalism history occurred in 1869 with John Muir arriving in Sierra Nevada. Muir's profound admiration for nature is exemplified by his famous remark, "No description of heaven that I have ever heard or read of seems half so fine" (Cronon, 1996). This sentiment encapsulated the emerging reverence for nature’s beauty, marking a shift in how people viewed and valued the natural world.

During this same period, another pioneer of nature exploration, Jan Kalinowski, started his expeditions in Peru. Kalinowsk conducted comprehensive research and produced documentation of the region's diverse flora and fauna. His work established a foundation for later scientific endeavours, a legacy continued by his son, Celestino Kalinowski, who furthered our understanding of the region's distinctive species and ecosystems (Kalinowski, 2017).

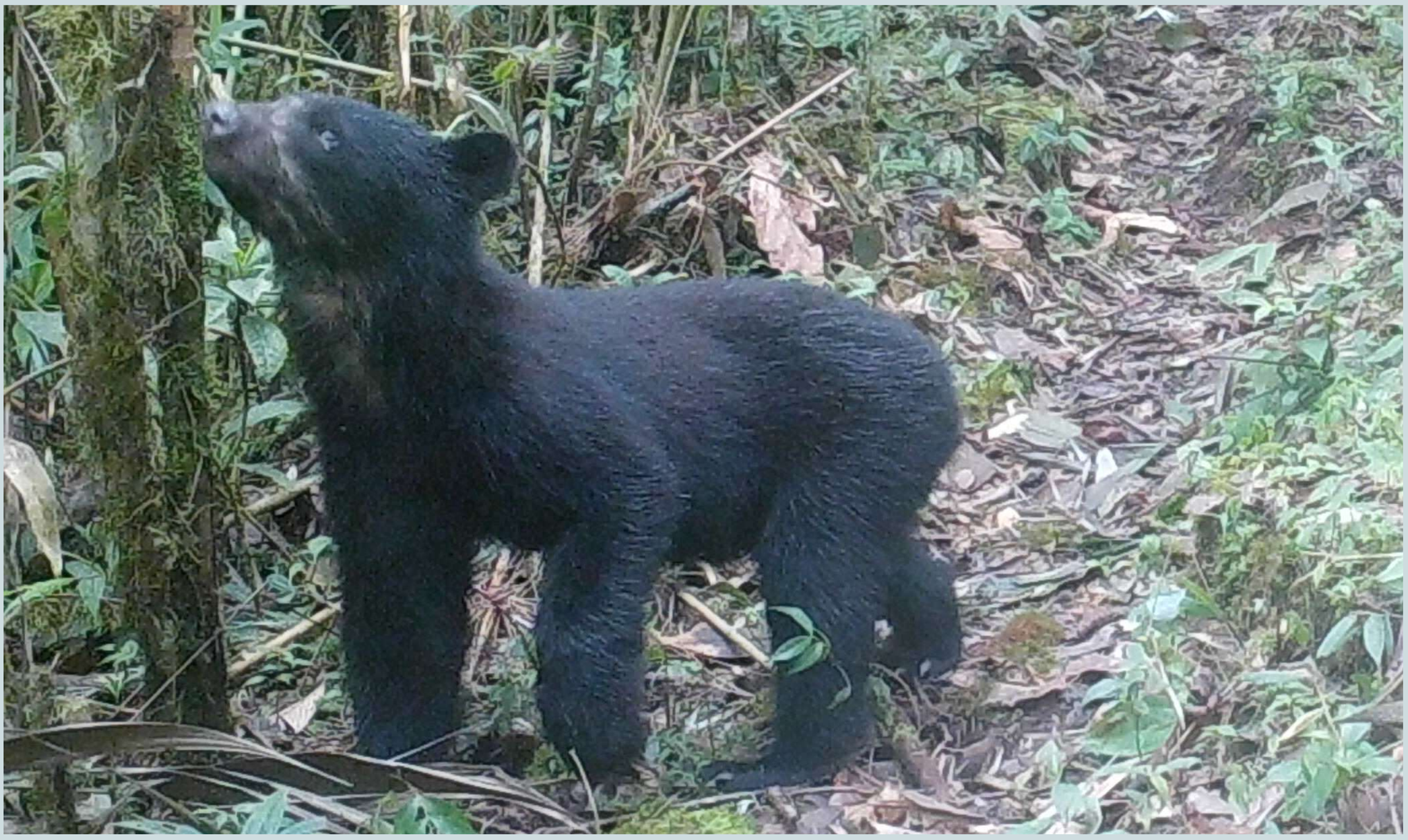


Image 10: Picture of a baby Andean bear taken with a tramp camera of the research team at Soqtapata.

Jan and Celestino Kalinowski conducted relevant work in today’s Camanti District, in the Region of Cusco, founding the Cadena area. This area is now recognised as part of The Tropical Andes, which is recognised as one of the world's biodiversity hotspots, is home to an astonishing variety of flora and fauna (Critical Ecosystem Partner, 2021). The Andean corridor plays a pivotal role in keeping global biodiversity, providing essential habitats and sustaining ecological processes that support the functioning of the wider environment (Critical Ecosystem Partner, 2021).

The Tropical Andes hotspot, which is primarily located in Peru, faces significant threats due to its vast fossil and mineral resources (Myers et al., 2000; Martinez-Gugerli, 2017; Bax & Francesconi, 2019).



Image 11: Picture of Jan Kalinowski.

Consequently, Peru has been subjected to considerable pressure to implement conservation mechanisms. In response, the Peruvian government enacted the "Ley de Flora y Fauna Silvestre" in 2011, which introduced the "Concession for Conservation" scheme to promote private land conservation (MINAM, 2011).

In 2012, a new conservation adventure started when the Concession for Conservation Soqtapata was created and officiated by the Peruvian Government in Camanti, Cusco-Peru. With 9,816 ha of rainforest, Soqtapata became the first private Concession for Conservation in Cusco with the aim to preserve, study and expand the knowledge of the area in an economical sustainable manner.
The Research & Development Centre of Soqtapata (CIDS in Spanish) currently fulfils the mission of conservation and scientific discovery at Soqtapata, continuing the Kalinowski legacy with a dual focus on biodiversity conservation and the advancement of scientific knowledge. The CIDS plays a pivotal role in studying the intricate interconnectivity of life within the Cusco Rainforest, from the cataloguing of new species to the understanding of the impacts of climate change on these vulnerable ecosystems.

In Latin America, there are more than 2,000 protected areas, which collectively encompass 12% of the region. These areas are confronted with considerable challenges, not only in terms of land preservation but also in achieving economic sustainability (Land Conservation Network, 2024). As is the case with many volunteer conservation initiatives, the Soqtapata project encounters difficulties in achieving economic sustainability. To provide support for their endeavours, the pursuit of ecotourism has been identified as a potential avenue for economic activity.

In Soqtapata, a variety of ecotourism experiences have been developed, which make use of the region's natural resources and built infrastructure to provide visitors with immersive experiences. The aim of these initiatives is to generate income that will sustain conservation efforts while offering a distinctive opportunity for tourist visitors to engage with and support this vital ecosystem's preservation.

5. Research statement

The current dynamics among conservationists, biologists and tourists as funding entities involved in protecting biodiversity are well-defined within academic, political, and international circles. Nevertheless, these relations remain predominantly unidirectional, lacking a reciprocal and interconnected synergy. There is a notable absence of direct interaction between these actors.

Soqtapata, a pioneering volunteer conservation project with over a decade of experience, provides an exemplar of successful conservation efforts in Peru. They support other conservation agents and develop prototype experiences to immerse tourists in the rainforest. Despite financial limitations, Soqtapata is aware of the wealth of its biodiversity and natural landscape, enabling them to create experiences that are minimally invasive yet profoundly engaging.

This paper/project acknowledged the debates and problems associated with the neoliberalisation of nature, the environmental and social impacts of ecotourism, and its limitations in providing a more holistic impact in conservation areas (Echtner and Prasad, 2003; Harvey, 2005; Duffy, 2008; Bax et al., 2019; Fletcher, 2015; Martinez-Gugerli, 2017; Euromonitor International, 2021). Moreover, it examined potential avenues for collaboration, particularly within the rainforest and with biologists, with the aim of more accurately gauging the needs and expectations of tourists (Sheil and Lawrence, 2004; Saville, 2018).

‘Tourism is a **service-intensive** industry’

As a service designer, I am aware of the service component of the tourism industry and the potential for intervention in a service-intensive sector (Avlonitis & Hsuan, 2017).
Those who travel in Latin America with an environmental focus are increasingly interested in destinations where they can participate in conservation efforts and develop a deeper connection with the natural world (Gray Group International, 2024; TouristSecrets, 2023; PRB, 2001). Eco-travellers are keen to take part in activities such as wildlife monitoring, habitat restoration, and community-led conservation projects. However, many perceive that the current range of offerings does not fully meet their expectations, leading to a sense of unfulfilled potential in their travel experiences (Gray Group International, 2024; Euromonitor International, 2021).
Following many discussions with the leadership teams of Soqtapata and other conservation areas in the Peruvian rainforest, as well as an analysis of trends in sustainable travel, ecotourism, and the expectations of eco-travelers (ACCOR, 2024), it became clear that there is significant potential for enhanced eco-travellers experience.





This project examined

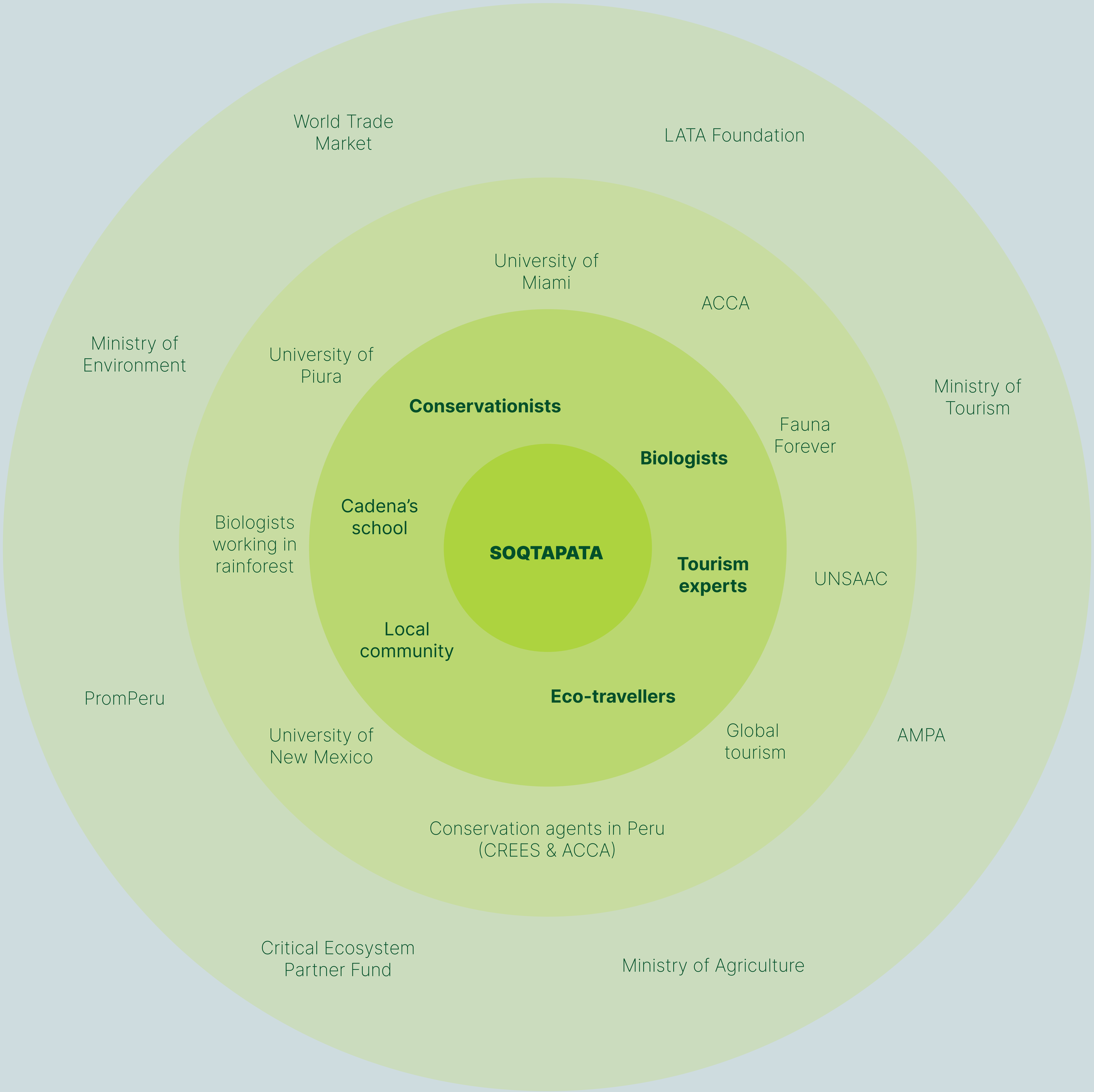
how might we

enhance the experience of eco-travellers at Soqtapata through the fostering of meaningful connections within a conservation community to entail the formation of active engagement between travellers, biologists and conservationists.

The objective was to create a memorable and positive experience that enhances the value proposition of Soqtapata and strengthens a shared conservation purpose. By fostering a supportive community, this approach aimed to generate a positive feedback loop through word-of-mouth and differentiated value, providing Soqtapata with a more compelling sales proposition. Ultimately, this contributes to its economic sustainability while advancing its conservation mission.

6. Stakeholders

The main stakeholder of the project is the Concession for Conservation Soqtapata, managed by a private family B Corp Herpiro S.A.C. BIC in Peru.
Due to the nature of the legal structure of Soqtapata, there are other actors involved such as the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Environment and the Regional Government.
Additionally, because of the tourism activities, the Ministry of Tourism, Prom Peru and Tourism actors are also involved.
However, for the purpose of the project, the main key actors are (1) conservation agents, (2) biologists working on the rainforest with conservation agents and (3) eco-travellers.

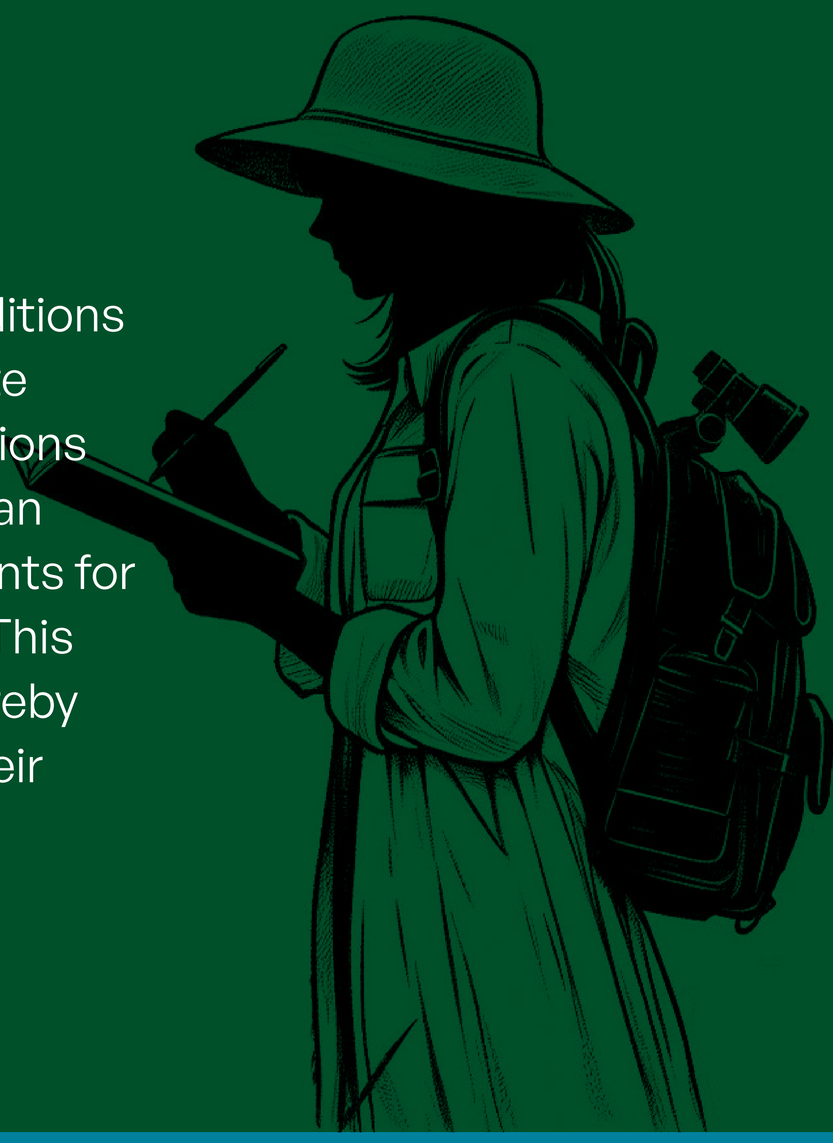


*Due to limited access to the specific group of eco-travellers, proxies were also employed, including experts in eco-tourism in the Peruvian rainforest. With the assistance of organisations and individuals with considerable experience, we were able to establish contact with eco-travellers and draw upon the expertise of these individuals to gain a deeper understanding of the issues, develop and validate our solutions.

All participants in the project were contacted through Soqtapata's network and those of their partners.

BIOLOGISTS

These field researchers engage with the natural environment in conditions that are inherently challenging. They are typically affiliated with private organisations, academic institutions, or non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Given their considerable experience of working in the Peruvian rainforest, they are well placed to appreciate the essential requirements for the successful completion of research projects in this environment. This project was able to gain access to biologists through Soqtapata, thereby leveraging their previous or current work experience in the region. Their profound understanding of the Peruvian rainforest, particularly their extensive experience at Soqtapata, proved to be instrumental in the project's advancement.





ECO-TRAVELLERS

The eco-traveller represents the primary target demographic for this project's service offering, making them a highly pertinent stakeholder in the realm of service design. This term describes a specific type of traveler who proactively seeks out ecotourism activities, drawn to destinations that promise a positive social or environmental impact. For those engaged in eco-travel, a journey is not merely a sightseeing excursion; rather, it is an immersive, purposeful experience that is rooted in learning, engagement, and stewardship.

Driven by a commitment to environmental sustainability, eco-travellers seek opportunities to meaningfully connect with both the natural world and local communities, making conscious choices that support conservation efforts and benefit the local economy. Such travellers value the opportunity to engage in activities that foster a deeper understanding of ecological and social challenges, whether through conservation projects, educational interactions with scientists and local guides, or community-centred initiatives.

CONSERVATION AGENTS

For the purpose of this project, a conservation agent is defined as an individual who owns or oversees the management of a conservation area. They handle supervising conservation initiatives and the economic viability of the land. In this project, Herpiro S.A.C. BIC (Soqtapata) fulfils the role of conservation agent, having entered a contract with the Peruvian government for the use of land dedicated to conservation purposes. The contract includes an approved master plan which delineates the social, environmental and economic activities to be developed over the next decade (2024-2034).



ECO-TRAVELLER PERSONA

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND

PASSPORT
PASSEPORT



Type
P

Code
GBR

Passport No.
O66R2D2

Surname
MCGREGOR

Given name
EWAN

Nationality
BRITISH CITIZEN

Age
28

Sex
MAN

Place of birth
PERTH

Date of issue
10/10/2022

Date of expire
10/10/2032





P<GBRUK<MCGREGOR<<EWAN<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<

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Behaviour / Interests:

- High environmental and social awareness (conservation)
- Concerned about their carbon footprint: in their daily lives and when traveling.
- Interested in natural destinations, biodiversity, and level of impact.
- Interested in learning during their travels, gaining new knowledge and experiences.

Pains / Needs

- Can’t find a reliable options for sustainable experience traveling through Latam; with a balance between comfort and an authentic immersion with nature.
- Be better prepare to be able to achieve his interests.
- Have a sense of community related to their conservation interest to strengthen his commitment.
- Does not have the time to engage in volunteer programs that usually take multiple weeks of commitment on-site.

III.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Image 12: Picture of eco-traveller doing an offering to the “Pachamama” (mother earth).

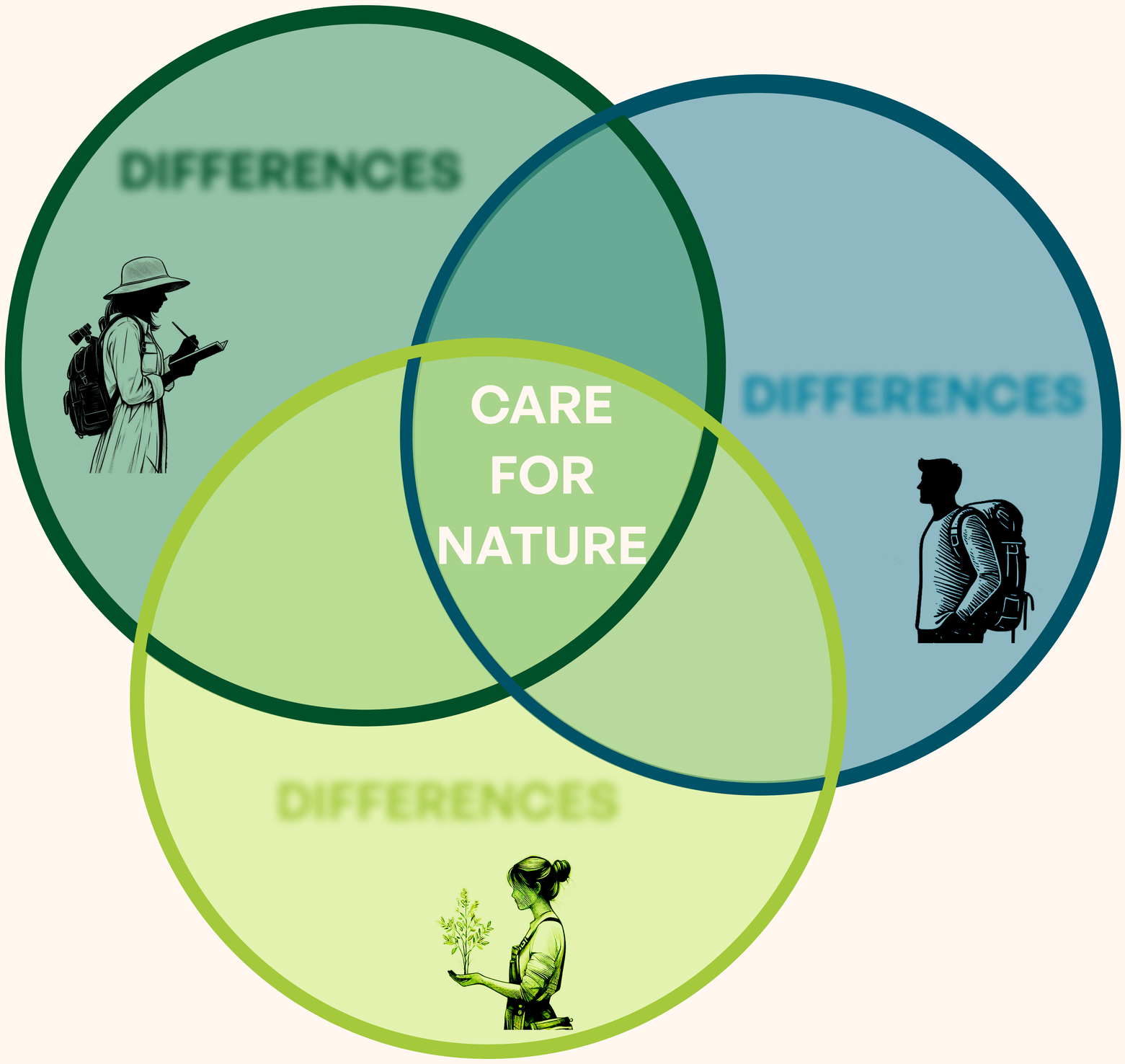
7. Research implications

The project devised a service to enhance the experience of those travelling with the specific intention of minimising their environmental impact by involving them in conservation efforts. This goal requires a certain level of interaction between eco-travellers, conservation agents and biologists. Considering the intrinsic collaborative nature of conservation and the service-oriented character of tourism, I adopted a collaborative approach as a service designer. I deployed a co-design approach for both research and the development of solutions (Busciantella and Scataglini, 2024).

The term 'co-design' is frequently employed to describe a process for the creation of solutions. However, the Research Through Co-Design (RTC) approach, an evolution of Research Through Design, offers a greater opportunity to generate and understand new ideas by incorporating diverse knowledge from various participants working towards a common goal (Busciantella and Scataglini, 2024).

For research through co-design to be effective, it is essential that both participants and researchers recognise and respect the differences between them while focusing on the similarities that connect them. In this instance, all participants have a common interest in nature and its conservation, despite holding different interpretations and implications of these concepts (Saeri & Bragge, 2020). The existence of a shared interest provides a robust foundation for effective interaction and collaboration.

Research through co-design



It is to be expected that when engaging with multiple stakeholders who hold differing perceptions of nature, their varying values and priorities will give rise to disagreements at various levels. However, the objective of this research was to identify and build upon areas of shared common ground. By directing discussions towards mutual interests, in particular the collective stewardship of nature, it became feasible to navigate potential conflicts. Notwithstanding the discrepancies in power relations and individual interpretations, the strength of this shared dedication to environmental conservation proved to be a potent unifying force, facilitating constructive collaboration and reducing contention among the participants.

8. Methodology

The tourism industry is, by its very nature, a service industry. It is, therefore, dependent on the delivery of outstanding experiences that motivate individuals to seek out similar services. The structure of the tourism experience is multifaceted, encompassing sensory and bodily experiences, perceptual and cognitive elements, social interactions, and emotional engagement. These components must be integrated to create a holistic tourism experience (Tussyadiah, 2014; Gao, et al., 2022). In conservation areas and in the context of ecotourism activities, while there are instances where the goals of tourism and biological research may appear to be in conflict, there is often an opportunity for collaboration (Saville, 2019).

The focus of this project is a particular phenomenon: over time, particularly in Westernised societies, there has been a **noticeable** decline in our ability to distinguish variations in the colour green, shapes, and even smells. This diminished capacity to perceive our surroundings has influenced our relationship with the environment, and consequently, our valuation of it (Edward et al., 2022). The capacity to discern differences and similarities is contingent upon the ability to generate, exchange, and interact with knowledge (Edward et al., 2022). Biologists frequently possess this knowledge and are eager to expand it through collaboration.

As previously defined, eco-travellers evince a pronounced interest in connecting with nature and engaging more deeply with the environment. However, as paying tourists, it is of the utmost importance that **‘the noticing’** learning methods employed be non-invasive.

Contemporary pedagogies of environmental care (Edward et al., 2022) emphasise the importance of creative, nature-based experiences that encourage experimentation with different modes of learning and expression.

The fostering of **care** represents a pivotal element of environmental pedagogies, as it facilitates individual engagement, which is indispensable for the formation of meaningful connections. In the absence of care, there is a risk of knowledge, emotions and experiences becoming detached from one another (Edwards et al., 2022). In this context, **care** is of significant relevance, as it is unlikely that people will prioritise the protection of that which they do not care about. Therefore, the **process of noticing**, which is aimed at knowledge acquisition, requires the incorporation of creative sensory elements that engage eco-travellers through a **care-focused approach**. This reinforces their connection to the conservation mission, thereby enhancing both their experience and their support for the cause.

9. Method

The research process of the project was conducted in three principal phases, as follows:

Secondary research

Entailed a comprehensive examination of existing literature and prior studies, with the objective of acquiring insights into the domains of ecotourism, conservation, service design, and noticing while simultaneously identifying gaps within these fields.

Structured around four key lenses:

1. Neoliberalisation of nature

This lens examined the impact of neoliberal policies on conservation and ecotourism. It investigated the influence of these policies on the relationship between conservationists and the tourism sector, which is often characterised by the commodification of nature. By analysing this debate, it was possible to identify the tensions between economic growth and sustainable environmental practices. This, in turn, informed strategies for integrating eco-travellers into more meaningful and long-term conservation efforts.

2. Sustainable tourism

The research delved into the evolution of tourism, with a particular focus on the transition towards sustainable practices. It examined the impact of tourism as a service on local communities, environments, and economies, emphasising the necessity of designing tourism experiences that prioritise ecological preservation and community benefits.

3. Service design and co-design

A substantial proportion of the research was devoted to the contribution of service designers in the development of tourism services. Particular attention was devoted to the methodology of Research Through Co-Design, which represents an evolution of Research through Design. This approach emphasises collaboration, allowing multiple actors (such as eco-travellers, conservationists, and biologists) to contribute to the design process. Co-design proved essential in engaging stakeholders to not only collect information but to create shared value through collaborative ideation, ensuring the final service aligned with the needs and aspirations of all involved.

4. Noticing and nature

Finally, the concept of noticing was explored as a critical practice in nature-based experiences. This idea, tied to the ecological interactions of stakeholders, provided a framework for developing a service that fosters deep care and attention toward nature. For eco-traveller's, noticing becomes a key tool in enhancing their engagement with conservation efforts and fostering long-term connections with the environment and its protectors.

Primary research

Structured in three main phases:

10	1	1	8	4
in-depth interviews	**co-discovery workshop**	**co-design workshop**	**workshop participants**	**validation sessions**

In-depth interviews

In-depth interviews were conducted with key stakeholders, including two members of the Soqtapata management team, two leading biologists who have worked on various projects at Soqtapata, three ecotourism experts specialising in the Peruvian rainforest, and three eco-travellers that previously visited Soqtapata. The aim of the in-depth interviews was to identify their necessities and expectations when they visit a conservation area, especially, Soqtapata, and their experience in similar areas.

The co-design workshops

Two sessions were conducted. The first session was designed to investigate potential design avenues in collaboration with biologists and ecotourists (and their proxies). During these sessions we had the participant of five people, two biologists and three eco-travellers. The second session was dedicated to the prototyping of potential solutions in collaboration with the groups. For this session we had the participation of the same five people of the first session and another tourism expert.

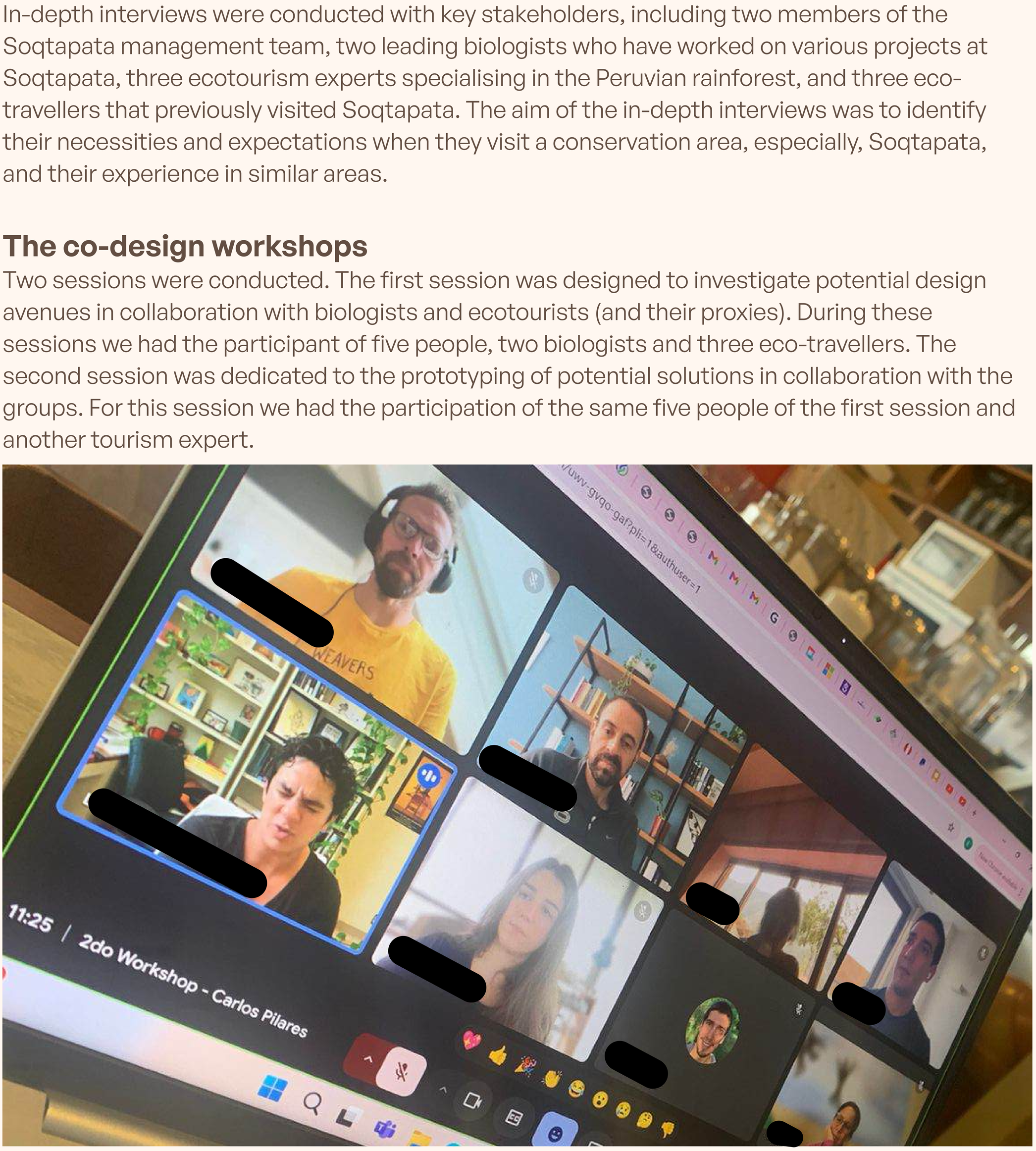


Image 13: First workshop with tourists, biologists, tourists experts and conservationists.

Given the international nature of the participants, all interviews and sessions were conducted virtually via the online platform known by all participants, Google Meet. With the participants' consent, the interviews were recorded. To facilitate the co-design sessions, the Miro and Figma platforms were employed. Despite some participants being unfamiliar with these tools, the sessions were designed in such a way as to minimise the technical skill requirements, thus allowing participants to focus on the ideation process. Furthermore, the sessions were recorded with the explicit consent of the participants and with their authorisation for the information to be stored until the end of May 2025.

Validation sessions

During the prototyping phase, I organised validation sessions to gather feedback on the service proposal and prototypes. These sessions were designed as informal conversations with both workshop participants and individuals who had not been involved in the earlier co-design sessions. The aim was to gather different perspectives from eco-travellers, conservationists and biologists with similar profiles to ensure less bias, while still maintaining a strong connection to the project objectives.

The decision to include both groups - those who had contributed to the Discovery and Ideation workshops and those who had not - was to capture a wider range of insights. Those who had participated in the workshops were already familiar with the project context, while the others, although not previously involved in the project, brought fresh perspectives based on their similar roles.

These sessions provided invaluable feedback that allowed me to refine the service proposal and prototype iteratively. By engaging participants from diverse backgrounds, I was able to validate and adapt the service concept to better meet the needs of both eco-travellers and conservationists.

10. Privacy & security

The option of remaining anonymous was made available to participants, but all ultimately elected to publish their public information. All data were stored securely in a Google Drive folder, accessible only to the researcher. The interviews were recorded via audio, whereas the co-design sessions were recorded via video, given the nature of the activities in question.
Subject to the provision of prior consent, participants will have access to this report and may identify themselves if quoted. Nevertheless, the general findings will not include the names of the participants.
Furthermore, the collaborative relationship between Soqtapata and the biologists ensured that there was no risk of subordination, allowing participants to engage in the project on an equal footing.

IV.
FINDINGS & ANALYSIS

Image 14: Picture of an eco-traveller at the Mystic Pool at Soqtapata.

11. Secondary research findings

Neoliberalisation of nature & Sustainable tourism

The contemporary debate on the neoliberalisation of nature is characterised by a high degree of complexity and frequent contention. This perspective acknowledges the ways in which natural resources are increasingly commodified and used within capitalist models, which can lead to unsustainable exploitation and contribute to environmental crises. Nevertheless, within the field of ecotourism and conservation, there is an emerging awareness that the sustainable management of these resources – through practices that educate, inspire, and engage both tourists and local communities – can facilitate a transition towards a more sustainable model. By employing resources in a manner that prioritises ecological balance, it is possible to develop sustainable activities that reduce extractive pressures while fostering a deeper understanding and respect for the environment. The following table outlines the key goals and pressures of conservation and economic objectives, illustrating areas of alignment as well as conflict within this model.

Conservation needs	Shared goals	Economic pressures
Protect biodiversity	Eco-tourism opportunities	Maximise profits
Preserve natural habitats	Community engagement	Increase tourism revenue
Reduce resources exploitation	Sustainable economic models	Expand market reach
Focus on long-term sustainability	Funding for conservation programs	Prioritise short-term gains

The concept of sustainable tourism was initially presented as a responsible alternative to the neoliberal approach to nature, offering a model that promised to balance economic benefits with environmental conservation. However, it is regrettable that the concept has not consistently demonstrated the anticipated level of consistency with this ideal. My research revealed that, once adopted by mainstream industry players, sustainable tourism began to lose its substance and purpose as a result of overuse and dilution. The terms "green" and "eco-friendly" were adopted with such widespread and often deceptive use – a phenomenon known as greenwashing – that they contributed to the massification of sustainable tourism without delivering tangible benefits to local communities or the environment. This outcome has largely benefited larger players in the tourism sector, with smaller, community-focused efforts that might otherwise have made a meaningful difference being overshadowed.

Despite the widespread acknowledgement of the necessity for a collaborative framework among stakeholders, the implementation of such collaboration has proven to be a significant challenge. Economic and political conflicts frequently disrupt these efforts, thereby weakening the core values that underpin sustainable tourism and leaving the concept fragmented and, in many cases, devoid of intrinsic value.

Nevertheless, the concept of sustainable tourism, founded upon genuine collaboration with the objective of fostering environmental and community benefits, remains a realistic and attainable goal. In many instances, projects around the world have been able to overcome these challenges, demonstrating that with genuine commitment to collaborative processes, sustainable tourism can indeed create lasting, positive impacts.

Service design and co-design as tools for conservation

The findings demonstrate that the utilisation of service design in conservation initiatives facilitates the convergence of stakeholders by harmonising disparate agendas towards a unified objective. In the context of ecotourism, co-design emerged as a highly effective tool, enabling participants to collaboratively develop solutions that simultaneously respect both conservation and visitor engagement needs. Through the utilisation of co-design workshops, ecotourists and conservationists were able to articulate their respective goals, values and concerns, thereby facilitating the identification of common ground as well as the revelation of conflicts of interest. It is noteworthy that the findings indicate that this process helped eco-travellers to appreciate the scientific and logistical challenges of conservation, while conservationists gained a greater understanding of the motivations driving sustainable tourism.

Noticing: Fostering engagement with nature

The findings indicate the significance of noticing as a technique for enhancing environmental engagement. As discussed by Edward et al. (2022), the act of noticing shifts participants' awareness from a passive observational stance to an active, interactive engagement with the natural environment. This practice revealed that both eco-travellers and biologists experience an enhanced awareness and connection to the environment when encouraged to focus intently on specific elements of the ecosystem. Through the act of noticing, participants were able to gain insight into biodiversity, while simultaneously developing a long-lasting connection that reinforced their conservation values.

The findings indicate that the practice of noticing fosters empathy towards the natural world and aligns personal experiences with conservation objectives. For those engaged in eco-travel, this results in a more meaningful interaction, which in turn encourages them to become advocates for conservation efforts even after their visit has concluded.

12. Primary research findings

In-depth interviews

“Tourism & research goes together”

Biologist

“Protected natural areas should never remain untouched, because the threats surrounding them will only continue to grow.”

Conservationist

“People don’t want to spend the money on things, but in experiences”

Tourism-Expert

“Yes this is beautiful, but it is beautiful because we are protecting it and we are stopping other bad things to happen here”

Biologist

“I want to feel like I am an important part of an important project”

Biologist

“I am a researcher, but also an educator - I want to share about my research”

Biologist

“I want to know that my trip and money are contributing to something positive”

Eco-traveller

“I feel small yet amazing when I am surrounded by nature”

Eco-traveller

“When we all share the table and eat, stories unfold and we all learn”

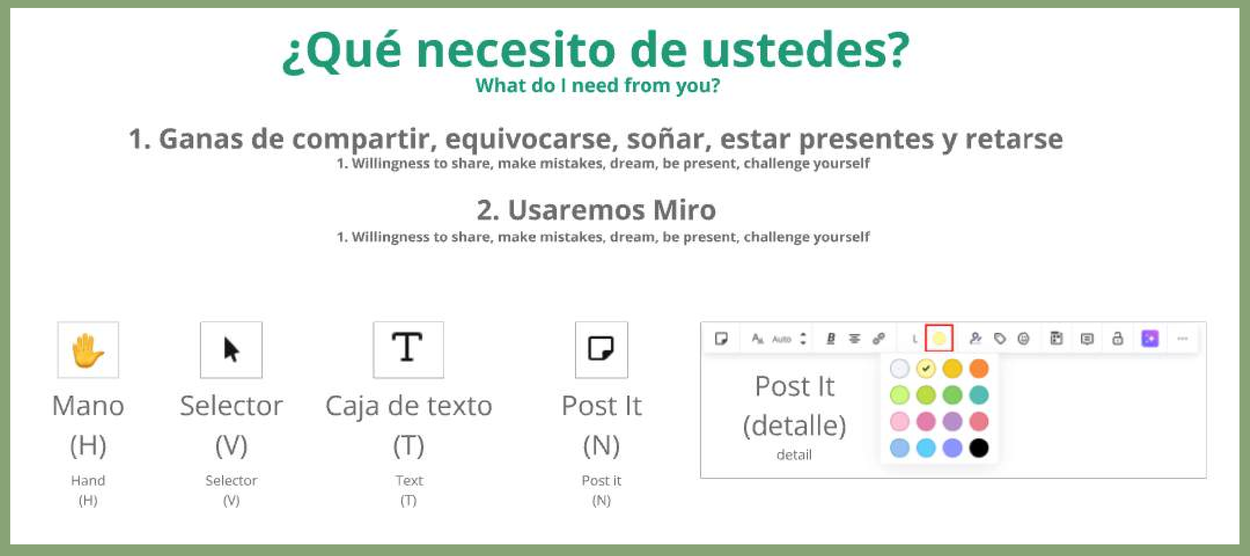
Conservationist

“We always need more help”

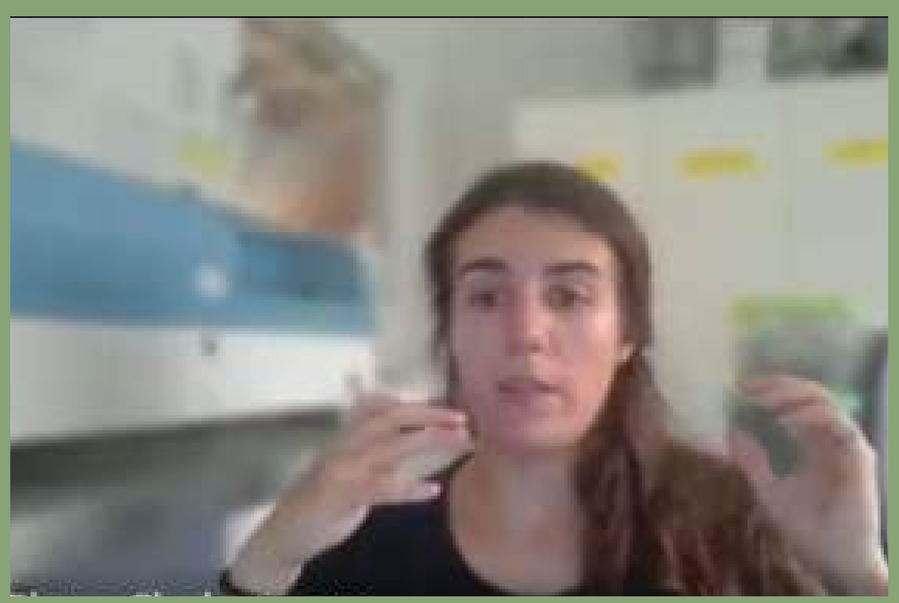
Biologist

1ST WORKSHOP
Exploring expectation and common ground

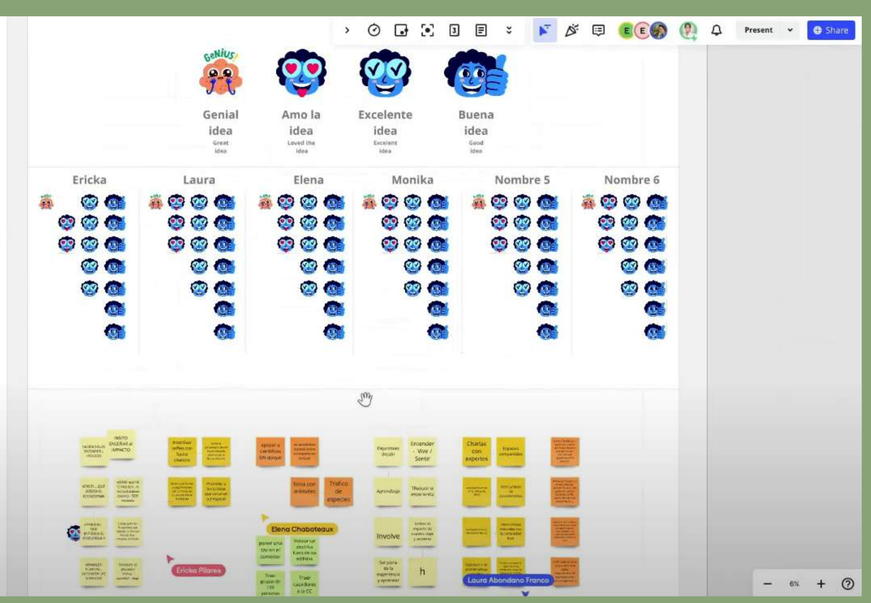
PARTICIPATORY ONLINE SESSION











KEY FINDINGS TOPICS

SHARING
COMMUNICATION
PROCESS
IMPACT
SUPPORT
EXPERIENCES
PRE-TRIP
SENSES
TRADITIONS
COMMUNITY
CONNECTIONS
IMMERSION
TECHNOLOGY
POST-TRIP
NEW KNOWLEDGE

2ND WORKSHOP
Less tools, more interactive talks

NATURAL ONLINE CONVERSATION









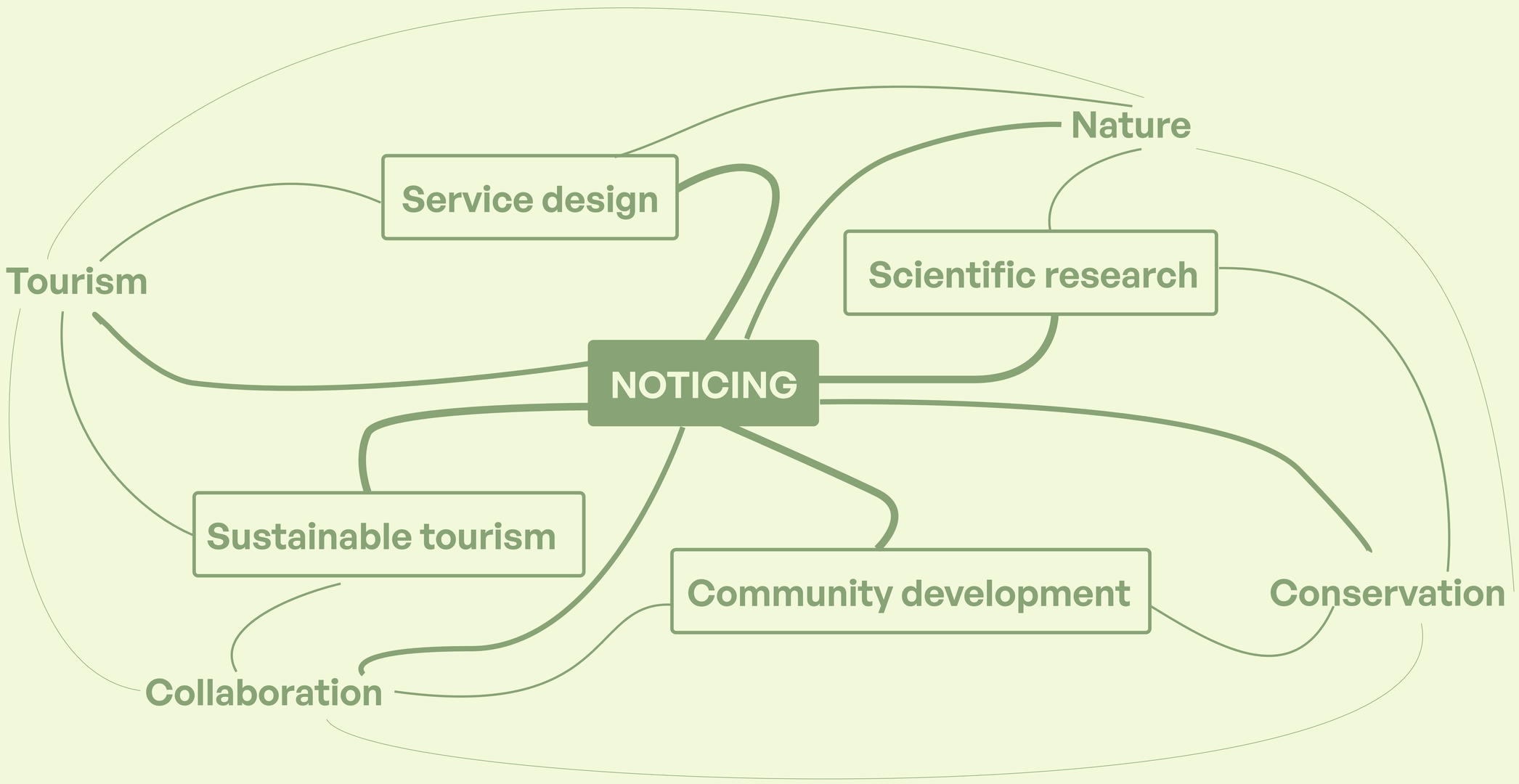
"YOU CAN BE A SCIENTIST"

From the shared commitment to **care for nature** that unites us all, to the enduring **vision of hope that drives us forward**, we come together to build a lasting impact.

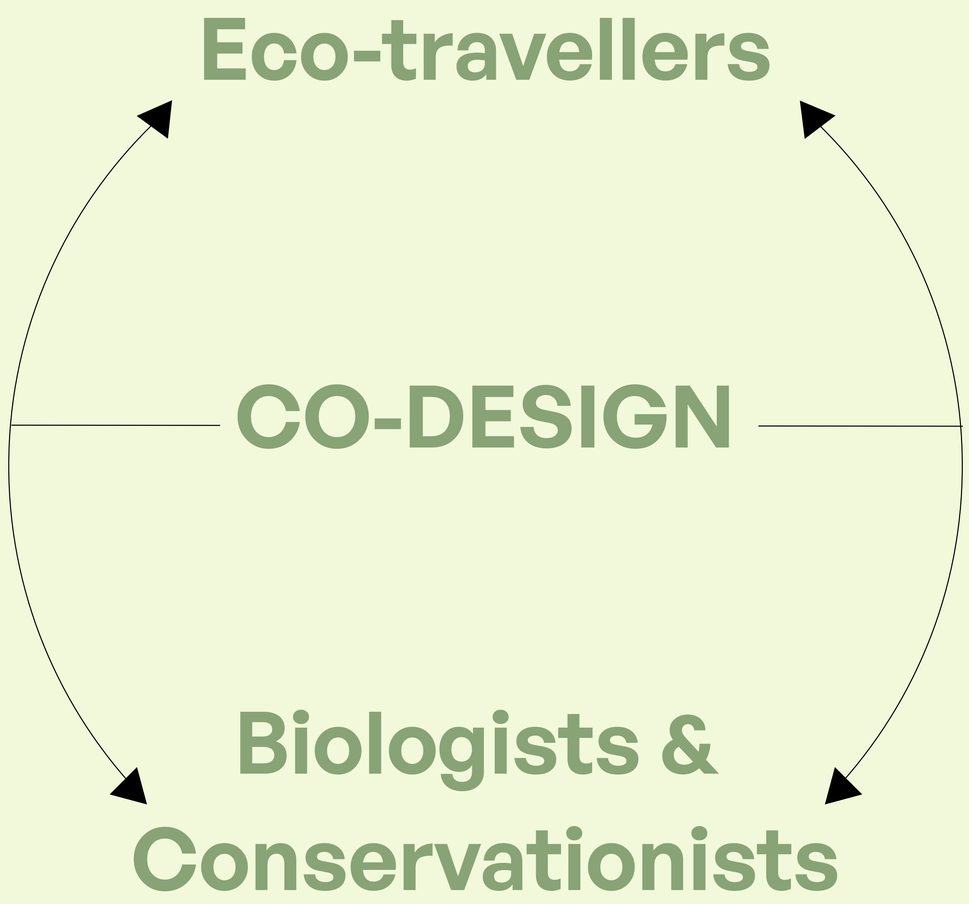
CARLOS PILARES ROBLES
MAJOR PROJECT
MA. SERVICE DESIGN 2023-2024

13. Analysis

The results of both secondary and primary research demonstrate the profound interconnections between sustainable tourism, conservation, and the function of service design in cultivating collaborative initiatives. At the core of this concept is the notion of "noticing," which entails actively engaging with the natural environment. As emphasised by Edward et al. (2022), the act of noticing is not merely about observing nature passively; rather, it necessitates a conscious and immersive interaction that enables participants to gain a deeper understanding of the ecosystems they encounter. For both eco-travellers and conservationists, this process of noticing fosters a heightened awareness and empathy towards the natural world, thereby reinforcing the shared conservation goals that underpin their collaborative efforts.



In the context of ecotourism, this awareness extends beyond the individual encounter with nature. The research methodology of co-design has been identified as a key approach for addressing the inherent complexity of stakeholder interests within the context of conservation initiatives. The collaborative nature of co-design, which brings together stakeholders from the fields of ecotourism, biology and conservation, enables the alignment of diverse objectives around a common goal of sustainable resource management. By participating in co-design workshops, stakeholders are able to articulate their respective needs and concerns, thereby facilitating the identification of common ground. Eco-travellers gain insight into the scientific and logistical challenges faced by conservationists, while conservationists gain a deeper understanding of the motivations driving sustainable tourism. Such a two-way exchange of knowledge engenders a sense of shared ownership over the conservation process, thereby reinforcing the commitment of all parties involved to the long-term success of these initiatives.



As these collaborative endeavours progress, the concept of hope emerges as a fundamental tenet in the design of services for the conservation of natural resources. In this context, hope is not an abstract concept; rather, it is a tangible force that motivates action.

This conviction is based on the assumption that collective action can result in beneficial change and that each participant, whether an eco-traveller, researcher or conservationist, can make a valuable contribution. The act of engaging with nature, participating in co-design processes, and contributing to the success of conservation efforts serves to reinforce hope. The findings of both primary and secondary research indicate that a sense of connection to the conservation project and a clear sense of purpose are of paramount importance. As one participant observed, the desire to feel like an important part of an important project is an intrinsic motivation that drives many to engage in sustainable tourism and conservation.

feeling connection → ***sense of purpose***

In conclusion, the findings indicate that the service design model is driven by the convergence of hope, collaboration, and environmental engagement. This model has the potential to transcend the transactional relationships that often exist between eco-travellers and conservationists, encouraging a deeper and more enduring connection to the natural world. The act of noticing, the collaborative nature of co-design, and the shared vision of hope in service design collectively establish a framework wherein participants not only contribute to conservation but also become advocates for it. This holistic approach provides a robust foundation for the future of sustainable tourism, one that strikes a balance between the needs of conservation and the aspirations of those who seek to engage with and protect the environment.

14. Feedback & considerations

During the early prototyping phase, I gathered feedback from a diverse group of potential users and stakeholders, including eco-travellers, biologists and conservationists. These insights provided valuable perspectives on the service concept, highlighting its strengths, areas for improvement and ways to increase engagement.

"Let's consider that we won't be able to train a person to do scientific research with just an app."

“A tourist have a lot of apps already, making them have one more might be difficult”

“Engagement means different things for different people”.

“One could even ask the visitors to go and find a place and take short video with the soundscape of Soqtapata they find inspiring and start a soundscape online library :) a collage of different experiences and perspectives”.

“Involve also the community, specially the school and the kids somehow”.

“Not every eco-traveller actually identify as eco. Consider expanding the reach of your solution”.

Scalable and accessible training
Comments about the limitations of training visitors to conduct scientific research through the app alone led to the inclusion of guided learning experiences on site with project experts. This ensures deeper, hands-on engagement while accommodating varying levels of prior knowledge.

Encouraging creativity and personal connection
Suggestions such as creating a collaborative soundscape library inspired the design of creative, personalised activities within the Learning Centre. Visitors can share their unique perspectives and contributions, enriching the community experience.

Broadening appeal beyond eco-travellers
Recognising that not all visitors self-identify as eco-travellers has informed a more inclusive communication strategy and flexible levels of engagement. This allows the service to cater for a range of interests and motivations, from casual tourists to deeply committed conservationists.

Involving local communities
Suggestions for involving local communities, particularly schools and children, reinforced the importance of designing experiences that benefit and actively involve the surrounding population.

Recognising different definitions of engagement
Feedback highlighted the need to accommodate different interpretations of engagement. This led to a range of activities and roles being offered, from passive observation to active participation, to ensure that visitors could engage with the projects in ways that matched their interests.

These considerations ensured that the service remained inclusive, collaborative and adaptable, ultimately resulting in a more impactful and meaningful visitor experience.

V.

SERVICE PROPOSITION

Image 15: Sunrise at Soqtapata.

15. Framing the service

The service has been developed with the objective of providing a meaningful and community-oriented service experience for those engaged in eco-tourism. This service commences only after the eco-traveller has confirmed their booking, thus marking the commencement of a bespoke journey that is centred on immersive engagement with conservation efforts at Soqtapata. The service is not concerned with the initial stages of attraction or presale; rather, it is focused on enhancing the experience of the eco-traveller before, during, and after their visit.

In recognition of Soqtapata's emphasis on engaging with and resonating with eco-travellers, the project incorporates a communication manifesto. The manifesto, which is designed to be used in conjunction with a visual presentation, sets forth Soqtapata's value proposition and establishes transparent expectations for eco-travellers. Furthermore, it encourages visitors to not only experience the Amazonian environment as adventurers, but also to assume the role of guardians of the land. This message serves to reinforce the purpose-driven aspect of eco-tourism, establishing a connection between the traveller's journey and the broader conservation mission.

It should be noted that the presale stage is not within the remit of this service. However, the strategy employed by Soqtapata for audience engagement remains of significant importance. The company's direct-to-consumer model and partnerships with specialised tour operators provide a foundation for reaching the target eco-travel demographic, strengthening brand identity and ensuring a shared understanding of Soqtapata's vision among potential visitors.

Finally, the service has been designed with a primary focus on eco-travellers, in alignment with the vision and brief provided by Soqtapata. Although the project acknowledges the potential value of volunteers as a target audience, the constraints and priorities outlined by the partner organisation led to the service being designed with the primary objective of enhancing the experience of eco-travellers. This approach guarantees that the service remains faithful to its objective of fostering more profound connections between visitors, the natural environment, and conservation initiatives.

SERVICE DESCRIPTION

A service platform was designed for Soqtapata with the goal of **facilitating connections and community building** between eco-travellers and a range of stakeholders, including biologists, conservationists, local communities, and other eco-travellers.

The platform eases immersive and sustainable engagement with conservation efforts, enabling **meaningful interactions before, during, and after a visit**. Those engaged in eco-travel are enabled to gain knowledge, contribute and form connections with Soqtapata's conservation objectives, thereby enhancing both their personalised experience and the impact of the conservation work.

16. Customer journey map

Eco-traveller journey
AS IS

stage	Pre-sale	Sale	Before visit	During visit	After visit
	1-6 months before trip	1-4 months before trip	1-4 months before trip	at Soqtapata	1-12 months after trip
Expectations	Nature Purpose **Authenticity**	Easy **Clear** Secure	Everything settled up **Purpose** New experiences	Be amazed Learn **Engage w/ purpose**	Share experience **Maintain connection** Do more
Actions	**Research** References Social media	**Details** Pay Validate	**Forget about trip** Do normal life Re-engage w/ trip	Do exploration **Surface engagement** Got new knowledge	Post pictures Talk about trip **Move on**
Emotion	Nervous, Amazed	Excited	Unengaged	Excited, Wistfulness, Excited	Grateful, Unengaged

Eco-traveller journey
TO BE

stage	Pre-sale	Sale	Before visit	During visit	After visit
	1-6 months before trip	1-4 months before trip	1-4 months before trip	at Soqtapata	1-12 months after trip
Expectations	Nature Purpose **Authenticity**	Easy **Clear** Secure	Everything settled up **Purpose** New experiences	Be amazed Learn **Engage w/ purpose**	Share experience **Maintain connection** Do more
Actions	**Research** References Social media	**Details** Pay Validate	Welcome package **Engage w/ service** Personalise experience	Do selected experiences **Deep engagement** Meaningful connections	Join community Share experience **Continue connections**
Emotion	Nervous, Amazed	Excited	Engaged	Excited, Engaged, Excited	Grateful, Engaged

17. Value proposition canvas

CUSTOMER JOBS

Book tours through standard travel
Chooses pre-packaged eco-tours from commercial platforms or tour operators.

Plans basic logistics
Often overlooking the deeper aspects of preparing for an immersive ecotourism experience.

Engages passively in the field
Observes wildlife and landscapes, but often feels like a spectator, with limited hands-on interaction .

Seek personal meaning
Seek fulfilling experiences in nature that align with personal values.

GAINS

Authentic and powerful experiences
An opportunity to engage deeply with nature and conservation efforts and contribute to meaningful work.

Learning and personal growth
A chance to gain new knowledge about the environment, wildlife and conservation methods.

Connecting with like-minded people
Build relationships with other eco-conscious travellers, local communities or conservationists.

Sustained involvement
Staying involved with the places and people they meet long after the trip is over, creating a lasting impact and connection.

PAINS

Superficial interactions
Feelings of detachment due to limited interaction with local conservation projects or communities, reducing the sense of impact.

Knowledge gap
Often reliant on tour operators or guides who may lack in-depth information, leading to a sense of missed learning opportunities.

Lack of continuity
Typically have no way of staying in touch with the people, projects or causes they have met after their trip, leading to a sense of disconnection.

Difficulty in finding credible conservation-focused
It's difficult to find travel options that genuinely support conservation, rather than just marketing themselves as environmentally friendly.

GAIN CREATORS

Increased sense of purpose
Allows eco-travellers to feel that their actions directly support conservation, increasing their sense of purpose.

Fosters lasting connections
The shared experiences, community meetings and ongoing post-trip engagement foster a network of like-minded individuals and a sense of community.

Sustained engagement
By staying connected to projects and people post-trip, travellers continue to feel a part of Soqtapata's mission, building long-term brand loyalty and personal satisfaction.

PAIN RELIEVERS

Access to experts
Local biologists and conservationists provide in-depth insights, ensuring that eco-travellers' curiosity is met with valuable, accurate information.

Create an active role
By offering project tasks and contributions (even remotely), the platform allows eco-travellers to become active participants rather than mere spectators.

Encourage post-visit engagement
Continues the experience beyond the trip, allowing eco-travellers to stay updated and connected, reducing feelings of disconnection.

SERVICE

Soqtapata's platform provides eco-travellers with a meaningful, immersive and purpose-driven experience that begins as soon as they secure their booking. It enables them to actively participate in conservation efforts, connect with biologists and conservationists, and stay engaged with projects long after their visit. By fostering both community and connection, the platform transforms ecotourism from a passive experience into an impactful, ongoing journey.

Pre-trip access to content
Provides eco-travellers with project information, videos, articles and ways to connect with Soqtapata stakeholders.

Dynamic Engagement Options
Provides ways to support and engage with projects both locally and remotely, including access to necessary training and project-related tasks.

On-site community spaces
Dedicated areas for learning, knowledge sharing and socialising over meals, where travellers and experts can interact and share experiences.

Post-Trip Connections
Allows travellers to follow project updates, stay connected with community members, and even contribute to projects after they leave.

18. SWOT analysis

Strengths

Increased engagement and personalisation
The service allows eco-travellers to immerse themselves in conservation projects before, during and after their visit, enhancing personalisation and connection.

Knowledge-rich content and unique learning
Provides exclusive, in-depth information and education through videos, project descriptions and live interactions with biologists, setting the service apart from standard ecotourism packages.

Community building and long-term relationships
By fostering lasting relationships between eco-travellers, conservationists and local communities, Soqtapata helps to build a meaningful, sustainable, eco-conscious community.

Alignment with social and environmental values
The mission resonates strongly with travellers seeking purposeful experiences, making it attractive to a market of values-driven, environmentally conscious individuals.

Direct communication with experts
Access to biologists and conservationists provides eco-travellers with a unique, insider perspective that is difficult to find elsewhere, adding credibility and depth to the service.

Weaknesses

Niche audience with specific needs
The platform's target audience is niche, and potential growth may be limited to eco-travellers who are particularly invested in conservation, potentially excluding more casual travellers.

Complex user journey across stages
The service journey, segmented into pre-visit, on-site and post-visit experiences, requires eco-travellers to navigate multiple stages and engage with different features over time, which can be overwhelming for some users and could lead to abandonment if the flow isn't intuitive.

Heavy reliance on user engagement and initiative
The service relies on users to be proactive in consuming content, learning about conservation projects and engaging with other eco-travellers and staff. Without strong engagement features, users may feel disconnected or miss out on intended experiences, reducing perceived value.

Dependence on real-time content and project updates
The value of the platform is closely linked to fresh and dynamic content related to Soqtapata's projects. If these updates are not consistent or timely, users may find the platform to be stagnant or less informative than expected, affecting their motivation to stay connected.

Opportunities

Growing demand for authentic, purposeful travel
The growing preference for sustainable, meaningful travel experiences among younger, environmentally conscious generations aligns well with Soqtapata's goals and presents an opportunity to attract a dedicated user base.

Expanding remote engagement opportunities
Soqtapata can further develop remote volunteer or support options, allowing eco-travellers to contribute to conservation efforts even when they are not travelling.

Leveraging partnerships for growth
Strategic partnerships with international ecotour operators, travel agencies or conservation organisations could increase the visibility, credibility and reach of the platform in new markets.

Develop exclusive membership or loyalty programmes
Offering a membership model could encourage repeat engagement, create a sense of exclusivity and provide recurring revenue. Members could be given access to special content, events or updates.

Eco-travel trend and social media amplification
Soqtapata could use social media and influencer marketing to amplify eco-travel stories, attract like-minded travellers and build an online presence to inspire a wider audience.

Threats

Low user engagement over time
If eco-travellers do not find the platform compelling enough to engage with before, during and after their visit, the service could experience high attrition rates. Without consistent interactions, users may disengage from the app after their initial booking, reducing the long-term impact.

Competition in the ecotourism market
The growing ecotourism industry has many players, and larger or well-known ecotourism brands could capture a significant share of ecotourism travellers, especially if they offer similar services with greater brand recognition.

Environmental or political instability
Given that the platform operates in protected areas, any environmental crisis, political instability or policy changes around protected areas could impact Soqtapata's operations and visitor engagement.

Economic uncertainty affecting travel budgets
Economic downturns could reduce discretionary spending, particularly on international travel, impacting the ability of eco-travellers to book experiences with Soqtapata.

Evolving regulatory for conservation tourism
Changes in conservation and tourism regulations, particularly in protected areas, could affect Soqtapata's operations and restrict certain activities in the field.

19. Manifesto

“Imagine a place where the world breathes in its purest form,
where time slows,
and every heartbeat syncs with nature.
Here, adventure doesn’t just happen;
it unfolds with the whisper of the forest,
the rhythm of the rain,
and the stories told by ancient trees.
Stay, explore, learn,
not just as a traveler, but as a vital part of a greater mission
every step you take supports wildlife conservation,
every moment contributes to research that protects these lands.
“Experience the Amazon not only as an adventurer but as a guardian.

Are you ready to journey deeper,
to awaken your spirit, and leave a legacy?

Come, nature awaits.”

Image 16: Picture of a biologists reflecting in the Saucipata river.

20. Service blueprint

	Customer actions	Front-stage interactions
Pre-visit stage	• Review booking information and package details. • Update personal information (e.g. allergies, food preferences). • Explore and learn about current and past Soqtapata projects. • Discover tasks that require remote or on-site support. • Choose to support a project by donating or participating in a task. • Complete virtual training for any tasks that require preparation before arrival.	• Mobile app/platform interface: Interface for checking booking and package details, updating personal details, exploring projects, reviewing species, and learning about assignments. • Virtual training portal: Accessible through the app for task-based training. • Engagement Channels: Newsletters and WhatsApp groups for relevant updates and reminders.
On-site stage	• Participate in pre-booked experiences and tasks as outlined in the package. • Engage in outdoor activities and interact with biologists, other visitors and Soqtapata staff. • Spend time in the learning room exploring samples, observing specimens and expressing experiences (e.g. through music, art, writing). • Join the community meal times (lunch/dinner) to discuss experiences, share stories and learn from biologists and peers.	• Learning Space: Physical space at Soqtapata with educational materials, sample specimens, and tools for creative expression. • Community Meal Space: Designated area for shared meals, discussions, and knowledge exchange. • Mobile App / Platform (Minimal On-Site Use): Access to digital project information if desired during the visit.
Post-visit stage	• Check the app for project updates and news. • Stay in touch with Soqtapata, biologists and other visitors through the app's community features. • Continue to support the projects through donations or remote participation. • Access newsletters and join WhatsApp groups for ongoing engagement.	• Mobile app/platform: Main touchpoint for receiving updates, community interaction and post-visit project support. • Newsletter and WhatsApp groups: Channels for regular updates, project news and community engagement.

Back-stage processes	Support processes
• Project definitions & interaction design to build tasks for interest tourists. • CMS management: Soqtapata and biologists update the platform with project information, tasks and any specific training requirements. BBDD of all species and information identify at Soqtapata with pictures, sounds and description. • Booking and user data management: Soqtapata staff update client data and ensure that personal information is accurate.	• Training Content Management: Ensure training materials are available, accurate, and engaging. • Customer Support Team: Address any questions about booking updates, project involvement, or virtual training.
• Experience Coordination: The Soqtapata team ensures that all pre-booked activities and additional tasks are ready and accessible. • Learning space management: Staff manage educational materials, ensure expression tools are available and update information on new projects or species. • Setting up community meals: Coordinated by Soqtapata staff to facilitate meaningful discussion, knowledge sharing and interaction between visitors and experts.	• Coordinate activities and room set-up: Ensure all spaces are prepared, equipped and managed to provide a smooth on-site experience. • Visitor Support Staff: Provide assistance with any personal questions, guidance on activities or problems with the experience.
• Content management for updates: Biologists and the Soqtapata team regularly post updates on active projects, new discoveries or conservation successes. • Community management: Moderating and supporting user interactions in app communities and WhatsApp groups to maintain engagement.	• Project update management: Regular input from biologists and Soqtapata to keep project information on the platform relevant and engaging. • Community moderation and engagement support: Customer support team responds to queries and monitors engagement in online communities.

21. Storyboard

The following storyboard illustrates the journey of Nicole, an eco-traveler with a passion for nature and conservation, as she experiences the innovative service provided by Soqtapata. The service, which was designed with the intention of facilitating the integration of eco-tourism and conservation efforts, seeks to enhance visitors' engagement with the natural environment through a combination of pre-visit preparations, immersive on-site activities, and ongoing post-visit connections.



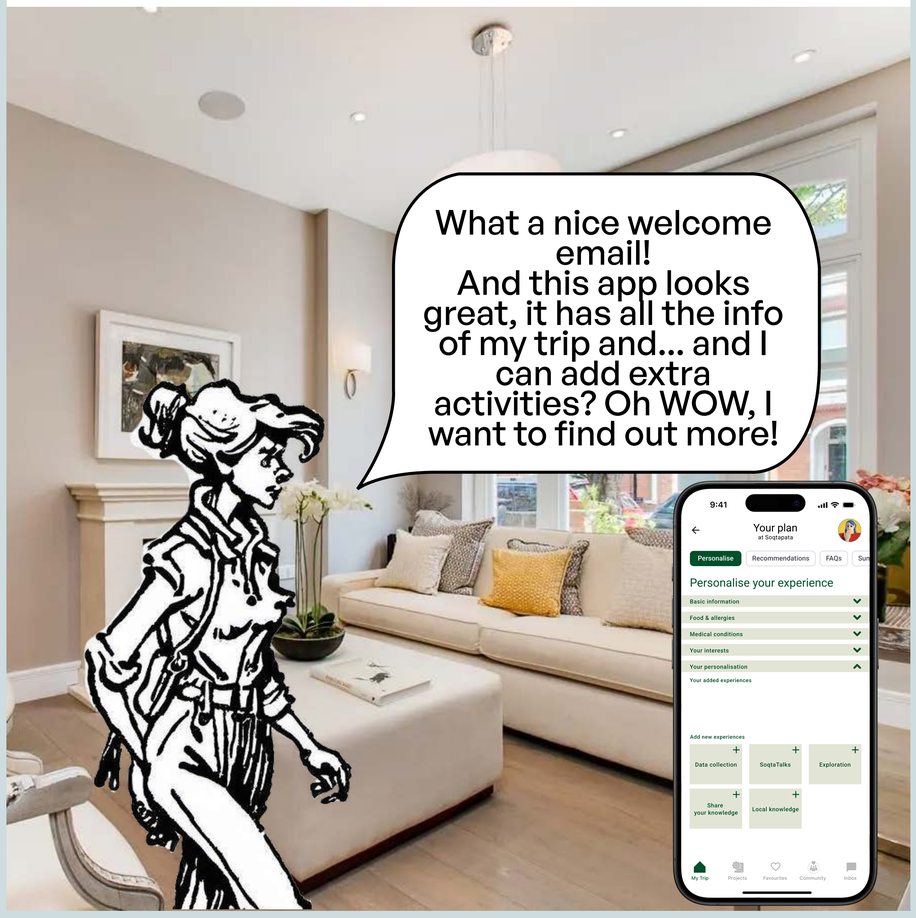
The narrative is structured around the experiences of Nicole, who is depicted as exploring the Soqtapata app, registering for hands-on conservation activities, engaging in meaningful interactions with biologists and other visitors, and developing a sustained connection with the projects and the community.

This journey illustrates how Soqtapata transforms a conventional eco-tourism experience into an impactful, knowledge-sharing journey that supports conservation initiatives while enhancing the visitor's personal connection with the natural world.

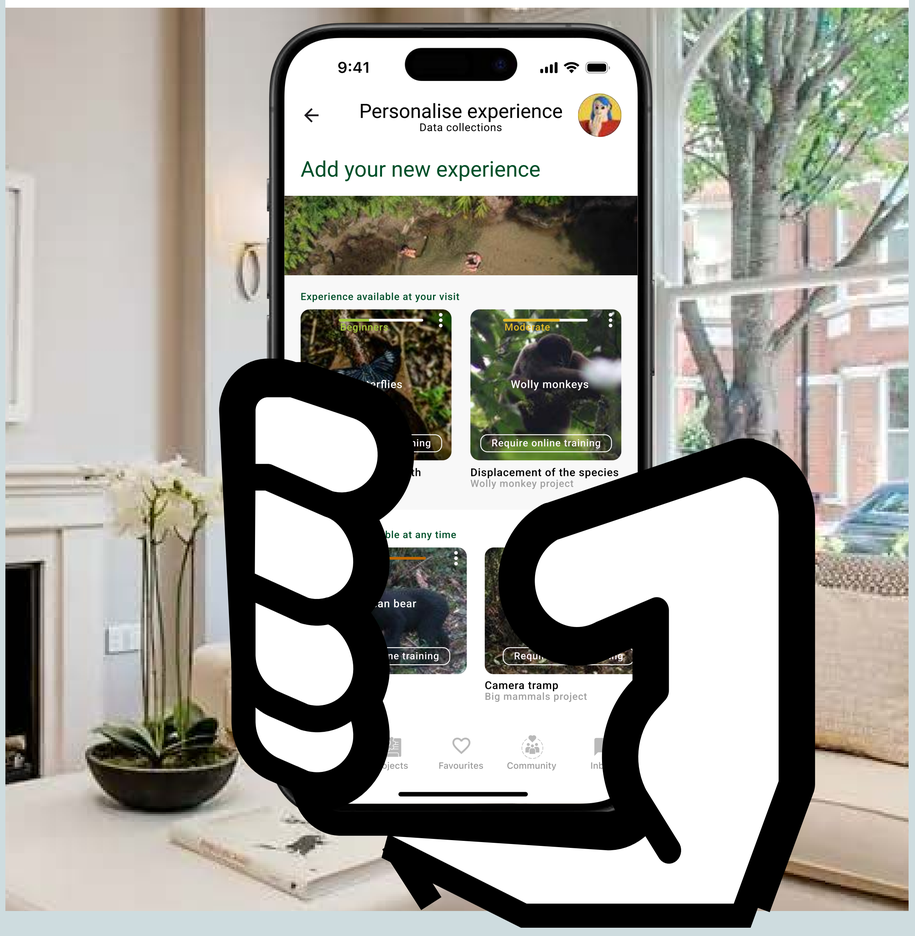
Scene 1: Nicole, an eco-traveler from the UK in her late 20s, just booked a Natural Experience package at Soqtapata, a conservation area in Peru.



Scene 2: Nicole receive a welcome email with instructions and downloads the app of Soqtapata and starts exploring its features.



Scene 3: Nicole explore the experiences she can add to her trip base on his long history interest in data collection.



Scene 4: Nicole finds that there is a Woolly monkey project that requires some help when she will be visiting. She explore the experience and decided to sign up to it.



Scene 5: The day finally comes and Nicole starts her journey from Cusco to Soqtapata, exploring the andes to the rainforest.



Scene 6: Nicole made it and start exploring the facilities that exists for the visitors



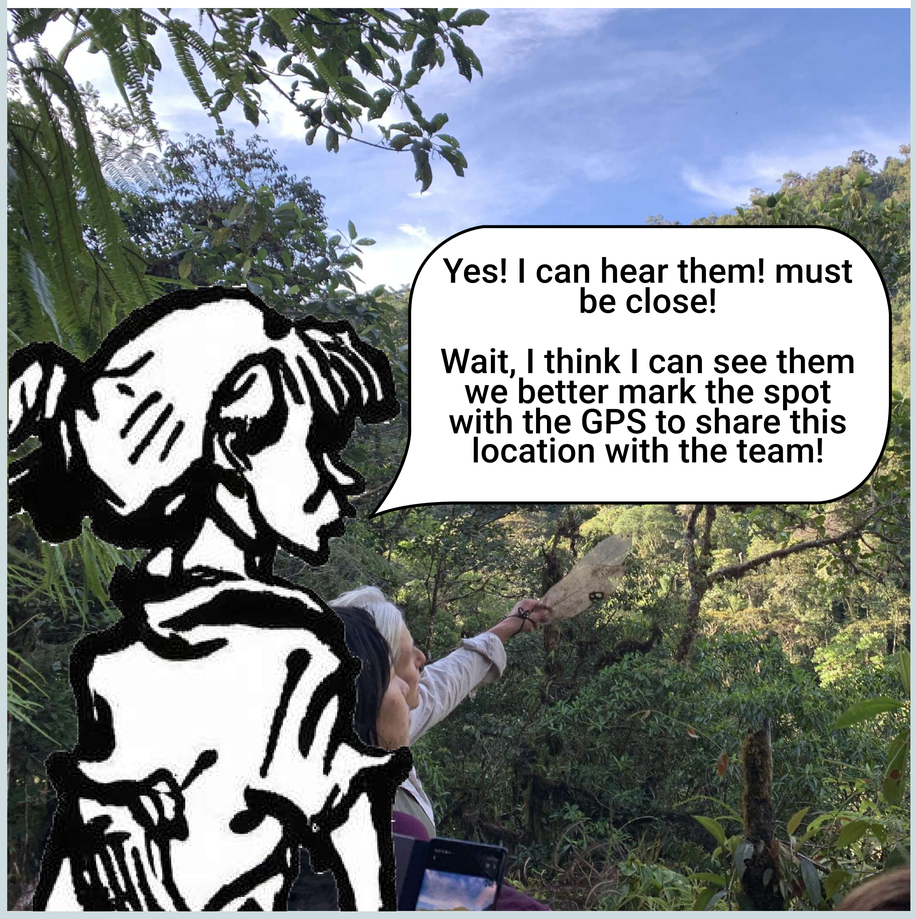
Scene 6: As planned, Nicole goes to the reunion point to talk to the leader of the woolly monkey project, and learn more about what will happen later in the day.



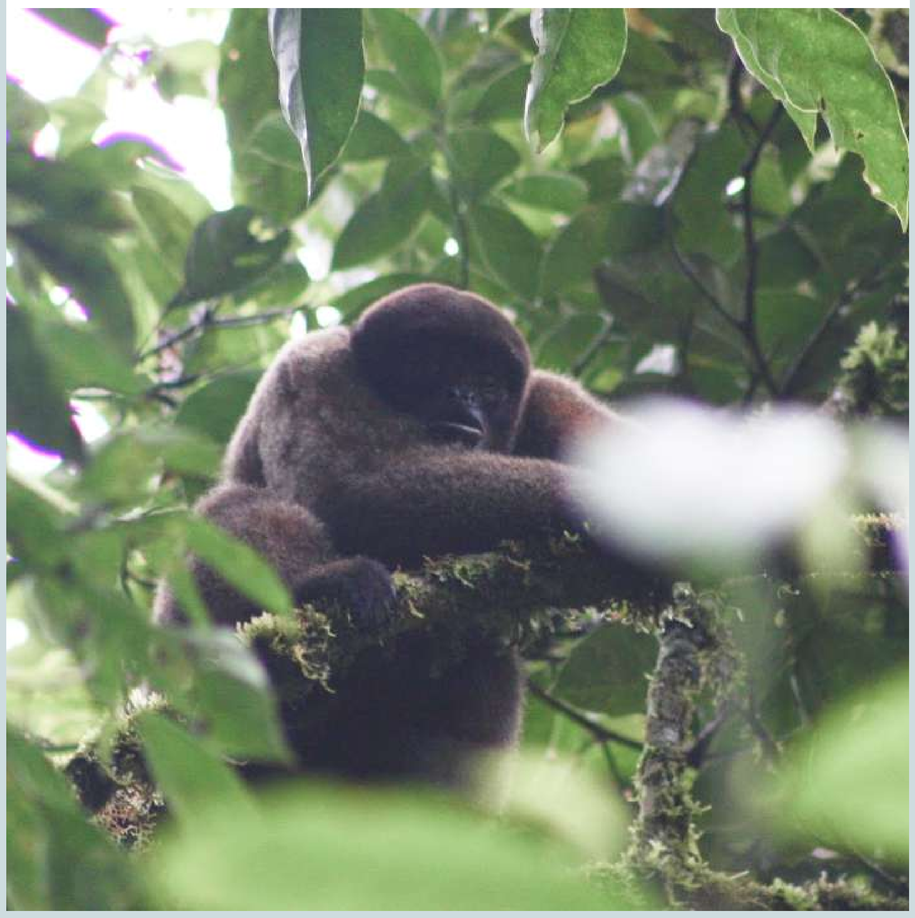
Scene 7: All the visitors goes for a trek, Nicole feels great, knowing more about the woolly monkeys and she is exiting about contributing to the project



Scene 8: Nicole is impressed by the different natural viewpoints and the different levels that exists in Soqtapata.



Scene 9: Nicole and the team was lucky enough to find some woolly monkeys and take a picture of them



Scene 10: Nicole enjoys a nice path in the natural pools with everyone, submerge in the beauty of nature.



Scene 11: While resting, she continues to explore the app of Soqtapata to learn more about the place and everything that happens there.



Scene 12: Nicole visits the Learning Centre in Soqtapata to keep exploring and talking to others about the projects and more.



Scene 13: Lunch time, and everyone is at the same table, biologists, eco-travellers and conservationists, sharing and connecting.



Scene 14: Back in London, Nicole keeps interacting with the app, reading about the updates of the woolly monkey project and more.



22. The service

Introduction to the service

The service, designed for Soqtapata, is a comprehensive experience that integrates digital and on-site elements to facilitate connection, learning, and collaboration among visitors. Although the SoqtaConnect app functions as a personalised gateway into the service, its intrinsic value is manifested on-site, where visitors interact with the dynamic ecosystem and vibrant community of Soqtapata.

Who is the service for?



The primary target audience for Soqtapata is the eco-traveller. This term is used to describe individuals who are deeply curious about nature and motivated to make a positive impact through meaningful travel experiences. Those who engage in eco-travel are typically driven by a desire to learn, contribute to, and connect with their surroundings, seeking out activities that align with their values of sustainability, conservation, and cultural exchange.

Eco-travel market is relatively niche and that not everyone readily identifies as an "eco-traveller".

It can be observed that a significant proportion of tourists share an interest in exploring nature, learning about biodiversity, and participating in conservation activities, even if they do not identify themselves as eco-travellers. Soqtapata addresses this discrepancy by developing a service that appeals to a more extensive demographic while nevertheless retaining its environmental focus.

The service is designed in a considered manner to accommodate a range of levels of engagement and skill requirements, thereby ensuring its accessibility to all.

A variety of experiences is available to visitors, ranging from relatively passive pursuits to more active contributions. These include assisting researchers in fieldwork and engaging in creative knowledge-sharing at the Learning Centre.

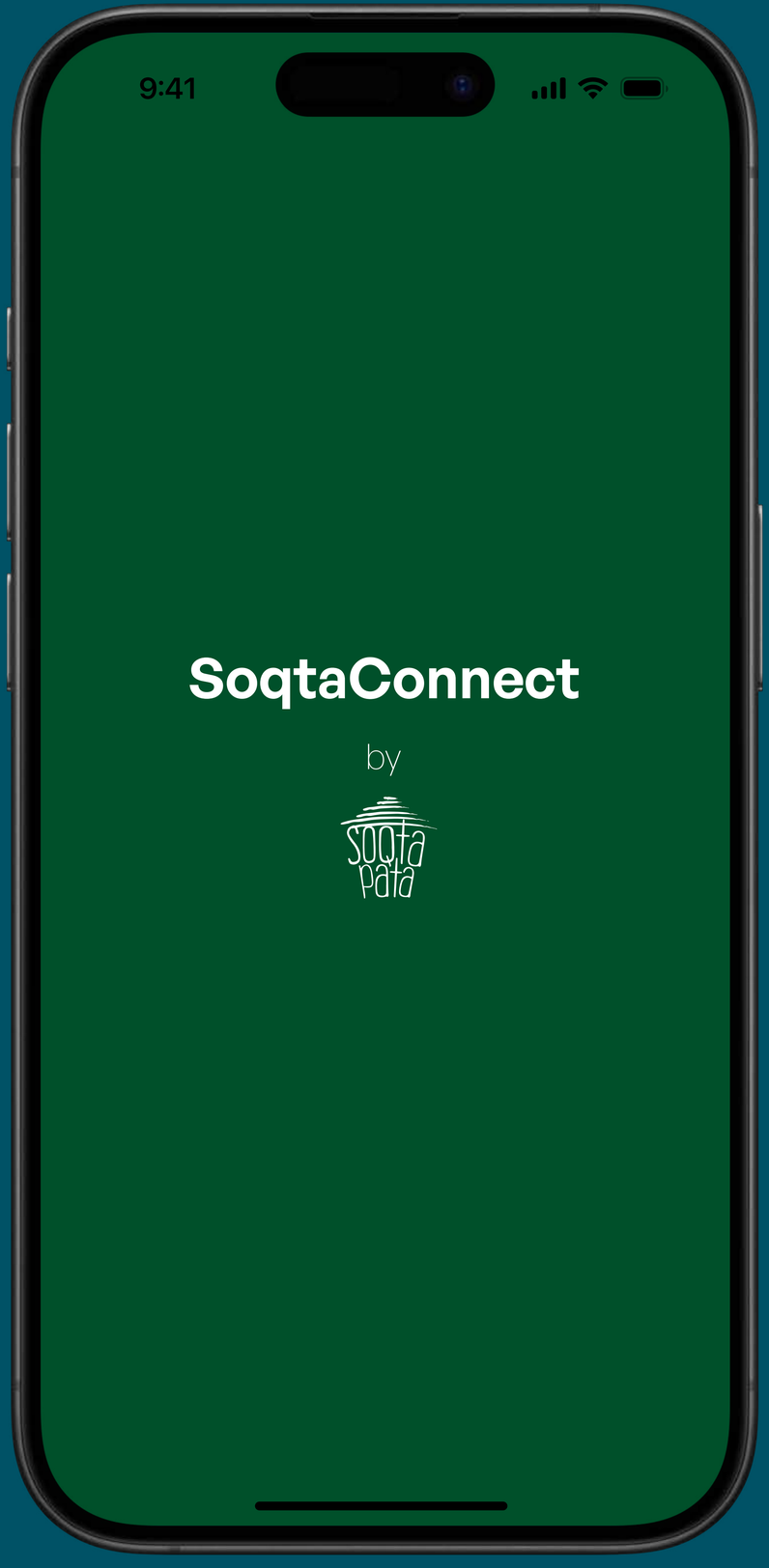
By offering a range of entry points, Soqtapata encourages each visitor to engage with the service in a manner that aligns with their interests and abilities. This approach ensures that visitors leave with a sense of fulfilment and connection. This inclusive approach enables the service to reach not only experienced eco-tourists but also a broader tourist audience, who may develop an affinity for nature and conservation through the experience.

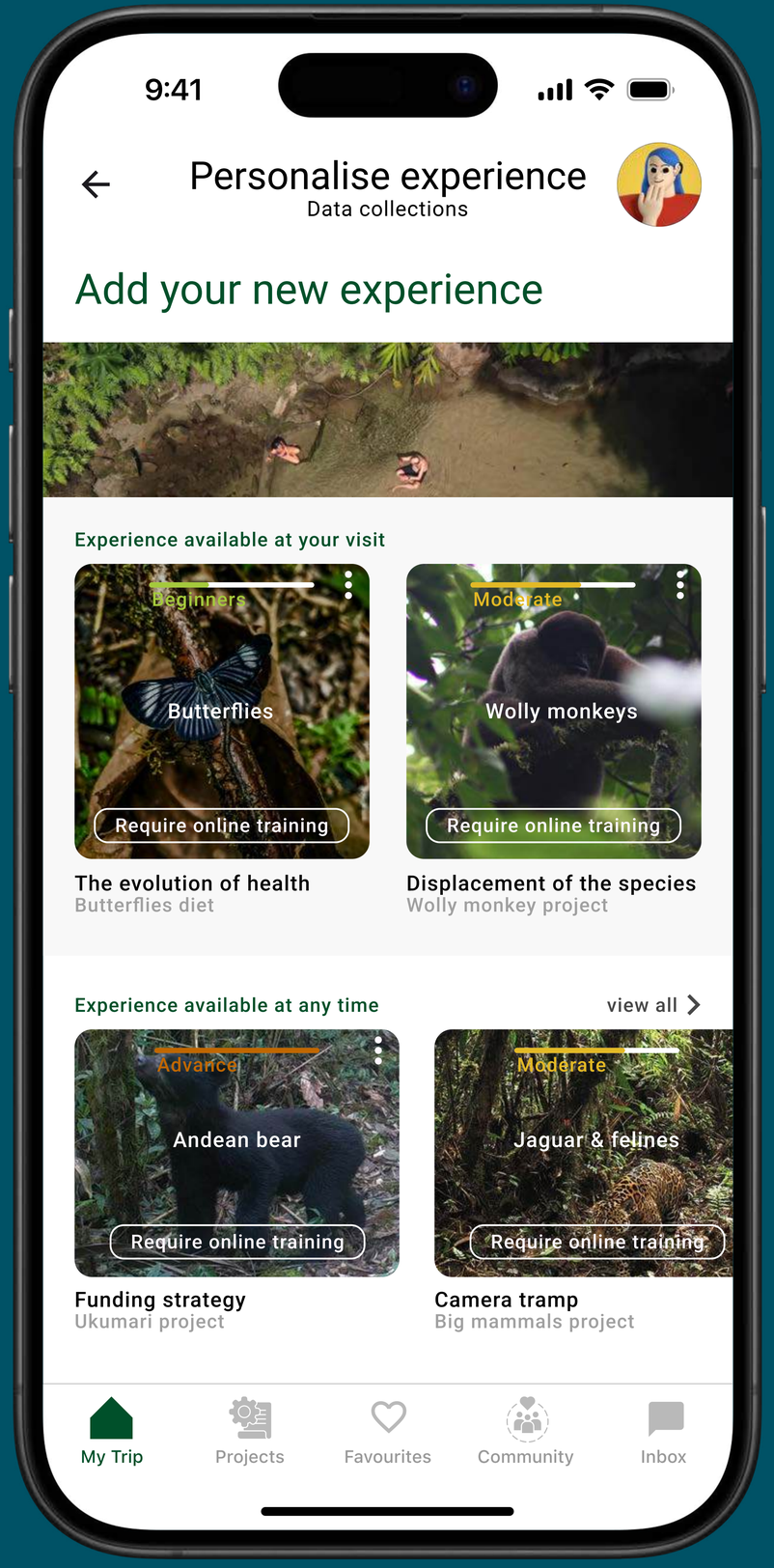
In this way, Soqtapata fosters a shared appreciation for biodiversity and conservation, inspiring all visitors, whether eco-travellers or curious tourists, to become advocates for nature in their own unique way.

The SoqtaConnect App

The SoqtaConnect app functions as the digital gateway to Soqtapata, providing visitors with a seamless means of preparing for their journey, deepening their engagement with conservation efforts, and maintaining their connection to the projects long after their visit.

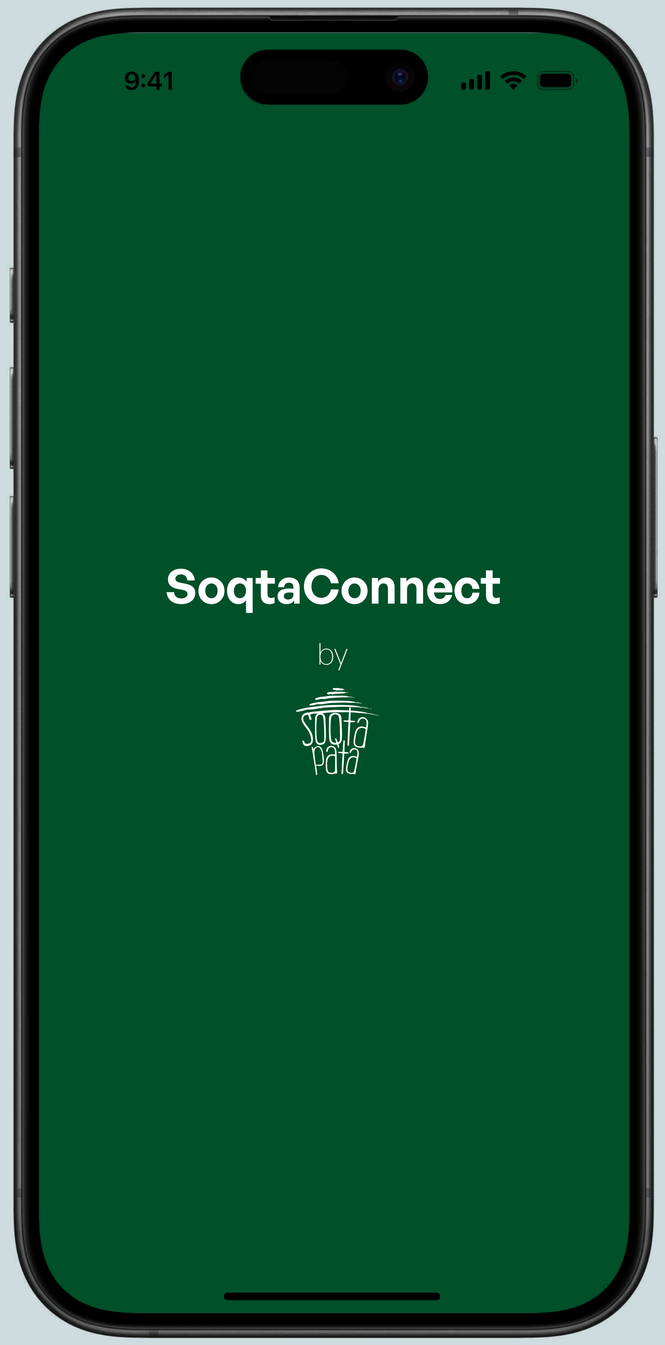
The app has been designed in such a way as to complement the immersive on-site experience, and plays a critical role across all stages of the service.

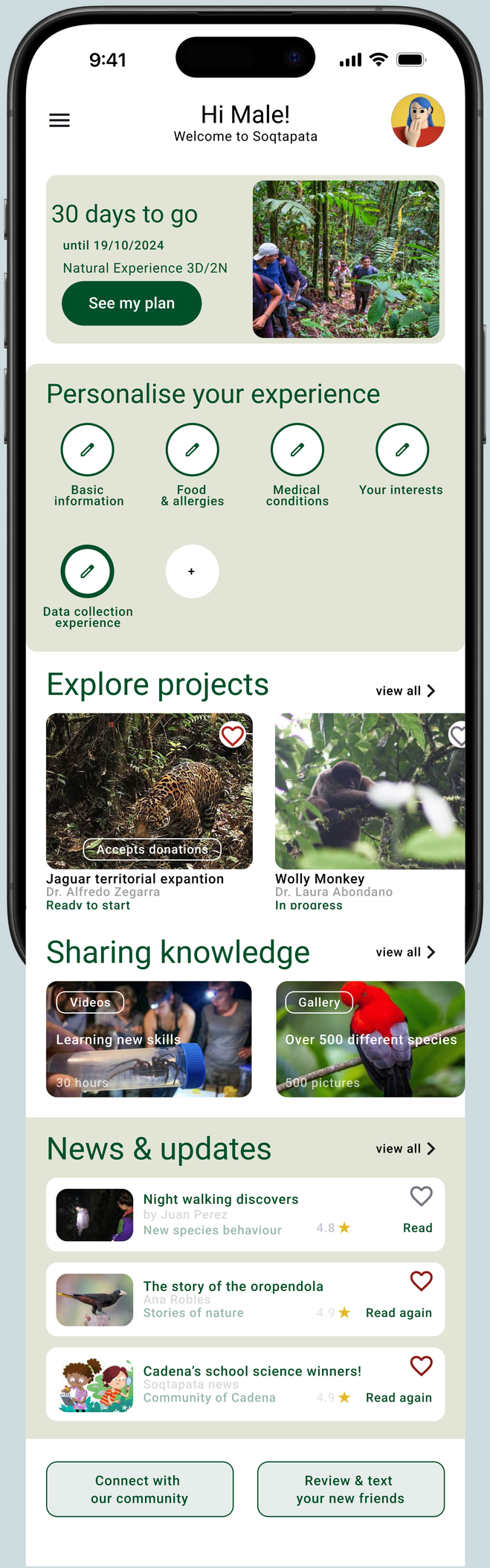




Pre-visit preparation

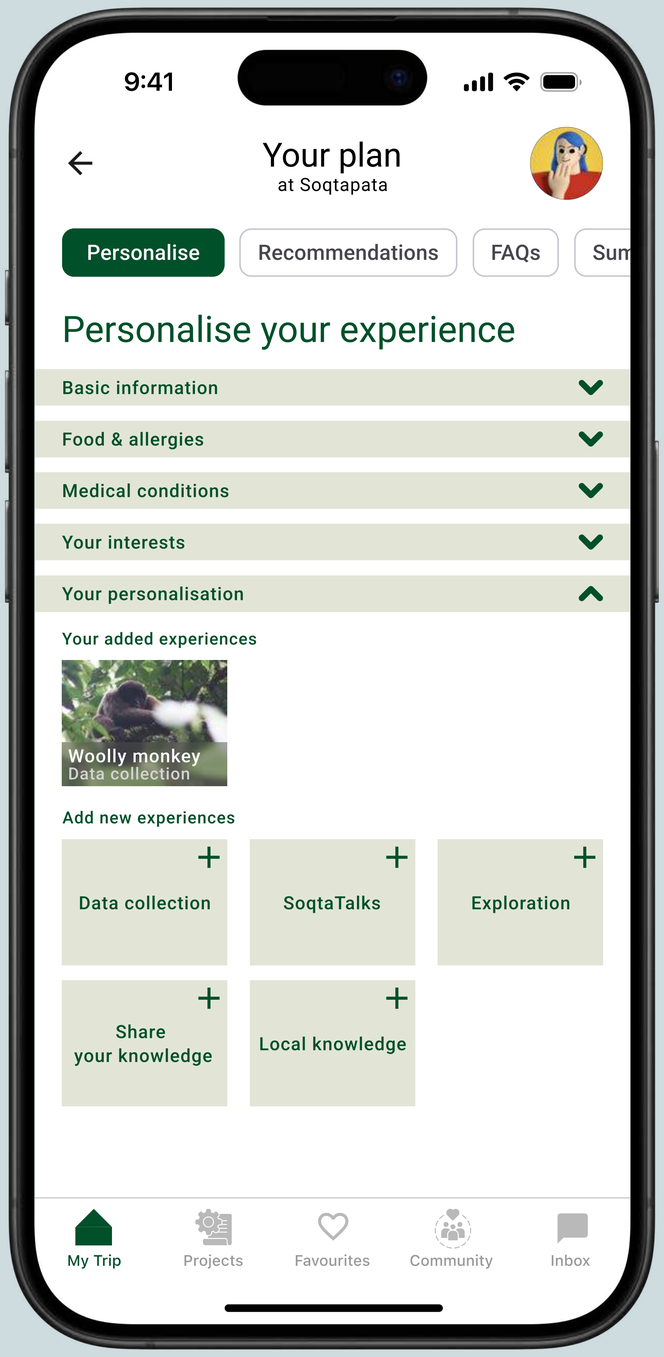
The app ensures that eco-travellers are prepared to make the most of their time at Soqtapata. After booking their trip, visitors receive a warm welcome through the app, which centralises all the essential details of their package. They can check trip information, update personal preferences (e.g. dietary restrictions, allergies) and explore additional activities that match their interests.
In addition, the app introduces users to Soqtapata's ongoing projects, including tasks that require volunteer help, either remotely or locally. For those interested in participating, the app provides access to the necessary training materials, enabling them to contribute meaningfully from the start of their visit.





Home

- How many days until T-day.
- Access to all projects.
- Access to all material to learn more.
- Keep up with news and updates.
- Engage with our different communities.



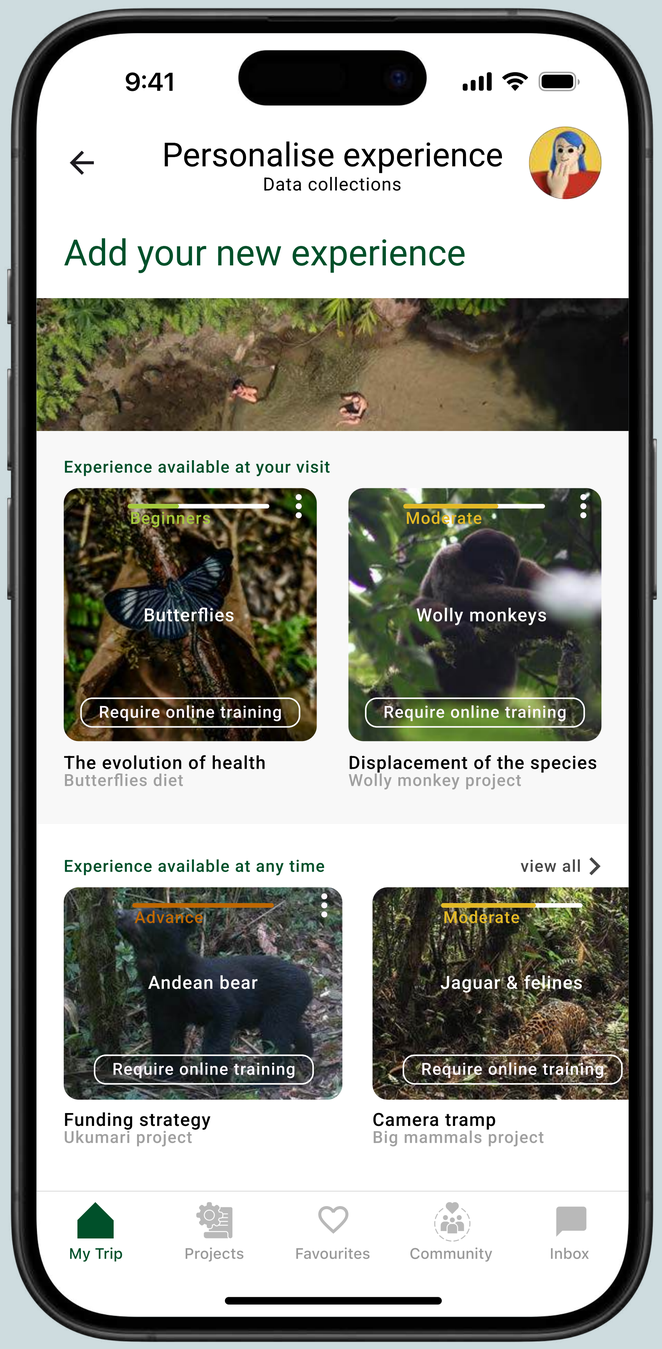
Personalise your experience

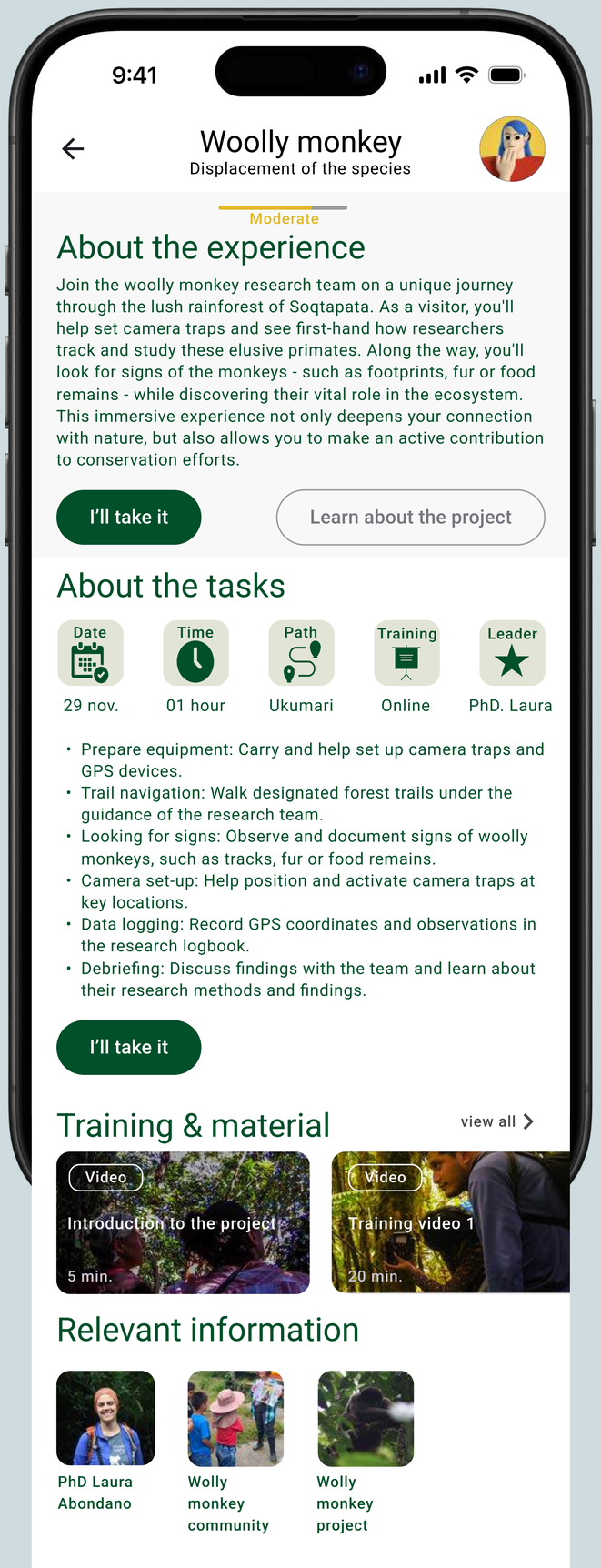
- Choose your food.
- Tell us more about you
- Any medical condition?
- Select more new experiences.

Choose what type of experience you want to explore and add to your trip.

Choose your experience

- Experiences for all levels.
- Experiences on-site and remote, you choose when and how!
- Experiences related to projects, your contribution is part of something big.



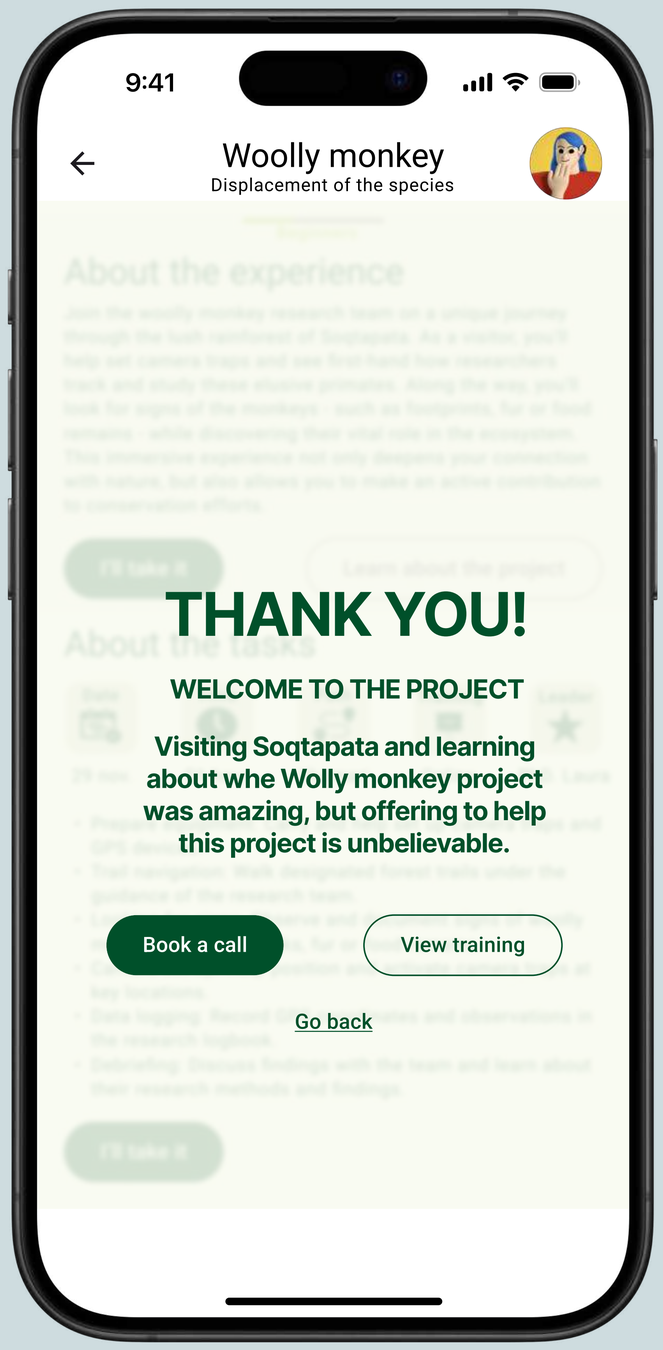


Learn about the experience

- Brief summary.
- Description of the task.
- Training & material for the task preparation.
- Learn and connect with the project leader, the project and the community of people working & interest in the project.

Thank you!

- Join the experience.
- Option to book a call with the team members to learn more.
- Start your training process.



On-site companion

While at Soqtapata, the app becomes a digital guide, providing real-time updates and resources to enhance the visitor experience. Whether it's navigating the facilities, accessing project details or logging wildlife sightings, the app allows visitors to stay informed and involved. Integration with on-site experts allows for seamless communication and coordination of planned activities, ensuring participants feel safe and connected.

Learning Centre

- A space to read, watch and learn about projects, species and more.
- It is about sharing knowledge, be creative and engage with nature like never before.





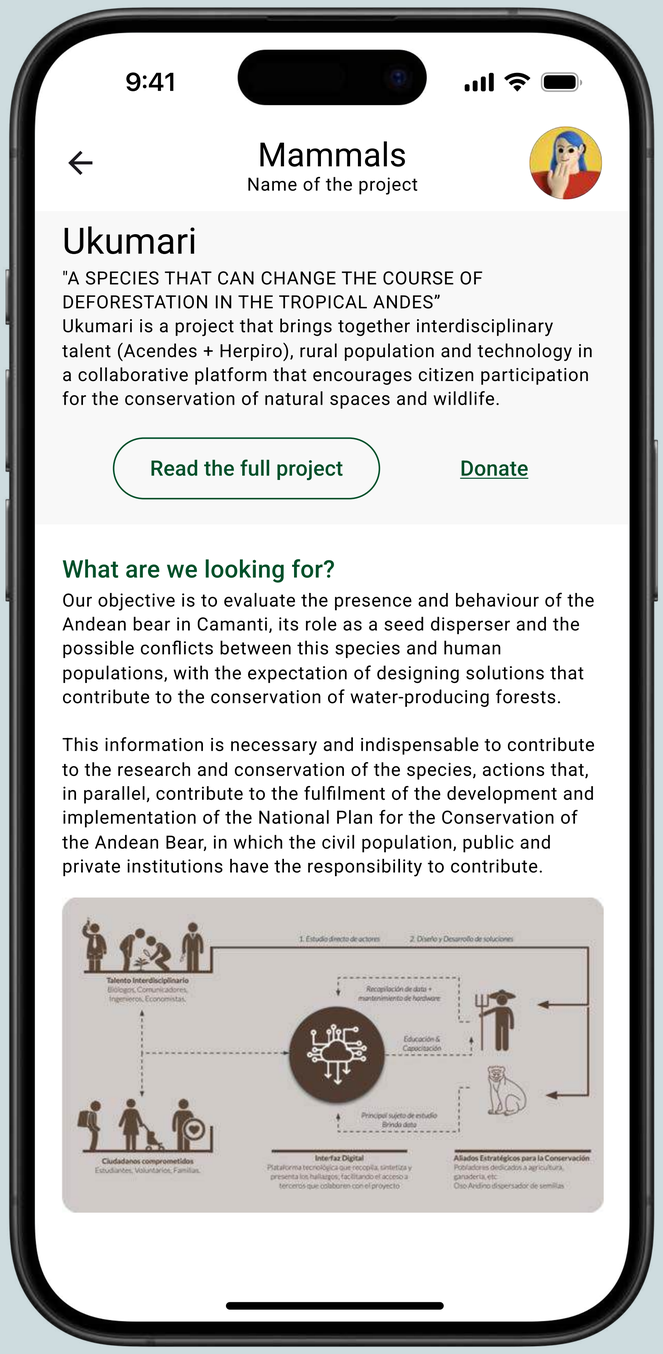
United at the table

- Sharing moments between people united by care of nature.
- Inspiring conversations brining hope into everybody.

Post-visit companion

The app extends the Soqtapata experience beyond the forest. Visitors can stay updated on the progress of the projects they have contributed to, from the discovery of a new species to milestones in conservation initiatives.

The platform encourages ongoing interaction with the Soqtapata community, allowing visitors to connect with researchers, fellow eco-travellers and conservationists. Visitors can share their experiences, donate to projects or even sign up for future tasks, ensuring that their relationship with Soqtapata evolves over time.







Engagement through time

- Read about more projects.
- Re-engage with the people you met at your visit.
- You already know what they are doing and what you are supporting $$$.
- Share the news with more friends, getting more people engage with Soqtapata.

With its intuitive interface and focus on personalisation, the SoqtaConnect app is more than a travel tool - it is a bridge between eco-travellers and the natural world, reinforcing the sense of purpose and connection that defines the Soqtapata experience.

VI.

REFLECTIONS

Image 17: An eco-traveller doing yoga in the river at Soqtapata.

DESIGNING FOR ONLINE COLLABORATION

From trying to control the environment, to enable the environment to guide the conversation.

While I have extended experience leading workshops across-sectors, this was the first opportunity on which I have design and facilitate a workshop that was 100% online. Given the international scope of the partner organisation and the dispersed geographical locations of the participants, an online format was deemed to be the most appropriate.
I foresaw two principal difficulties: (1) the management of online tools and (2) the stimulation of creativity among participants whose are non creative. While the technical aspects, such as the utilisation of Miro, were relatively straightforward and accompanied by clear instructions and uncomplicated tasks, the true challenge was in the creation of an environment conducive to creativity.

In the context of a workshop, my goal is to create an environment that encourages the generation of novel ideas and the consideration of perspectives beyond those typically associated with the participants' conventional roles. Despite my best efforts to evoke a calm, nature-inspired atmosphere, typical online distractions – including background noise, connectivity issues and multitasking – proved challenging.
Furthermore, the intrinsic characteristics of the participants, namely their roles as biologists and tourists, constituted an added challenge. Those engaged in the field of biology brought with them a profound understanding of the environmental risks that they were facing, which made it challenging to encourage them to consider imaginative approaches that were beyond the scope of their existing knowledge.

As a service designer, I was able to gain valuable insights into the importance of designing a workshop that would enable highly specialised participants to step outside of their roles. I believe that greater emphasis on role-playing could have helped them to set aside their professional boundaries and engage in the kind of creative thinking that involves considering alternative possibilities. For creativity to flourish, participants must be willing to adopt a new perspective and to step outside of their usual roles.

SCAPING FROM MY BIAS

Design to be out of the picture and keep my mouth shut, trust vs biases

One of the main challenges during the workshop was managing my involvement in the ideation process. As the founder of Soqtapata, I naturally bring a particular set of biases to the project. Considering this, I endeavoured to minimise my involvement and ensure that my input did not unduly influence the participants.

In retrospect, it would have been beneficial to engage the services of an external facilitator to co-lead the workshop. An individual not acquainted with the participants would have offered a neutral perspective. Nevertheless, it proved difficult to find a suitable candidate who spoke Spanish, as the participants did. Furthermore, it was anticipated that the pre-existing trust between the participants and myself would ease a more open and honest environment. It is probable that the trust enabled the participants to feel at ease in sharing their ideas, despite the potential for my presence to subtly influence the direction in which their ideas developed.
It required significant effort to prevent my own opinions from influencing the discussion, which may have affected the overall flow of the workshop. Furthermore, my previous interactions with certain participants at Soqtapata may have exerted an influence on the process that was not fully predicted.

It is crucial for service designers to be mindful of their positionality. While it is impossible to eliminate bias, acknowledging its existence enables a more considered examination of the outcomes. Awareness of the role that my role and relationships played in shaping the workshop outcomes enables me to undertake a critical review of the data, separating my own impact from that of the participants.

It is inevitable that bias will always be present to some extent. However, by recognising its influence, it is possible to manage it more effectively and gain a clearer understanding of the results.

SEARCHING FOR THE UNIFYING THEME

From care to hope, a timeless connection

My relationship with Soqtapata, its people and all its stakeholders has given me a deep understanding of the overarching themes in conservation. At the beginning, I didn't consciously recognise 'care' as the central theme guiding this project. Subconsciously, however, it was already there, as care is the unifying element that drives everyone involved in conservation. This realisation crystallised during the interview process, where I saw first-hand how deeply care shapes the motivations of those working in the field.

Through the co-design phases of research and ideation, as participants engaged in open dialogue, the concept of care gradually evolved into something even more powerful: hope. As the conversations progressed, hope became the natural extension of our shared care - an optimistic vision of a better future that didn't just drive the participants themselves, but had the potential to engage others, explore new approaches and unite diverse efforts around a common conservation mission.

Hope, regardless of faith, carries with it an expectation of positive change, and unlike care, which often feels tied to the concerns of the present, hope transcends time. This felt particularly important in the context of the environmental crisis, where time is precious and yet hope persists.

As a service designer, witnessing this shift from concern (care) to optimism (hope) in a co-design setting taught me the power of stepping back. Allowing participants greater ownership of the process not only enriched the outcomes, but also demonstrated the resilience of hope in the face of challenges.

In closing, I'm reminded of something my mother once said in response to the scepticism that sometimes greets hopeful, ambitious work. She said, "Some people may call us crazy for what we're doing here, but I'm glad to be seen as crazy - only those who are crazy enough can achieve the unthinkable".

VII. CONCLUSION

Image 18: An eco-traveller couple watching a waterfall at Soqtapata.

23. Conclusion

This project has been a transformative experience, both in terms of the service concept itself and in regard to my role as a service designer. It demonstrated the value of adaptive research methods, such as research-through-co-design, in addressing complex, context-specific challenges. The iterative process of designing with, rather than for, diverse stakeholders – including eco-travellers, conservationists and potential local contributors – facilitated a deeper understanding of collaboration as a fundamental aspect of meaningful solutions.

As a service designer, I was able to gain an appreciation for the complexities inherent in the balancing of diverse expectations, integrating user needs, organisational constraints, and broader ecological and community goals. This project served to reinforce the value of humility and adaptability, particularly when working with communities that are geographically remote or lack the resources to engage effectively with digital technologies. In such cases, digital engagement can serve as a crucial means of facilitating participation.

Furthermore, it emphasised the importance of designing services that are both inclusive and scalable. While the eco-travel market provided the initial impetus for the project,

the realisation that the majority of tourists may not identify as "eco-travellers" proved to be a pivotal turning point.

By designing levels of engagement that cater to varying skills and interests, the service invites broader participation while remaining faithful to its fundamental conservation mission.

Ultimately, this process served to reinforce the notion that the realm of service design extends well beyond the mere delivery of functional solutions.

Instead, it encompasses the creation of interconnected, mutually beneficial ecosystems, characterised by a profound understanding and shared purpose - **care** and its evolvement to **hope**.

It has been a privilege to contribute to a project that not only addresses immediate needs but also establishes the basis for long-term, sustainable change at Soqtapata and beyond.

24. Next steps

To ensure the feasibility and scalability of the project, the following steps have been identified:

Define the Minimum Viable Product (MVP)
Given Soqtapata's limited resources, the service should focus on delivering core functionality in a lean and cost-effective manner. Prioritise essential features such as the on-site experience, basic app functionality and community engagement tools, while phasing in additional functionality over time.

Explore alternative technology solutions
While an app provides a centralised digital experience, feedback highlights its potential drawbacks for travellers overwhelmed by multiple apps. A hybrid approach could include a lightweight app for core functionality, while leveraging platforms such as web portals or progressive web apps (PWAs) to improve accessibility.

Simplify the community building process
Community engagement is critical to maintaining relationships after a visit. However, complex systems can put users off. Exploring simpler methods such as WhatsApp groups, podcasts or newsletters can provide ongoing connectivity and updates without overwhelming resources.

Strengthen local community involvement
Begin co-design sessions with the Cadena school and local community to better understand their needs and align them with Soqtapata's goals. This will ensure their involvement is meaningful and impactful, and lay the groundwork for future collaboration.

On-site testing and validation of the service prototype
Conduct pilot tests with small groups of eco-travellers to evaluate the usability of the app, the effectiveness of the on-the-ground experience, and the feasibility of integrating local community input. Use feedback to iterate and refine the service before full roll-out.

Develop partnerships and funding strategies
Seek partnerships with organisations or stakeholders in conservation, education or tourism to secure funding and resources for implementation. In addition, explore crowd-funding campaigns or eco-travel packages that directly support community projects.

These next steps aim to move the project from concept to implementation, ensuring that it remains practical, impactful and aligned with the needs of Soqtapata and its diverse stakeholders.

VIII.
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Image 19: A biology that uses its senses to better connect with nature at Soqtapata.

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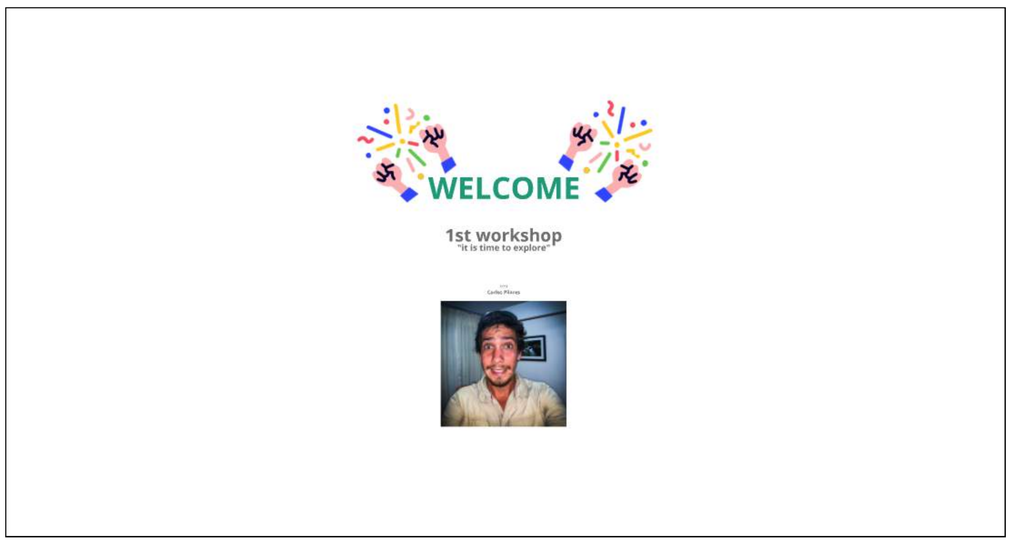
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IX.

APPENDIX

Image 20: A yoga session at Soqtapata as part of a Yoga Retreat experience.

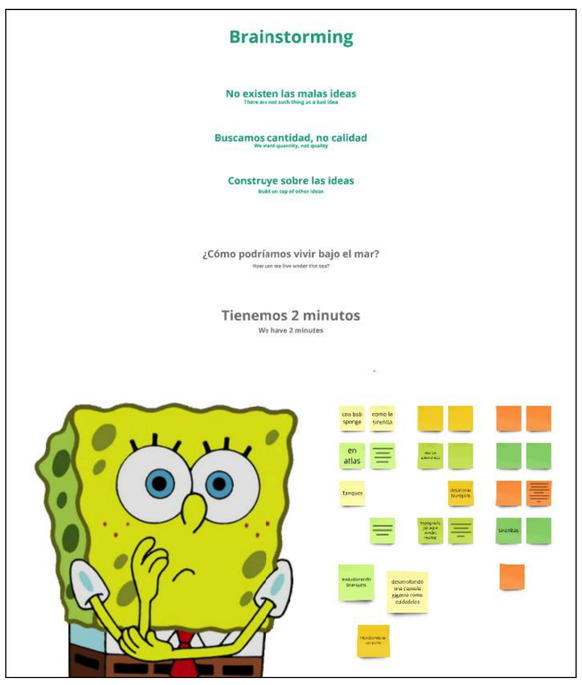
Workshop 1. Co-design session for exploration





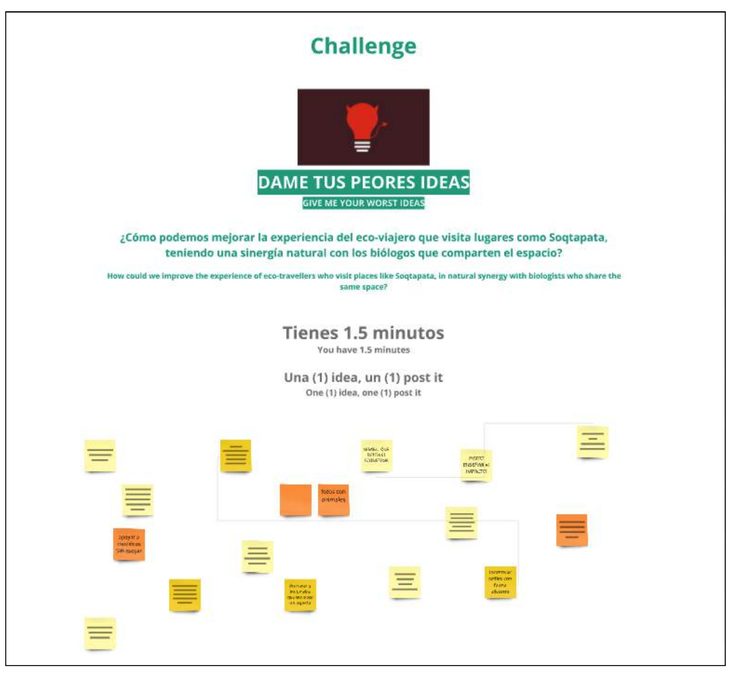


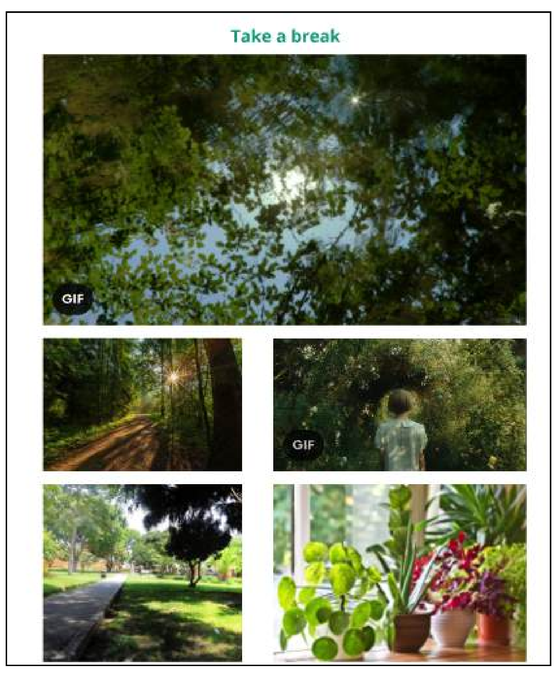














Workshop 2. Co-design session for ideation

WELCOME

2do workshop

"its time for ideation"

Carlos Pilares



¿Por qué estamos aquí?

Why are we here?

1. Porque les pedí y ustedes aceptaron

1. Because I asked you and you said yes!



2. MA. Diseño de Servicios en Universidad de Artes de Londres

2. MA. Service Design at University of the Arts London

El diseño de servicios, con su enfoque centrado en el ser humano, colaborativo y sistemático, se trata de crear servicios que resuenen con las personas (Salinas, 2022)

Service Design, with its human-centred, collaborative and systemic focus, its about creating services that resonate with people (Salinas, 2022).



3. Proyecto de Maestría

3. Master Project

¿Cómo podemos mejorar la experiencia del eco-viajero que visita lugares como Soqtapata, considerando su característica diferenciada de busca generar activamente un impacto positivo en las áreas que visita, en una sinergia natural con los biólogos que comparten el espacio?

How could we improve the experience of eco-travelers who visit places like Soqtapata, considering their distinct characteristic of actively seeking to create a positive impact in the areas they visit, in natural synergy with biologists who share the same space?

¿Qué necesito de ustedes?

What do I need from you?

1. Ganas de compartir, equivocarse, soñar, estar presentes y retarse

1. Willingness to share, make mistakes, dream, be present, challenge yourself

2. Papel y lápiz

1.Paper & pencil



Qué haremos?

What are we going to do?



Por dónde empezamos?

Where do we start?

RULES

1. Todas las ideas son buenas, no tengas miedos de decirla

1. All ideas are good, don't be afraid to share them

2. Olividate de los peros, todavía no es importante

2. Forget about the buts, it is not important yet

3. "Esa idea es interesante, le agregaría esto, o sumaría a esta otra idea"

3. "That idea is interesting, I would add this, or it will add to this other idea"

4. Respetemos a los demás mientras estén hablando

4. Lets respect others when they are talking

Por dónde continuamos??

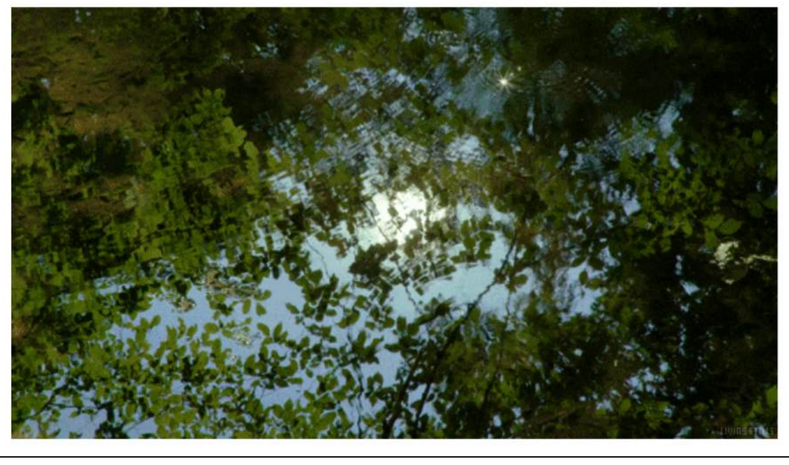
Where do we continue?

SHARING | COMMUNICATION | CONNECTIONS | IMMERSION | SUPPORT

PROCESS | COMMUNITY | POST-TRIP | SENSES | EXPERIENCES

IMPACT | TECHNOLOGY | TRADITIONS | NEW KNOWLEDGE | PRE-TRIP

Take a break



HOPE

"You can be a scientist"

Register sounds or when you see an animal

Collect data - Pre training videos?

Pre-trip engagement
What you want to do and with who?

Engage with the work happening there

Member of the eco-club

Share information - see jobs to be done

Support the future biologists / scientists

During trip dinner time
What they learn, conversations

Support the community - cadena

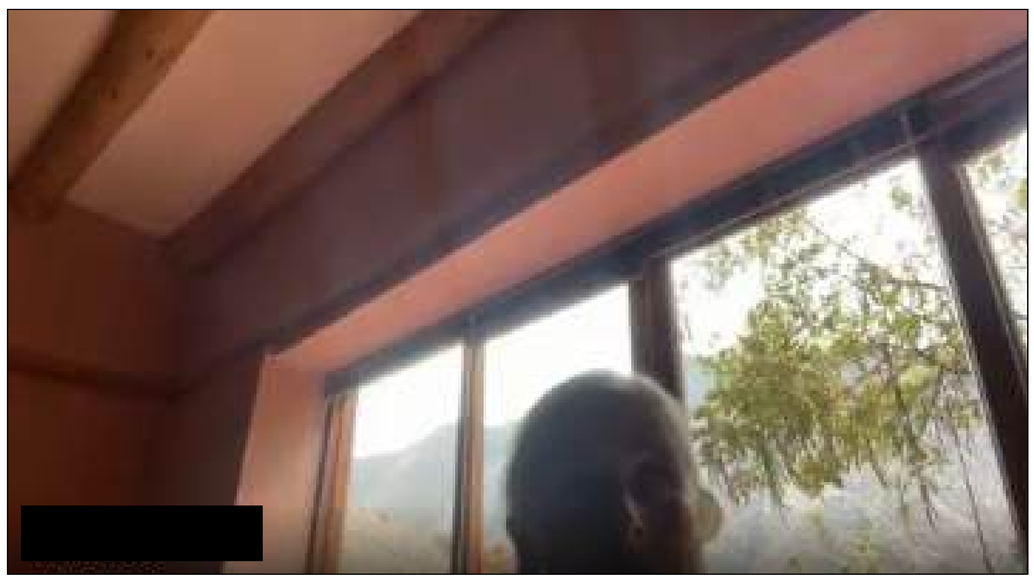
Book
share knowledge

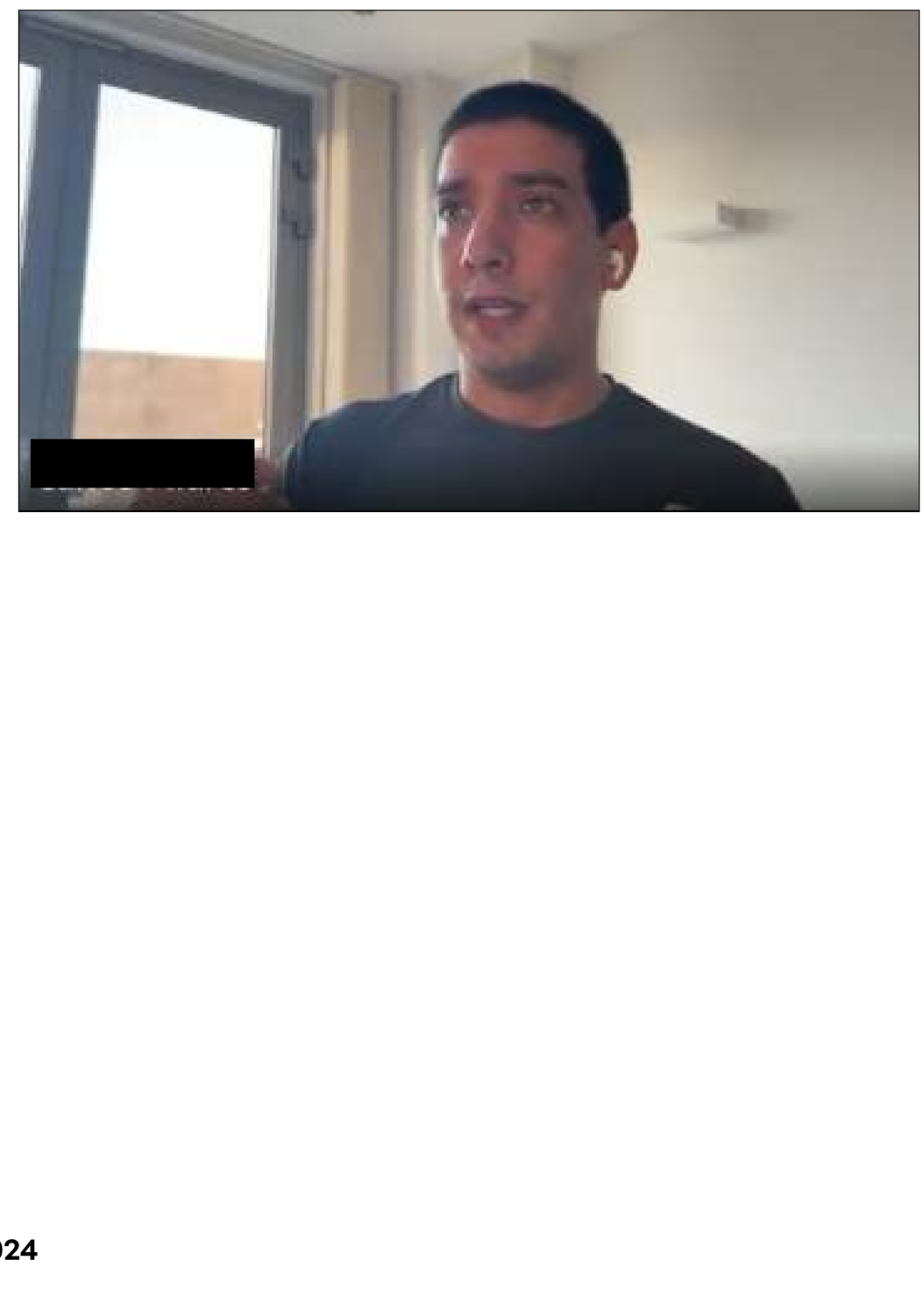
Newsletter post

Workshop 2. Co-design session for ideation - participants

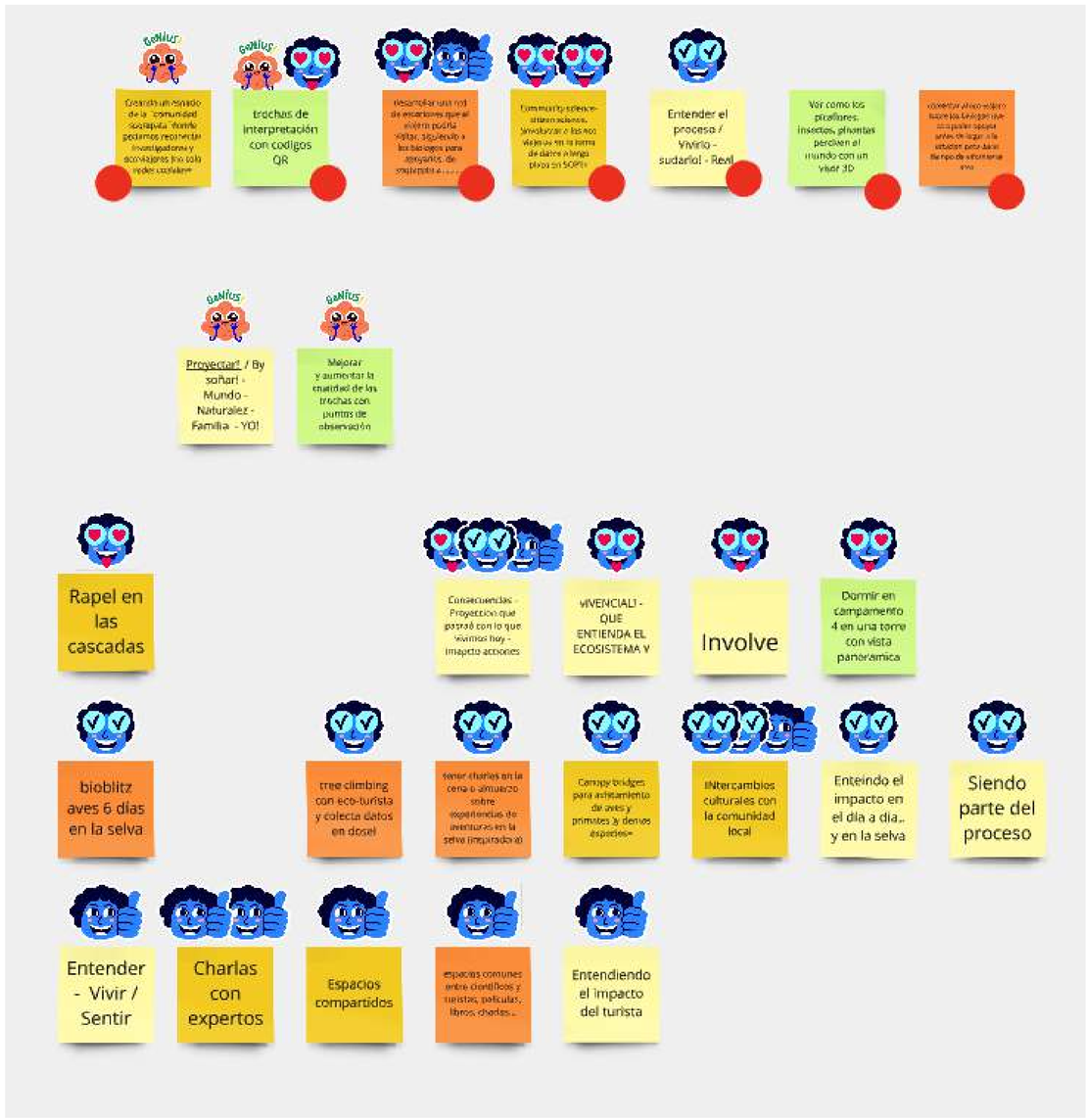




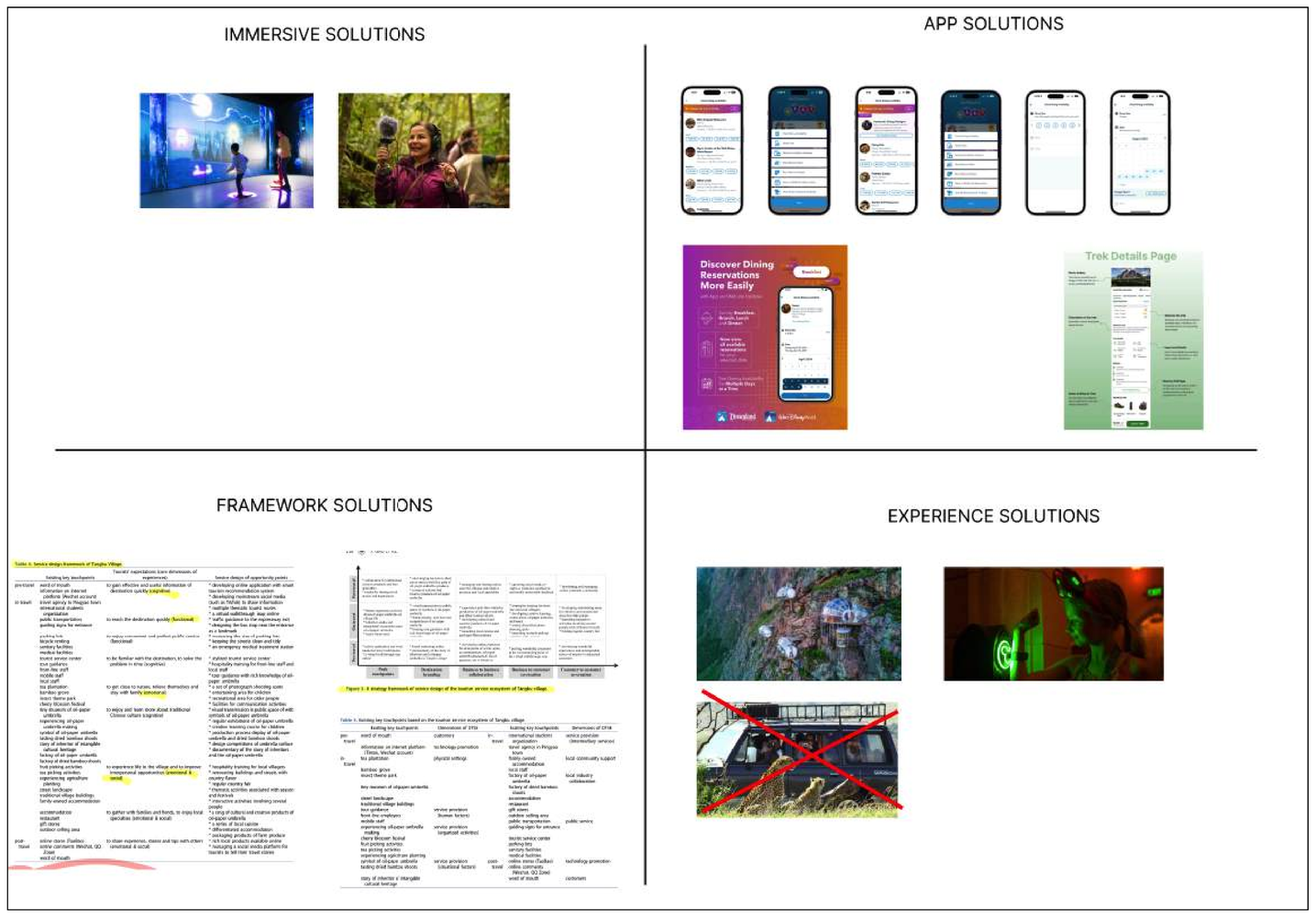




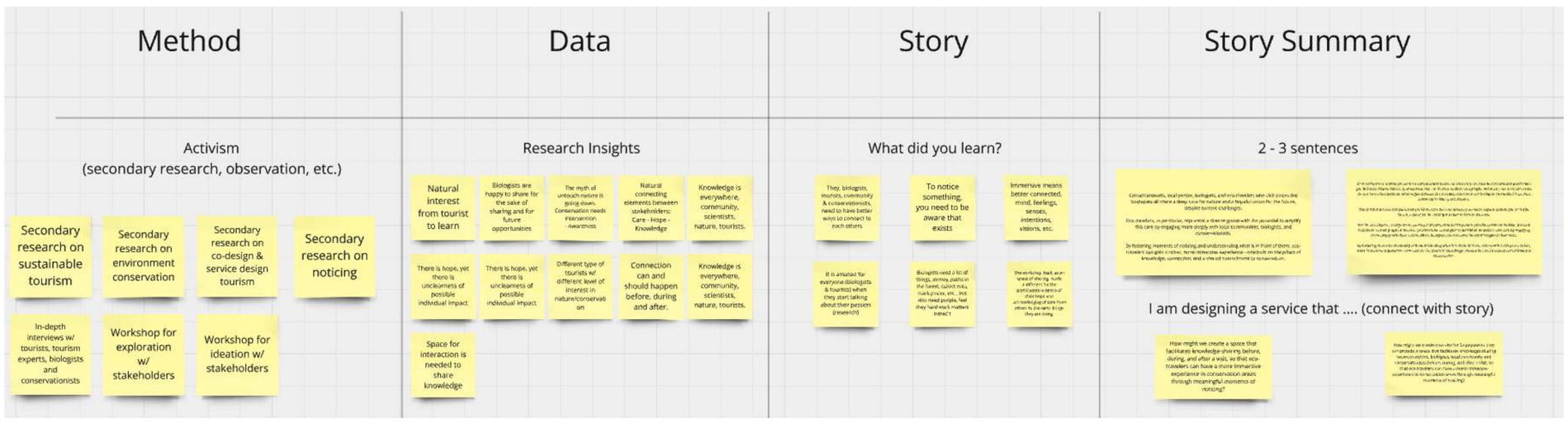
Ideas after workshops



Initial moodboard



Connecting the information to a story



Semi-structured interviews guide

Semi-structured interviews to:

Biologists

1. Rapport

a. What is your speciality and how did you get to that interest? What is your motivation to study that?

2. Understand their pains and necessities when visiting Soqtapata – where is the help opportunities.

b. Why did you choose to work with Soqtapata? How was your relationship with them?

c. What are the key elements you are looking in a place like Soqtapata for your research purpose? Soqtapata had those? What was missing?

d. If you could have something from Soqtapata, or any similar place, that doesn't imply tech tools or specific species, what would be best for you? What are you missing?

3. Explore what are their ambitions and expectations working with and in Soqtapata (or similar places).

e. What is your overall expectation in a place like Soqtapata? What is your ambition as an individual and a biologist?

f. How would you frame your ideal scenario?

4. How do they see eco-travellers and if they have any experience/interactions/expectations from them when visiting Soqtapata.

g. What do you think about tourist visiting areas like Soqtapata? Do you think they have a positive or negative impact? Why?

h. What do you think is their motivation and difference from other tourists?

i. Have you interacted with them? How was that interaction?

j. Do you think they can contribute to your ambitions or the conservation area? How? Would it be just money?

Semi-structured interviews to:

SOQTAPATA Team

1. Rapport

a. What is your role in SOQTAPATA, and what motivated you to get involved in this project?

b. How do you see SOQTAPATA in the future, where are you aiming for?

2. Understand their current relationship with biologists and eco-travellers.

c. What is the purpose of working with biologists?

d. How do you contact and engage with biologists?

e. Where do you see that relationship going forward?

f. Why did you choose to work with tourists (eco-travellers)?

g. How do you contact and engage with eco-travellers?

h. Where do you see that relationship going forward?

3. Learn about the value proposition that offers to eco-travellers and biologists.

i. What is it that you offer biologists that they want to work with you? How is that different from other areas?

j. What is it that you offer eco-travellers that they want to visit you? How is that different from other areas?

4. Identify their biggest pains when providing services to eco-travellers and biologists.

k. What are your current challenges while engaging and interacting with biologists? Do you have any plans/have you try anything to solve those challenges?

l. What are your current challenges while engaging and interacting with biologists? Do you have any plans/have you try anything to solve those challenges?

Semi-structured interviews to:

Eco-travellers + Proxies

1. Rapport

a. How started your connection with natural places to visit? What do you enjoy most about those type of places?

b. How did you learn about Soqtapata? What did you like the most when you learned about it?

2. Better understand the motivations (drivers) and expectations of an eco-traveller visiting a conservation area like Soqtapata.

c. What was then your motivation to visit a conservation area like Soqtapata? Why a conservation area? Did that influence your decision? Why?

d. What did you expect to happen when you visit a conservation area like Soqtapata? What did you expect? How was the overall experience?

3. Determinate the level of interest in science and knowledge regarding conservation.

e. How interested were you in the research information and work that biologists are doing in Soqtapata? Why is that? Did you know anything about conservation before?

f. Would you like to contribute more to conservation? Why? How would you like to do it?

4. Identify the key driver for a WOW contribution feeling/factor in their experience.

g. What was the most shocking feeling/factor/element that impressed you during your visit to Soqtapata?

h. How do you feel after visiting it? Did you enjoy it? Why? Do you think it would be the same that visiting other similar places? Why?

VISIT SOQTAPATA

CARLOS PILARES ROBLES
MAJOR PROJECT
MA. SERVICE DESIGN 2023-2024