



BALTIC JOURNAL OF LAW & POLITICS

A Journal of Vytautas Magnus University

VOLUME 16, NUMBER 3 (2023)

ISSN 2029-0454



Cite: Baltic Journal of Law & Politics 16:3 (2023): 1916-1939

DOI: 10.2478/bjlp-2023-00000147

Cultural heritage potential as a contribution to the tourism development of Montecristi, Ecuador

Catalina Margarita Verdugo-Bernal

Facultad de Recursos Naturales, Escuela Superior Politécnica de Chimborazo (ESPOCH), Riobamba 060155, Ecuador.

Email: catalina.verdugo@esPOCH.edu.ec

Silvia Patricia Montufar-Guevara

Facultad de Recursos Naturales, Escuela Superior Politécnica de Chimborazo (ESPOCH), Riobamba 060155, Ecuador.

Email: silvia.montufar@esPOCH.edu.ec

Erica Estefanía Andino-Peñañiel

Facultad de Recursos Naturales, Escuela Superior Politécnica de Chimborazo (ESPOCH), Riobamba 060155, Ecuador.

Email: erica.andino@esPOCH.edu.ec

María Fernanda Chávez-Melo

Universidad de las Fuerzas Armadas, San Golqui 171103, Ecuador.

Email: mfchavez8@espe.edu.ec

Myriam Isabel Piray-Quezada

Consortio Geoparque Volcán Tungurahua, Penipe 060503, Ecuador.

Email: myriam.piray2020@gmail.com

Camila Fernanda Paredes-Narvaez

Investigadora independiente, San Golqui 171103, Ecuador.

Email: camilaparedes059@gmail.com

Received: December 25, 2022; reviews: 2; accepted: January 14, 2023

Abstract

Montecristi's cultural heritage potential is analyzed to determine the contribution to tourism development. Tangible and intangible cultural heritage is present in the parish and is part of the cultural identity of its population. The use of cultural heritage as an attraction

to generate tourism activities, has allowed a better diversification of the offer and the creation of new tourist products aimed at a demand interested in knowing about history, culture, traditions and having more experiential experiences linking with the community, in turn, it requires an adequate management that regulates the tourist activity and promotes the development in the locality. Montecristi is characterized by having a cultural heritage that is still present in current generations, its potential is evidenced in historical, architectural, traditions and customs, all these, allow a cultural exchange. From a qualitative, quantitative study and bibliographic review, the information is collected to propose a proposal that promotes tourism development, where the recipient community is involved as the main beneficiary, since tourism development seeks to improve the quality of life of the population taking advantage of its resources and adapting the locality to provide tourist facilities [1].

Keywords

Cultural heritage, potential, tourism development, Montecristi

1. Introduction

The Montecristi urban parish and at the same time cantonal head of the Montecristi canton, is characterized by having a material and intangible cultural heritage represented in immovable cultural heritage assets, spaces where handicrafts made with wicker or straw are sold, festive and religious acts in which they perform dances and parades. In rural areas, the elaboration of handicrafts is linked to commercial activity, however, in the Montecristi parish[2], there is a greater concentration of this activity and presence of tourism, due to the fact that it has road access and adequate equipment to facilitate the visit of national tourists and foreign tourists who arrive mainly through cruise ships that disembark at the seaport of Manta[3].

As indicated in the Development and Territorial Planning Plan of the Montecristi canton, the parish has several natural attractions and a greater presence of cultural attractions; tangible heritage such as museum, libraries, houses, church and squares are concentrated in the parish, due to lack of conservation plans and carelessness of the authorities, some goods have deteriorated and others have disappeared with respect to intangible heritage, mainly the elaboration of crafts, represents an important source of economic income, however, a loss of these craft techniques is expected since future generations do not show greater interest in dedicating themselves to this activity and seek other economic alternatives such as trade, due to the lack of support for tourist ventures [4].

Finally, it is evident that due to the neglect of the population in general, interest in cultural heritage has diminished, causing a loss of identity; From the collection of information, the potential of the cultural heritage and the historical value of the parish is determined, since it was the birthplace of several important characters for the country. With this background, a proposal is proposed that promotes the economic, social and cultural growth of the Montecristi urban parish, an

activity that links the population and both public and private entities in the management of tourism that contributes to tourism development.

2. Methodology

Cultural heritage has a close relationship with tourism, in general terms it is stated that heritage is transferred from generation to generation[5]., in places where there are movable and immovable heritage assets with a symbolic value, these represent history and ways of life; the language, ancestral traditions, are aspects of a population that for years has maintained these expressions as a differentiating aspect and that generates interest to people motivated by culture, so tourism is the way to make visitors known this heritage and at the same time allows economic, social and cultural development [6]. (Sandoval, 2017).

In the present research work, two support theories have been considered, Functionalism Theory to analyze culture as a system that satisfies the needs of a society and General Systems Theory and its model of the Tourist System where the elements of the system are analyzed and details the current situation of tourist activity, both theories allow us to demonstrate the relationship between tourism and cultural heritage, considered an element of culture and that generates a tourist development of a town that has the necessary tourist attractions.

Functionalism is a current that appeared in Europe and developed in the United States, in summary it states that culture is a system, its elements generate activities so that it works when satisfying basic needs and even leisure and fun needs. presented by the human being, through the use of its elements that are transformed into products with characteristics that are attractive to a demand with new motivations to learn about culture and interact with the local population [7].

In this way, cultural heritage, by being part of culture, becomes a consumer good, acquires a value that can be paid for by demand and contributes to the increase in economic income of a locality, this demand seeks to satisfy their needs or motivations to Through the consumption of cultural products such as visits to historical sites, eating local food and observing cultural expressions, tourism and cultural heritage jointly promote social participation, economic growth and, above all, the whole community is kept alive. culture through diffusion [8].

The General Systems Theory relates tourism as a system that is made up of elements or subsystems, the same ones that interact with each other to achieve an objective. Tourism is seen as a social system, as such, it begins with the displacement of people, considered actors, whether they are tourists of any origin who represent the demand and have different motivations and needs, the second actor, the directly related receiving community or indirectly with tourism. Another element is the internal organization of the system made up of resources that serve to create exchange relationships, whether for economic or symbolic benefit. Outside of these relationships, there are physical, social, cultural, economic and political phenomena where tourism develops, without these elements the relationships would not be generated to achieve the tourist activity [9].

Knowing the internal and external elements of the system, models based on the General Theory of Systems have been proposed, such as the Sergio Molina Tourist System[10], this author indicates that the Tourist System is made up of six elements, the same ones that are found within a tourist space and that its functions allow a tourist development to be generated, involving the receiving community and its attractions to satisfy the tourist demand, for this, policies are created that regulate the activity, the infrastructure and equipment are installed in a place to complement the satisfaction of needs and provide a better quality of life.

The application of the General Theory of Systems in this investigation serves to know the current state of the parish, its resources or tourist attractions, policies, lodging and food establishments, the interest of the receiving community to determine if, from its elements, can achieve tourism development [11].

Both theories are based on the study of a system, considering that tourism is a phenomenon that satisfies certain needs, the analysis of its elements determines whether or not a tourist space generates satisfaction for both the demand and the inhabitants; Based on the functionalist theory, these needs are identified, based on culture such as language, traditions, food and representations, physical and even social needs can be satisfied when integrating a group of visitors who have arrived motivated to a place that provides tourist services[12].

Culture through tourism generates economic development, which means that a town that has the necessary cultural resources, both tangible and intangible, generates a feeling of belonging and values its heritage even more; With globalization, tourism is constantly changing due to the competitiveness of the markets, as the demand seeks a new tourist product, based on experience, knowledge and recognition of the value of culture, based on the close relationship between culture and heritage, is transformed into cultural tourism, a type of tourism that seeks the protection, conservation and dissemination of heritage and involve the population in the revitalization of the economy, generating cultural tourism activities to satisfy demand[13].

3. Results

Next, the situational diagnosis of the parish is presented, considering the geographical, physical, cultural, social and economic aspects to relate them to the current context, a compilation of the general data of the canton and the parish is detailed, followed by the analysis of the results obtained by applying the UNESCO indicators for the heritage part and the elements of the tourism system for the tourism part.

Macro environment

Geographic diagnosis

The Montecristi canton, is located in a strategic part of the province of Manabí, being in the center-west part, it has become the center of commercial

activities. Its political-administrative division is made up of five urban parishes, which are the following: Aníbal San Andrés, General Eloy Alfaro, Leonidas Proaño, Colorado and Montecristi, the latter cantonal capital, and only one rural parish, La Pila. To the north it limits with the cantons of Jaramijó and Manta, to the south with Jipijapa and the Pacific Ocean, to the east with Portoviejo and Jipijaja and to the west with the canton of Manta and the Pacific Ocean, its extension is approximately 734 km² [14].

The Montecristi canton is characterized by being located in the tropical subdesert bioclimatic region, like other cities in the province. From the month of January to April, there is presence of rain, the months of August, September and October are the driest. The temperature has an average of 25 ° C, in the month of August the temperature is generally lower than 21 ° C and in the months of January to April the presence of rain is more frequent and registers up to 26 ° C.

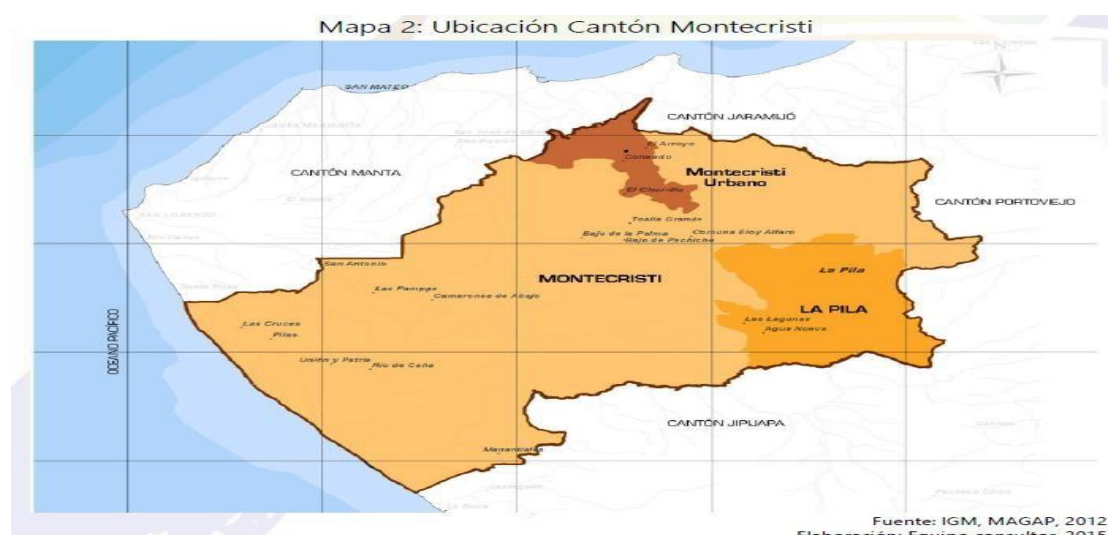


Figure 1-1: Map of the location of the San Antonio community of Montecristi
Source: (GAD Montecristi Municipality, 2015)

Socio-cultural diagnosis

According to the 2010 census, the INEC registered 70,294 inhabitants in both urban and rural areas. According to the projections made for the year 2014, the canton is made up of 87,096 inhabitants. Regarding the Montecristi parish, there is no updated data, nor is it registered in the official database, but considering the INEC data, among all the urban parishes there are around 46,312 in 2010 and for 2014, 58,805. The canton represents 5% of the total population of the province of Manabí [15].

The distribution of the population grows in all areas, in the urban part a growth of 6.15% is registered, being a representative percentage since, in these areas, the presence of goods, services and commercial facilities is evident. Education in the urban area is distributed by fiscal, private, fiscal and municipal institutions, of the total number of institutions, 84% are in this area. The health service is limited, its infrastructure is not suitable for the care of all the inhabitants [16].

Ethnic groups

In the canton, 75% identify themselves as mestizos, due to the flow of people from neighboring provinces who migrated to the canton, only 9% identify themselves as Afro-Ecuadorian and Montubio, 5% as white and only 1% of the population is indigenous (GAD Municipality of the Montecristi canton, 2015). As there are several ethnic groups, in Montecristi there is a variety of customs and traditions that represent the very characteristic cultural identity of the province in general.

Economic diagnosis

The Montecristi canton has limited economic growth, the population tends to engage in commercial activities, since economic incentives and poor water quality make it impossible for the agricultural sector to maintain itself and generate a family income. In the urban part, the Economically Active Population (PEA) is dedicated to activities such as commerce, industry and manufacturing. The urban area such as the Montecristi parish is visited by inhabitants of the cantons and neighboring provinces, however, basic quality services have not yet been strengthened. The occupancy rate reflects that the manufacturing industry has a greater presence, followed by wholesale and retail trade [17].

History of the Name

Montecristi, considered a small town, does not appear until 1604 in the description of Guayaquil and is identified as a town that is characterized by having a mountain called Monte de Cristo (Jurado, 2015). In the Historical Notes section of the city of Montecristi of the PDOT, it is said that Montecristi was founded at the beginning of the 18th century, by a man named CRISTI, who located his home on the hill, using materials from the area, for this reason, it was called Monte de Cristo [18].

Montecristi Heritage City

Historical, Cultural and Natural Heritage of the country, is the declaration received by Montecristi on January 28, 2008, designated by the Constituent Assembly. This recognition provides, together with approved agreements, an inventory of tangible and intangible assets, of historical documents, is carried out to preserve them (Anonymous, 2009). Among the characteristics for its declaration, Montecristi is considered the cradle of historical figures, and a place where important events took place in the country's history, a settlement of pre-Hispanic cultures, made up of heritage houses and the canton where the fine hat is woven [19].

Microenvironment

Description of the Montecristi urban parish

The Montecristi parish, is one of the five urban parishes that make up the Montecristi canton, in this, most of the heritage assets are located, the most visited

being the Ciudad Alfaro Civic Center Historical Museum, in the center of the parish are distributed squares, some houses that maintain the old construction of the time and in the year 2013 the

INPC recognized them as patrimonial assets, due to the earthquake that occurred in 2016, some houses disappeared and those that remain are in a process of deterioration. In the main streets there are places where wicker crafts such as furniture, jewelry, others, made with toquilla straw and various items that are attractive to visitors are exposed for sale. The fine toquilla straw hat is one of the items that sells the most and contributes to the economy of artisans and merchants[20], in the parish there are no artisans who permanently indicate how the hat is made, since the artisans mostly They are found in the rural parishes of the canton and in Montecristi, there are collection centers to finish the hat with certain finishes and sell them[21].

To the canton, specifically to the Montecristi parish, a large number of parishioners arrive in the month of November to celebrate the Patron Saint Festivities of the Virgin of Monserrate[22], in addition, events and trade fairs are organized in order to promote the economy of the canton; Since Montecristi is a city with movable and immovable assets that have been preserved over time and are part of the culture and tradition of its inhabitants, these assets are unique and represent a potential that, based on tourist activity, promotes the visit of tourists who They seek to learn about the canton and its culture.

History

Montecristi appears in 1861 together with other parishes and is recognized in the same year as the capital of the province of Manabí. In the year 1867, a fire occurred, which affected the city and Portoviejo once again became the capital of the province; However, Montecristi is a city that, due to its geographical location, allows the execution of commercial and economic activities between some cantons, there are several supporting documents indicating that Montecristi has great historical and cultural value evidenced in its tangible and intangible cultural heritage, which represents the essence of its population [23].


Cultural heritage of the Montecristi parish

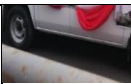




To generate tourism development in a territory, as explained [24], it begins with the analysis of the quality of tourist attractions, through the application of a methodology where data and specific characteristics that denominate an attraction as unique are recorded, in this document no information is omitted; The tool designed for this documentation is the inventory of attractions and their ranking measured with evaluation criteria. Inventories presented in various formats are part of Territorial Planning and private and public entities are responsible for collecting information.

When analyzing the results, according to the indicators and elements of the tourism system, the sheets are made with the information collected, in order to

synthesize the characteristics of the heritage assets that have been identified and describe their potential. The documented assets are those that were identified in the interviews by the Culture and Heritage technicians, since there is no documented inventory with the methodology proposed by MINTUR. The data is taken from the inventory of Heritage Assets carried out in 2013 by the INPC and the SIPCE, this information is very general. The criteria analyzed are those presented in the Guide by the Ministry of Tourism, the criteria of the tourism competitiveness index are applied[25].

Table No.01. Material and immaterial cultural heritage of Montecristi

Tangible heritage					
ATTRACTIVE	CATEGORY	TYPE	SUBTYPO	STATE	PICTURE
Basílica Menor de la Virgen de Monserrate	Cultural manifestation	Architecture	Historical-Religious	conserved	
Museo Histórico Centro Cívico Ciudad Alfaro	Cultural manifestation	Architecture	Museum	conserved	
Plaza Cervera	Cultural manifestation	Architecture	Public space	conserved	
Plazoleta Eloy Alfaro	Cultural manifestation	Architecture	Public space	conserved	
Casa Patrimonial Antigua Escuela Niñas Eloy Alfaro. 1910	Cultural manifestation	Architecture	historical-civil	conserved	
Intangible Heritage					
ATRACTIVE	CATEGORY	TYPE	SUBTYPE	STATE	PICTURE
Elaboración de artesanías en mimbre	Cultural manifestation	Folklore	Arts and crafts	conserved	
Tejido tradicional del sombrero fino de paja toquilla	Cultural manifestation	Folklore	Arts and crafts	conserved	
Fiestas de San Pedro y San Pablo	Cultural manifestation	Folklore	Religious holiday	conserved	
Fiestas Patronales de la Virgen de Monserrate	Cultural manifestation	Folklore	Religious holiday	conserved	

Tangible heritage					
Fiestas Octubrinas o de Independencia	Cultural manifestation	Folklore	Civil holiday	conserved	
Conmemoración del Natalicio de Eloy Alfaro	Cultural manifestation	Folklore	Civil holiday	conserved	
Rosquitas tradicionales	Cultural manifestation	Folklore	Gastronomy	conserved	
Dulces	Cultural manifestation	Folklore	Gastronomy	conserved	
Leyenda Llegada de la Virgen de Monserrate	Cultural manifestation	Folklore	popular beliefs	conserved	
Source: (National Institute of Cultural Heritage, 2013 - 2019)					

Modified by: Authors, 2023

When documenting the information in the designed files, it is evident that in the Montecristi parish there is a very broad cultural heritage, however, not all of these tangible and intangible goods are known by visitors, nor by the population, and there are even differences between certain Historical facts. Heritage assets such as a house, church, museum and squares keep history and have spaces in their surroundings suitable for cultural exchange, craft shops, shops and establishments such as restaurants, cafeterias and soda fountains, also with a wide landscape and viewpoints that allow observe certain landscape characteristics of the parish and the canton.

All the information can be made known to the visitors from the diffusion and providing tourist facilities. With regard to intangible heritage, its potential is observed in the process of making handicrafts and gastronomic products, thus keeping artisan techniques alive. The civic and religious festivals have a great cultural value and importance mainly for the population that participates in the parades and dances[26]. The city of Montecristi has access roads and the authorities on the dates that parades and events are held, organizes the population and the space to facilitate the transit and enjoyment of the attendees.

Analysis of results

Next, the analysis of results is presented according to the dimensions and indicators of UNESCO, these dimensions are seven as observed in the table and the

elements that are part of the Tourism System that are six, detailed above. First, the interviews carried out with the authorities are analyzed and followed by the analysis of the questions that are part of the surveys applied to visitors and the host community[27].

UNESCO Culture for Development Indicators

Dimensiones	Subdimensiones
Economía	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Valor agregado de las actividades culturales 2. Empleo cultural 3. Gastos de hogares en cultura
Educación	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Una escolaridad completa, equitativa e integradora 2. Valorización de la interculturalidad, la diversidad cultural y la creatividad en la educación secundaria básica 3. Capacitación de los profesionales del sector cultural
Patrimonio	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Protección y valorización del patrimonio
Comunicación	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Libertad de expresión 2. Acceso y uso de Internet 3. Diversidad de contenidos de ficción en la programación de la televisión pública
Gobernanza e Institucionalidad	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Marco normativo en cultura 2. Marco político e institucional en cultura 3. Repartición de las infraestructuras culturales 4. Participación de la sociedad civil en la programación cultural
Participación Social	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participación en actividades culturales 2. Confianza 3. Libre determinación
Igualdad de Género	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Grado de igualdad de género 2. Percepción sobre la igualdad de género

Figure 12. UNESCO dimensions and indicators
 Source: (UNESCO, 2017)

Economy

Culture has become an industry through which employment is generated, promotes the responsible use of resources and innovation to transmit cultural expressions[28]. The opinion of the main actors is considered to know the reality of the artisans and the authorities to determine if the cultural activities contribute to the economy of the parish.

Results of the survey applied to the receiving community.

AREA	DETAIL IN %	OBSERVATION
Economic activity	18% commerce, 14% students, 13% women-in household activities, 11% manufacturing/handicrafts, 10% public servants, 8% are dedicated to industry, 7% retirees, 6% transport, 5% teaching, 4% construction activities, 3% lodging and food and 2% agriculture, fishing and forestry.	All activities have been considered to determine the minimum presence of service providers. 11% manufacturing mostly located in rural areas.
Socioeconomic level	46% medium, 35% medium low, 13% low, 5% medium high and 1% high. however, 35% is a representative percentage compared to the total, so those surveyed	Few people are engaged in cultural jobs. 35% consider living with a scarcity of economic, labor and educational resources. Authorities are unaware of the cost of the population in cultural activities, however it is known that they do so in decorations for religious and civic festivals.
Education level	52% secondary, 31% university, 7% specialization, 11% primary.	Public institutions organize workshops and artistic and cultural events to motivate generations to learn about the history of the cantón.
Governance and Institutional	77% are unaware of the projects on Cultural Heritage, 23% do know.	There is little diffusion of projects.
Projects	7% Rodantes Museum, 4% indicate that Typical Food Festivals are held	
Social participation: Interest activities	Cultural Nights 31% rated it 5, 30% rated 4 for historical tours of the parish, 32% rated 3 for handicrafts, 28% 2 for visits to heritage houses and museums and 30% with 1 to gastronomy tasting.	A Likert scale of 5 to 1 is suggested, with 5 being the highest preference rating and 1 being the lowest.
Participation in scheduled events	46% Conventions, fairs and congresses on local Cultural Heritage, artistic events are of interest to 33%, and gastronomic events to 21%.	Promotes cultural exchange and economic development

AREA	DETAIL IN %	OBSERVATION
Interest in sharing customs with tourists	53% very interested, 30% are interested, 12% not very interested, 5% not at all interested.	Purists come to Montecristi, but only visit the museum, there is unfair competition between artisans.
Gender equality	gender inequality with respect to access to different types of education is minimal, since the difference varies up to 3%, that is, both men and women in the parish have had equal access to education.	This indicator is positive because employability in the public sector is seen to be equal for men and women.
Communication: Media promote Montecristi	38% social networks and internet; 29% TV; 23% family and friends recommendations, 6% written press or newspaper, 3% on radio and 2% MINTUR promotions.	On the internet or on official sites, they do not find a greater description of the potential sites, so they are limited to visiting the museum only.
Material heritage: perception of importance	55% qualified the Basilica of the Virgin of Monserrate with 5, 44% qualified the Ciudad Alfaro Civic Center Historical Museum with 4, 24% qualified the Eloy Alfaro Square with 3, 31% with 2 Cervera Square and with 1 31% to the Antigua Escuela de Niñas Eloy Alfaro.	Not all people are aware of the activities carried out within this heritage.
Intangible heritage: perception of importance	38% qualify 9 to the Patronal Festival of the Virgin of Monserrate in November, 24% rate the Traditional Fabric of the Toquilla Straw Hat with 8, 18% rate the San Pedro and San Pablo Festivities with 7, 15% with 6 the wicker techniques, with 5 the elaboration of the donuts in a wood oven, 17% qualify the October Festivities with 4, 20% indicate a 3 to the commemoration of the Birth of Eloy Alfaro, 21% rate legends 2, 19% rate .	Few are interested in legends, gastronomy and civic dates

Source: Paredes, 2020

Elaborate by: Autoras, 2023

Tourist System

For knowledge of the current tourist activity, an analysis of the elements of the tourist system is made, the analysis of interviews and surveys [29] is organized.

TOURIST SYSTEM		
ELEMENT	VARIABLE	
Superstructure	Appropriate management of cultural heritage by the GAD	63% consider that the Municipality of the Montecristi Canton and its directions such as Tourism and Culture and Heritage have not carried out adequate management, the previous administrations neglected various real estate, 37% affirm that yes, the current administration has been the organization of certain cultural activities.
	Opinion on GAD management	33% decided not to respond, 20% lack communication with the community and 14% lack promotion and publicity.
Infraestructure	State	The state of the infrastructure of the Montecristi parish is considered good, since basic services, communication, education, health services, garbage collection, and the state of streets, highways and transportation are in good condition, without However, high percentages such as 23% indicate that the basic services are bad, as well as the health service and the state of the streets, highways and transportation, 20% the collection service is excellent.
Equipment and facilities	registered	7 food and drink establishments 3 accommodation establishments (1st, 3rd, hostel) 17 artisan shops (toquilla straw hats and others)
Demand	Tourist opinion on relevance of services	42% rate accommodation and food as 5, 29% rate tourist information and guidance as 4, 26% rate tourist transport as 3, 30% rate 2 as having recreational spaces and 40% indicate that it is little or not at all important to have facilities such as viewpoints, trails, since their visit is currently for a few hours.

TOURIST SYSTEM		
	Visitor Profile	<p>With the interpretation of results, a visitor profile of 29 to 39 years old is defined, who arrives at the parish with his family motivated by tourist activities and thinks of returning since due to lack of time they cannot visit other attractions. 47% indicate that their stay is only 2 to 3 hours, this demonstrates part of the problem, since visitors do not see the parish as a place to spend the night and if they do, it is because they have relatives in the place, this is because there is no tourist money and adequate infrastructure. In general, they rate their view as very good and aspects such as infrastructure as good. The friendliness of the receiving community influences the fact that visitors want to return to the parish to carry out other activities and learn more about the Cultural Heritage.</p> <p>The surveys were applied in the month of September, it represents a low season, the presence of foreign visitors is 6% and the rest is made up of national tourists, mainly coming from cities near the canton such as Manta. Respondents affirm that the parish has a cultural heritage with potential, since it is interesting to visit houses, historical places. With these data it is concluded that from the cultural heritage new tourist products can be offered.</p>
Attractions and Activities	Most interesting activities	<p>31% of the visitors qualified the historical tours of the parish with 5, with 4, 27% indicate witnessing the production of handicrafts, 25% with 3 visits to heritage houses, 30% qualified with 2 to gastronomy tasting, 32% indicate that the least interesting activity, rated 1, is attending cultural nights.</p>

TOURIST SYSTEM		
	Real estate visited or to be visited	<p>The Ciudad Alfaro Civic Center Historical Museum is visited by 55%, and 23% visit the Basilica of the Virgin of Monserate, usually on weekends to witness the mass that is given in this church. The Cervera and Eloy Alfaro squares and the Patrimonial House where the Eloy Alfaro Girls' School used to function, are less frequented places, even visitors are unaware of their location. Visitors are interested in knowing 35% of the Basilica, 23% of the Eloy Alfaro Girls' School, 17% of the Eloy Alfaro Square, 14% of the Museum and 10% of the Plaza Cervera.</p>
	Status of visited real estate	<p>Of the 5 real estate visited, those surveyed consider that it is in a preserved state, as indicated by 70% for the Basilica, 66% for the CCCA Museum, 58% indicate that the Eloy Alfaro Square has that state, a 50% for the Eloy Alfaro Girls' School and 47% for Plaza Cervera; These results are from the number of people who have already visited the sites, also 40% consider that the former Eloy Alfaro Girls' School is deteriorated. The other percentages vary to indicate that some spaces are in the process of deterioration since the ornamentation is neglected and there is a lack of signage.</p>
	Celebrations that visitors have been to	<p>Un 55% afirma que no ha estado presente ya que desconoce la fecha en la que ocurren estos acontecimientos, un 25% ha llegado a Montecristi para conmemorar las Fiestas Patronales de la Virgen de Monserate que se realiza en el mes de noviembre, en esta fecha llegan varios comerciantes y artesanos a ofertar productos de otras ciudades, por lo que se convierte en una fiesta con motivo religioso y comercial. Para las Fiestas de San Pedro y San Pablo únicamente un 7% ha estado presente, esto es un problema ya que según datos históricos la fiesta es propia del cantón y los visitantes desconocen</p>

TOURIST SYSTEM		
	Handicrafts to witness their elaboration	62% who, during their visit to the parish, would like to witness the making of the toquilla straw hat, since they have qualified it as 5 being the most interesting craft, 31% have indicated 4 to the making of hammocks, chairs and furniture in wicker, with 3, 30% have qualified wicker bags, 36% dolls, ornaments in general and key chains with 2 and 36% are less interested in knowing how jewelry is made since they have qualified it with 1. Thus, the interest of tourists in having an experience and learning about craft techniques is evident.
	Legends	87% of visitors did not know about any, mainly because during their visit to the museum, the place where most of the surveys were carried out, the guide service is not provided and also because they are unaware of other places in the parish, 13% affirm that they did know about some legend, most of these associate Montecristi with certain stories and data from Eloy Alfaro
	known legends	87% do not know any legend, 10% know certain stories regarding the construction of the Train and the Fight of Eloy Alfaro, 3% have heard the Legend of Cerro Montecristi, this is considered natural heritage
	Gastronomic products of the parish	31% traditional sweets, 21% have tried ceviches, 18% would like to try traditional bagels, 17% have tasted onion, 12% indicate another product and 1% none.
	Other gastronomic products	92% did not respond
Receiving community		31% aged from 18 to 28 years, 25% from 29 to 39 years, 17% from 40 to 50 years, 15% from 51 to 61 years and 12% aged 62 or over . 51% male, 49% female. 45% agree that Montecristi has the potential for a tourism development to exist, 31% strongly agree, 18% little agree and 6% disagree at all. 30% interested in being part of event organization activities, 22% providing food service, 17% tourist transport service, 14% guidance, 10% in AAVV.
Source: Dirección de turismo, 2019		

Elaborated by: Autoras, 2023

Declaration to the urban parish of Montecristi as A MAGICAL TOWN

General objective

1. Recognize the Montecristi urban parish as a Magical Town[30], through the application of projects to promote tourism development.

Specific objectives

1. Create a local committee, made up of authorities and civil citizens in order to participate in decision-making on the tourist activity of the parish.
2. Document attractions, service providers and tourist infrastructure applying technical standards to demonstrate the potential of the parish.
3. Promote a tourist product, through the use of the cultural heritage of the parish to differentiate the regional tourist offer.

Beneficiaries

The main beneficiary is the receiving community, those people who participate directly in the tourist activity such as the owners of food and beverage establishments, artisans, merchants, owners of heritage houses, mainly receive an economic income for providing their services and offering certain products[31].

The community that participates indirectly in the tourist activity benefits from a cultural exchange and from basic infrastructure adjustments, thus maintaining a good quality of life and access to opportunities. This declaration, in addition to favoring the parish, contributes to the development of the canton and the province since a unique tourist product can be presented in the region, which promotes the activity visiting other attractions, other than those of sun and beach, traditional in the region[32].

According to the results of the surveys, visitors are interested in returning to Montecristi to learn about its cultural

manifestations, participating in historical tours of the parish is one of the activities that attracts the most attention,

currently the stay of visitors is less to one day, but if the infrastructure is improved and the quality of the establish

ments. It is regulated, it is likely that on their next visit they will decide to extend their stay. With this background, a matrix is presented where the possible projects are summarized, these have been proposed considering the results of surveys and interviews.

Table 20 Proposal

Dimen- sions	Lines of Action	Plan	Program	Project	Actions	Indi- cator	Time	Res- ponsa- ble
Economy	Fomento del emprendimiento turístico y fortalecimiento de las capacidades emprendedoras	Desarrollo Turístico en la parroquia Montecristi	Aprovechamiento del Patrimonio Cultural Material e Inmaterial para el desarrollo turístico de la parroquia Montecristi	Emprendimientos turísticos	-Actualizar registro de casas patrimoniales -Adecuación de casas patrimoniales para uso público (A&B, alojamiento, museos)	90% de casas rehabilitadas	3 años	GAD Dirección de Turismo Dirección de Cultura y Patrimonio
Education	Mejoramiento de capacidades técnicas			Jornadas de formación en Cultura y Patrimonio	-Talleres didácticos	50% de escuelas y colegios capacitados	1 año	GAD Instituciones Educativas
Governance	Fortalecimiento de la oferta turística			Adecuación de infraestructura básica	-Dotar de servicios básicos a toda la parroquia -Mantenimiento en carreteras, vías principales calles	70% de la población con los servicios básicos permanentes	1 año	GAD

Dimen- sions	Lines of Action	Plan	Program	Project	Actions	Indi- cator	Time	Res- ponsa- ble
				Propuesta de legislación para control de la Actividad Turística	-Crear un de reglamento interno que contenga ordenanzas municipales para la regulación de la actividad turística y conservación del patrimonio cultural	5 ordenanzas	1 año	GAD Dirección de Turismo Dirección de Cultura y Patrimonio INPC
Heritage	Improvement of technical capacities	Desarrollo Turístico en la parroquia Montecristi	Aprovechamiento del Patrimonio Cultural Material e Inmaterial para el desarrollo turístico de la parroquia Montecristi	Biblioteca de Patrimonio Cultural de la parroquia Montecristi	-Inventario de bienes patrimoniales aplicando la metodología del MINTUR -Colocación de señalética en espacios públicos, bienes inmuebles	100% de bienes inventarios 50% de bienes con su señalética (placa informativa)	2 años	Dirección de Turismo Dirección de Cultura y Patrimonio INPC
				Differentiated tourist offer	-Strategic alliance with tour operators	Reach agreements with 5 tour operators	1 year	Dirección de Turismo

Dimensions	Lines of Action	Plan	Program	Project	Actions	Indicator	Time	Responsible
Comunication	Strengthening of the tourist offer			Dissemination of heritage in local and digital media	-Tourism brand design -Commercial wedges -Web page design	80% progress in brand design 3 commercial wedges 80% of progress on the website	1 year	GAD Dirección de Turismo
Social participation	Promotion of tourism entrepreneurship and strengthening of entrepreneurial capacities			Living Heritage	-Training in tourist attention -Technical training in organization of cultural events -Technical training in management of cultural heritage.	50% of population trained	1 year	GAD Dirección de Turismo
Gender equality	Improvement of technical capacities			Active community for its heritage	- Formation of a committee for the organization of events and decision making	60% of people trained	2 years	Dirección de Cultura y Patrimonio INPC

5. Conclusions

The support of the research has been based on two theories, Functionalist and General Systems Theory with its model of the tourism system, since there is no one that studies cultural heritage and its contribution to tourism development as such, with these theories one can conclude that the Montecristi parish has cultural aspects such as cultural heritage that is transformed into a product to satisfy leisure and recreation needs when visiting real estate or participating in cultural events where intangible heritage is transmitted, these assets in turn are part of the tourist offer that is complemented with other tourist facilities to improve the stay of the demand.

According to the dimensions and its central indicators, the Montecristi parish is characterized for being a city with a cultural heritage, unique in construction, history, architectural design, festive, religious and civic events, craft techniques and legends that are part of the culture and tradition of the population, these attributes indicate the potential of the goods and generate an interest in the demand to learn and interact with other groups. What refers to infrastructure and tourist equipment is limited, which implies that it is a city of transit.

The declaration of Magical Towns is a program that seeks the use of heritage in order to generate tourism development, this program can be applied in the Montecristi parish, because it has cultural heritage that is not yet fully known and with certain tourist facilities that can be improved in order to offer a different tourist product at the province level

Author Contributions

Conceptualization, C.P.M.-E., M.d.I.C.d.R.-R., and J. Á-G; formal analysis, C.P.M.-E., M.d.I.C.d.R.-R., E.E.A-P and J. Á-G; investigation, C.P.M.-E., M.d.I.C.d.R.-R., E.E.A-P and J. Á-G; methodology, C.P.M.-E., M.d.I.C.d.R.-R., E.E.A-P and J. Á-G; writing— original draft, C.P.M.-E., M.d.I.C.d.R.-R., E.E.A-P and J. Á-G; writing—review and editing, C.P.M.-E., M.d.I.C.d.R.-R., E.E.A-P and J. Á-G. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Funding

This publication has been funded by the Consejería de Economía, Ciencia y Agenda Digital de la Junta de Extremadura and by the European Regional Development Fund of the European Union through the reference grant GR21161.

Institutional Review Board Statement

Not applicable.

Informed Consent Statement

Not applicable.

Data Availability Statement

Not applicable.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

References

- Baral, Ch. & Neupane, B. (2020). Tourism Attraction, Facilities, Flow and Assessment of Tourism Product of Manaslu Conservation Area. The Geographic Base. 7. 103-112.10.3126/tgb.v7i0.34279. Available online: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/348462937_Tourism_Attraction_Facilities_Flow_and_Assessment_of_Tourism_Product_of_Manaslu_Conservation_Area (accessed on January 03, 2023)
- [Sistema Nacional de Información \(SNI\)](https://app.sni.gob.ec). (2016). Cantón Montecristi. Available online: <https://app.sni.gob.ec> > sigadplusdocumentofin
- Gobierno Autónomo Descentralizado del cantón Montecristi (GADCM). (2015). <https://montecristi.gob.ec/index.php/noticias-gad/>
- Viajando por Ecuador. (2016). <https://ec.viajandox.com/manabi/montecristi-C149>
- Toselli, C. (2018). Tourism, cultural heritage and local development. Evaluation of the tourism potential of rural villages in the province of Entre Ríos, Argentina. Available online: <https://www.redalyc.org/journal/881/88165873007/html/> (accessed on 12 January, 12 of 2023)
- Sandoval, L. (2017). Patrimonio cultural y turismo en el Ecuador: Vínculo indisoluble. Tsafiqui, 1-24
- Arnoletto, E. (2007). Curso de Teoría Política. Obtenido de eumed: <http://www.eumed.net/libros-gratis/2007b/300/indice.htm>
- Fuller, N. (2008). Turismo y Cultura. Entre el entusiasmo y el recelo. Perú: Fondo Editorial.
- Bosch, J., & Merli, C. (2014). Fundamentos del enfoque sistémico para el turismo. Neuquén: EDUCO, <https://sistema-turistico.site123.me/teor%C3%8Das-del-sistema-tur%C3%8Dstico/el-sistema-tur%C3%8Dstico-seg%C3%9An-sergio-molina>.
- García, D. (2017). El patrimonio cultural y su aporte económico mediante el turismo. "Sistema del turismo cultural". Ponencia presentada en el 2do. Congreso Latinoamericano de Gestión Cultural. Cali.
- Leiper, N. (1979). General System Theory and Tourism. Beeton, Sue. (2006). Community Development through Tourism. 10.1071/9780643093881.
- Beeton, Sue. (2006). Community Development through Tourism. 10.1071/9780643093881.

- Gobierno Autónomo Descentralizado del cantón Montecristi (GADCM). (2015).
<https://montecristi.gob.ec/index.php/noticias-gad/>
- Actualización del Plan de Ordenamiento Territorial del cantón Montecristi. (2016).
GADCM con énfasis en gestión de riesgo.
Ecuador en cifras.gob.ec. Getnias
<https://lagentedemanabi.jimdofree.com/2015/07/14/espaldarazo-estatal-para-servicios-b%C3%A1sicos-de-montecristi/>
<https://ame.gob.ec/2010/05/20/canton-montecristi/>.
- Chica, C., Lemoine, F., Villacis, L., Meneses, W. (2020). Las viviendas de interés patrimonial como instrumento para el fortalecimiento de la actividad turística de Bahía de Caraques (Ecuador). *Revista internacional de turismo, empresa y territorio*. No. 8, julio-diciembre de 2020, pp. 194-211.
<https://ich.unesco.org/es/RL/tejido-tradicional-del-sombrero-ecuatoriano-de-paja-toquilla-00729>
<https://www.culturaypatrimonio.gob.ec/el-sombrero-de-paja-toquilla-un-simbolo-de-la-ecuatorianidad/>
- Sánchez, J. (2016). Ensayo de aproximación a la memoria histórica de Manta.
- USAID. (1986). Strategic Tourism Market Plan for Ecuador. Bureau for Latin America and Caribbean Agency for International Development, Washington, DC. 20523.
- Santana, C. (2019). Breves aportaciones conceptuales sobre inventarios turísticos en América Latina y Ecuador. *Turydes: Turismo y Desarrollo*, 1-29.
<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/32430?show=full&locale-attribute=es>.
- Gallardo, C. (2011). Festivities and Flavors of Ecuador. Universidad de las Américas. Quito – Ecuador. Available in
https://www.academia.edu/20334137/Fiestas_y_sabores_del_Ecuador
/(on December 24, 2022).
- Ross, L. (1962). The local community: A survey Approach. American Sociological Association. Available in <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2089720>. Consulted on November 4, 2023.
<https://en.unesco.org/creativity/monitoring-reporting/periodic-reports/innovative-examples>.
- Bauman, L. & Greenberg, E. (2016). The use of Ethnographic interviewing to Inform Questionnaire Construction. SAGE journals. *Health Education & Behavior*.
- Análisis de factibilidad para la declaratoria de pueblo mágico como estrategia de promoción turística del cantón Montecristi, provincia de Manabí. Available on:
<http://repositorio.sangregorio.edu.ec/handle/123456789/1987>
Consulted on November 22, 2022.
<https://odsterritorioecuador.ec/gad-montecristi/>.
<https://www.culturaypatrimonio.gob.ec/centro-civico-ciudad-alfaro-un-destino-cultural-de-manabi/>

Disclaimer/Publisher's Note

The statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of MDPI and/or the editor(s). MDPI and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions, or products referred to in the content.