

Saludos! Greetings!  
from Santiago de  
Okola

Kamisaki!

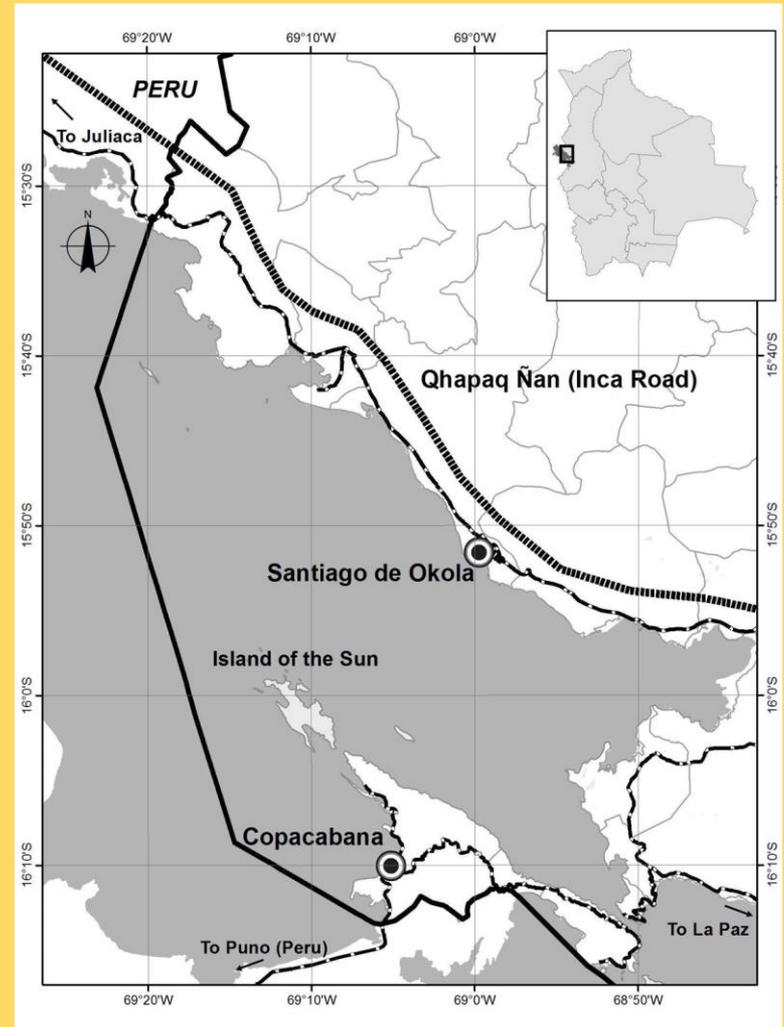


## Experiences and Perspectives from a 12 Year Agrotourism Project in Santiago de Okola, La Paz, Bolivia

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# Santiago de Okola

- Aymara farming and fishing village
- Population ~ 350
- Average age ~ 65
- Languages: Aymara and Spanish
- 3.5 hrs by road to La Paz
- 1.5 hrs by road to Island of the Sun
- Governance - Syndicate and State
- Oldest human remains - Pre-archaic era
- Micro-center of agro-biodiversity (2008)
- Site of Bioersivity International - PROINPA  
Foundation partnership pilot project
- [ASITURSO - Integrated Tourism Association of Santiago de Okola](#) (2008-present)

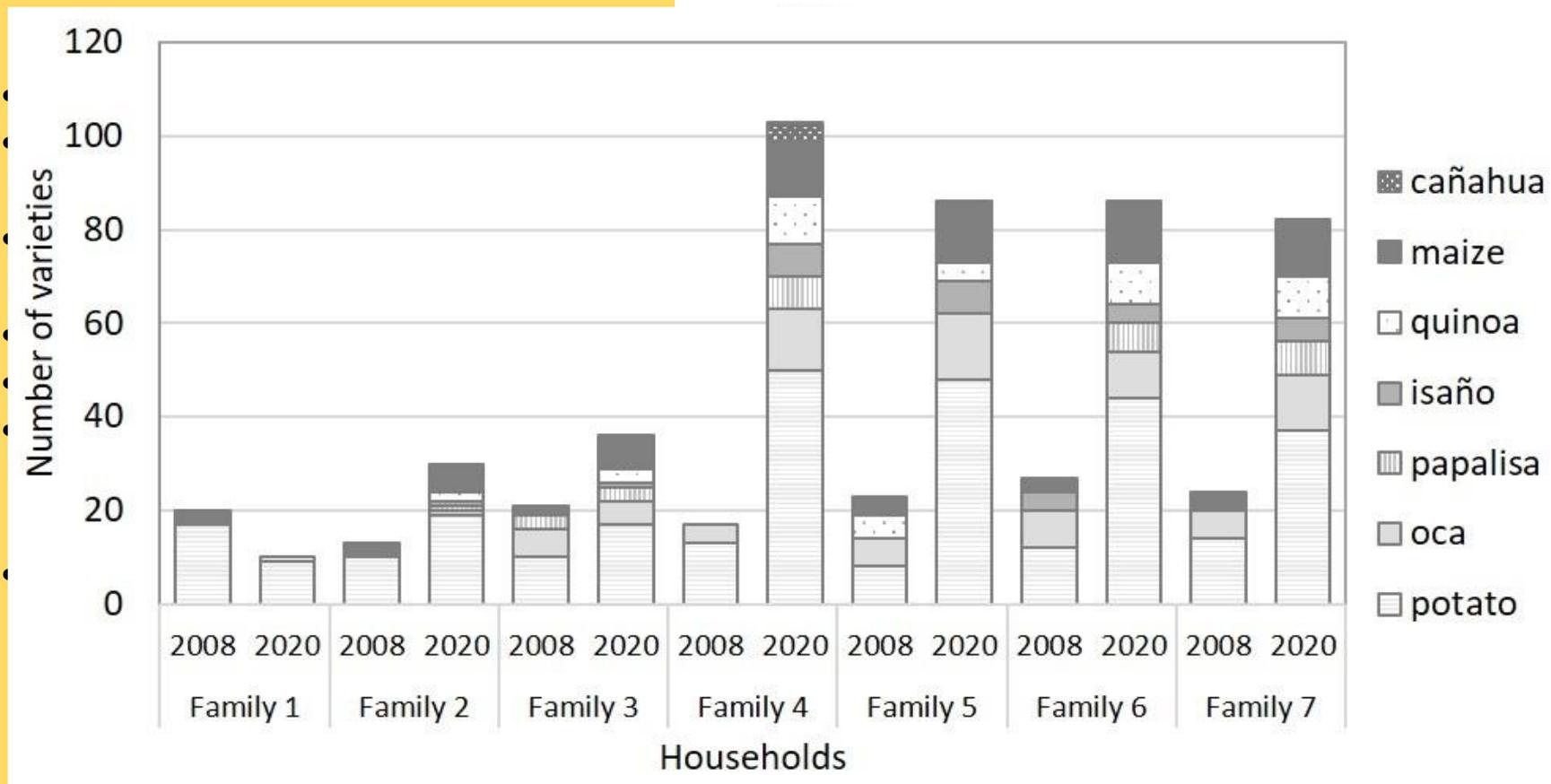


# 2008-2010: Bioversity International NUS-IFAD project



- NUS: Neglected and Underutilized Species
  - Central Andes - agro-biodiversity hotspot
  - Quinoa, cañawa, amaranth
- Action 7.2a: Agro-tourism pilot project
  - Conserve agro-biodiversity
  - Slow migration
  - Generate income
  - Conserve Aymara cuisine and culture
- Assessment of 4 communities
  - Community acceptance
  - High-agrobiodiversity
  - Access
  - Attractions
- Selection of Santiago de Okola

Book Chapter: Agritourism and conservation of neglected and underutilized native Andean crops in Santiago de Okola, Bolivia



# 2010 - 2020: A Decade of Learning and Growing



- Identification of participating families
- Organization type, name (ASITURSO)
- Statutes and by-laws
- Education and training
- Preparation of homestays
  - Agrobiodiversity menus
  - Housing, bathrooms
- Activities
  - Walks
  - Hikes
  - Workshops
- Financial management
- Community relations
- Infrastructure improvements
  - Housing, trails
- Promotion, marketing
- Community-tour operator relations
- Quality management & improvement

## After nearly 15 years of work in Santiago de Okola, we can say that.....

- Our work required deep knowledge of many of the “layers” of both natural and cultural systems, layers that we knew to look for and others that appeared over time
- Many mistakes were made and resources were not always used in the most effective ways
- Opportunity costs are high for local people to shift focus and engage in new activities and include significant social risks
- Internal social dynamics and personal relationships (for example, family and community histories) are rarely accessible to external development workers however they have an enormous influence on project outcomes
- The long term relationship between La Paz on Foot and the community has been essential for the project’s survival
- While additional data remains to be collected, we can currently say that until the pandemic hit the project has reached the original goals laid out in 2008: conservation of neglected and underutilized crop varieties, increased income for project participants and reduced rural to urban migration. **Keep track of your data!**
- Risk management for sustainable development projects must now consider cataclysmic events and the possibility of such events can be important (forecasted) layers
- Plan for unexpected [outcomes!](#) + church paintings



**Bienvenido / Welcome**

¡Bienvenidos al Dragón Dormido! Este lugar tiene mucho valor para la gente de Santiago de Okola y alberga plantas, animales y sitios arqueológicos únicos. Les invitamos a subir el Dragón y disfrutar de sus paisajes hermosos y vistas espectaculares.

Welcome to the Sleeping Dragon! This place holds special values for the people of Santiago de Okola and protects unique plants, animals and archeological sites. We invite you to ascend the Dragon and enjoy its beautiful landscapes and magnificent views.

**Reglas / Rules**

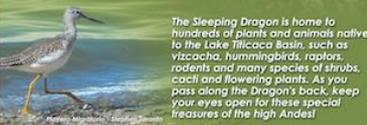
- Mantener los senderos indicados
  - Respetar la vida silvestre
  - Cuidar las plantas y flores
  - No dejar ningún tipo de basura
  - No pintar graffiti en el Dragón Dormido
- Please stay on the marked trails
  - Please respect wildlife
  - Please do not pick flowers or plants
  - Please remove any waste you produce
  - Please do not paint graffiti on the Sleeping Dragon

- Sanaqaqañi Jani mistusa thakhila
- Unjaña uywanaka
- Jani l'agaramil pangaranaka
- Jani jaythamakkil l'unanaka
- Jani piltanani qillqamil



**Ecología / Ecology**

Este lugar alberga cientos de plantas y animales nativos del Lago Titicaca, como vizcachas, colibríes, rapaces, roedores y muchas especies de arbustos, cactus y otras plantas. A medida que pasan a lo largo de la espalda del Dragón, mantienen los ojos bien abiertos para estos tesoros especiales de los Andes!



The Sleeping Dragon is home to hundreds of plants and animals native to the Lake Titicaca Basin, such as vizcachas, hummingbirds, raptors, rodents and many species of shrubs, cacti and flowering plants. As you pass along the Dragon's back, keep your eyes open for these special treasures of the high Andes!

**Arqueología / Archeology**

Los seres humanos han vivido aquí por más que 8,000 años. Evidencia de actividades humanas pre-históricas incluye caminos precolombinos, cerámicas, terrazas agrícolas, sitios rituales y arte rupestre.



People have lived around the Sleeping Dragon for at least 8,000 years. Evidence of pre-historic human activity includes pre-Columbian roads, ceramics, agricultural terraces, ritual sites and rock art.



**Usos actuales / Current Uses**

El Dragón Dormido es parte de la vida cotidiana de los habitantes de esta región. Nos gusta ascender el Dragón, cosechar plantas medicinales, pastorear nuestros animales y practicar rituales ancestrales en sus sitios sagrados.



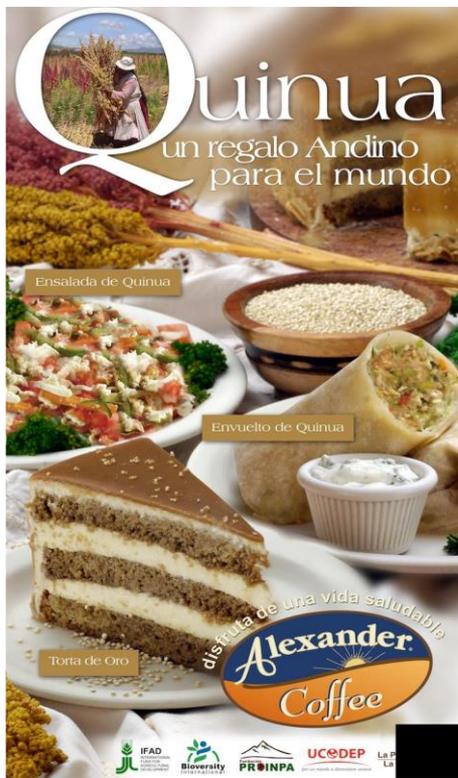
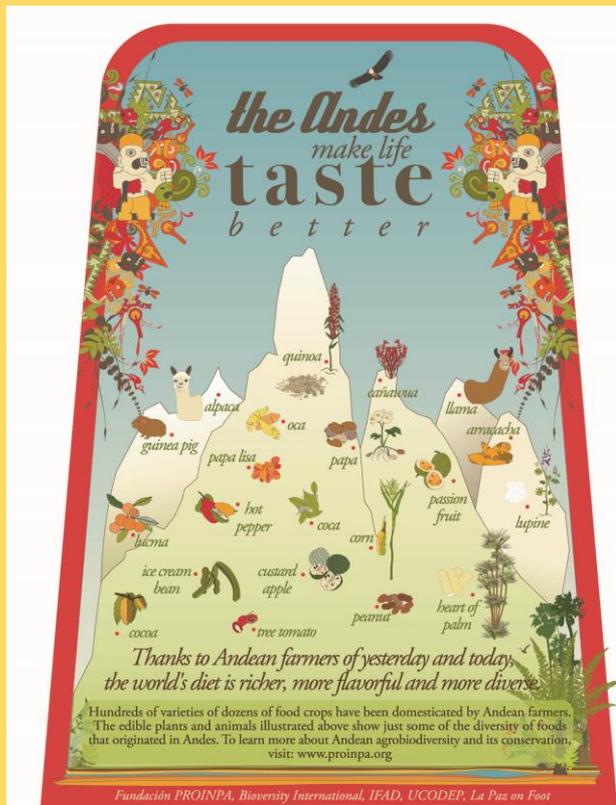
The Sleeping Dragon is a part of everyday life for the residents of this region. We enjoy ascending the Dragon to have a picnic, we harvest medicinal plants and firewood, pasture our animals here and practice ancient rituals on its sacred sites.

**Linea de tiempo de Actividades Humanas en el Lago Titicaca - Timeline of Human Activities on Lake Titicaca**

Año/Year	8000 - 2000 a.C.	2000 a.C. - 300 a.C.	300 a.C. - 1100 a.C.	1100 a.C. - 1300 a.C.	1300 a.C. - 1600 a.C.	1600 a.C. - 1826 a.C.	1826 a.C. - 2010 a.C.	2010 a.C. - PRESENTE
¿Quiénes estaban aquí?								
Who Was Here?								
Periodo/Period	PRE-CERAMICO	FORMATIVO	TIWANAKU	PACAJES	INCA	COLONIAL	REPUBLICANO	EST. PLURINACIONAL

**Agrodeciimientos**  
El letrero y el sistema de senderos del Dragón Dormido han sido pintados gracias a Prince Bernhard Nature Fund, Marika Alvarez, Sergio Colla, Einar Colla, Josef Reichberger y Stephen Tarranto. La Paz on Foot, Tomas Larrea, Larrea Larrea, Sebastian Quenno, Mike Larrea, Walker Larrea, Tootona Quenno, Isabel Quenno, Jose Quenno y Silvio Quenno (ASTURUCO). Los mapas fueron creados por Einar Colla y el letrero ha sido creado por Gustavo Mallareda (Grafica Siglo XXI) y Stephen Tarranto. La Paz on Foot, Diciembre 2013.

# 2012-2014: Corollary Projects



- **Prince Bernhard Fund for Nature**
  - Inventories
    - Archeological sites
    - Flora & fauna
    - Useful plants
    - Ritual sites
  - Trail system
- **Oxfam - Italy (in partnership with Bioversity)**
  - Organizational strengthening
  - Formalization of statutes and by-laws
  - Continued education and training
  - Community Museum Phase 1
  - Promotion, marketing
  - Complementary projects
    - Alexander Coffee Andean Grains Project
    - The Andes Make Like Taste Better
- **Total Budget: \$15,000 USD**

# 2013 - 2018: Tierras Nativas-The Cultural Conservancy



- **Tierras Nativas - The Cultural Conservancy**
  - Organizational strengthening
  - Research projects
  - Community museum improvements
  - Community center design & construction
  - Promotion
  - Pest & soil management
- **Total Budget: \$35,000 USD**



# 2018-2020: Recent “developments”

- New leadership in ASITURSO
- “Incamino” project
  - Focus on Qhapaq Ñan
  - Improvements to homestays, community center
  - UNDP, Italian Cooperation, others
- Increase in national tourists + impacts
- New tourism actors in community
- Higher end tourism operators in region
- Participation in [Red Tusoco](#), regional network of Community-based Tourism initiatives
- Coronavirus!
- **Chapter in Bioversity book on NUS experiences**

