

Lucila Morelos Páez
Claudia Marcela Delgado
Edisa Lozada
Laura Mesa Herrera

SOLID WASTE IN THE BEACHES OF SPRATT BIGHT IN SAN ANDRES ISLAND

I - IDEATION

Analysis of the issue:

Today, San Andres is an island with many activities, globally positioned as one of the most important tourism and commercial destination in the Caribbean region. This situation allows (besides a lot of people entering the territory), the entry of a significant amount of waste associated with tourism, which directly impact on beach areas; this situation combined with the lack of environmental awareness, both of tourists and residents who use the beaches as well, and limitations in infrastructure and equipment related with suitable sites for solid waste disposal, has been causing a gradual deterioration in the quality of our beaches as a result of the accumulation of solid waste.

Description of the idea:

The main purpose of the idea is to implement a **low cost and high impact mechanism to allow a significant reduction of solid waste disposal** on the beaches of Spratt Bight in San Andres Island, all these by using trained personnel who will act as "beachkeepers" who will sensitize users about the importance of proper waste disposal in these fragile environmental ecosystems, on the other hand, this personnel will work as supplier of biodegradable bags that will be used for the collection of waste generated during the use of the beach areas.

Also, this trained personnel will apply innovative pedagogical measures, to alert users who throw (or anyone who are leaving or forgotten) waste on the beaches, such as environmental **sanctions** or loudy alerts by using whistles or silent alerts through mimes; all these actions will alert people close to the user who is disposing solid waste incorrectly committing the person to take the waste out of the

beach areas and ensuring not to repeat inadequate waste disposal. (for example people can take with them, as sanction, two or more empty bottles or empty cans)

The people who take away from the island these solid wastes, will be awarded at the airport with a symbolic detail (medal, button, pin) for contributing to the final disposal of waste off the island.

Complementing all the above mentioned, including education, sensitization, environmental sanctions and pedagogical awareness, biodegradable bags delivered to users; there will be necessary to install waste containers in specific beach areas and at strategic points to allow users have suitable sites for the collection of waste resulting from the use of the beaches.

In this education and sensitization process, the island teenagers could be included. One of the main requirements for young students in the upper grades in schools, is to do 80 hours of social service. This focal group is between 15 to 18 years old. The proposal is that they do their 80 hours working on the beaches, especially in the busiest beaches of island making some campaigns for the collecting of garbage produced. They could use the the solid wastes making a classification of them. For instance the students could use the pop cans for a productive process or for sell it.

Finally, it is important to take in mind the concepts

Reuse: It is about use wastes over again, after cleaning, for its original, similar or innovating function.

Recycle: It consists in processing in order to transform used materials into raw material to manufacture the same products or new products.

Alternative Ideas:

- Increase the number of actual containers for garbage collection
- Incorporate specialized companies in waste collection in beach areas.
- Using for solid waste disposal half-buried containers directly on beach areas, reducing the impact on the landscape.

II - INTERVENTION

Key methodology to start with:

- **Incorporate key stakeholders** such as commerce, hotels in the area, public and private companies, who can provide funds for recruiting and training personnel that will work as sensitizer and beachkeeper.
- **Incorporate publicity and merchandising strategies** to incorporate in biodegradable bags and other items used (whistles, clothing) by beachkeepers in the exercise of their activity.

Obstacles to be surmounted:

- Low environmental awareness and low beach users participation
- Low participation of key stakeholders such as commerce, hotels, among others.

Relevants stakeholders and potential allies:

Stores, hotels in the area, public and private entities, vendors, tourist services (tents) and users, among others.

III - IMPLEMENTATION

How to win supporters:

- Showing the advantages and environmental benefits of increasing social awareness about the proper disposal of solid waste.
- Showing the benefit of having clean beaches as it would increase tourism and therefore the economy.
 - Recognition of participants from government agencies, for the contribution to the benefit of the environment
 - Improving the quality of beaches through reducing the amount of waste that is been actually disposed.

Effort and resources required (labor, money, institutions contributions):

- Negotiations with government and private institutions to achieve the necessary economic resources
- Human resources for training and capacitation
- Management sites for training activities
- human resources to carry out awareness-raising activities, such as "beachkeepers"
- Involve biodegradable bags suppliers
- Contact suppliers for purchase of working tools
- Involve the local chamber of commerce, including also hotels, shops, among others

Estimated time to achieve the goal:

(1) one year.

IV - IMPACT

The best measure of success, potential for replication and scaling:

The activities for this project described before, can be used to replicate this project in similar beaches, especially in those where there are many tourist and locals visitors, where the impact of improper solid waste can be greater and the "beachkeepers" can achieve the goals included in this Project. The simplicity of this proposal makes it easy to be implemented, however this implementation depends on the commitment between organizations to achieve the goals involved in the project.

Occurrence of unforeseen or unintended effects:

- Side effects from the use of biodegradable bags, which are not consistent with the environmental policies of the authorities. Frecuencias insuficientes en la recolección de residuos que produzcan tiempos de acopio mayores a lo esperado.
 - Low acceptance by users of the beaches.
 - Limitations on the available resources to implement the project.

Indirect effects (future generations) and the balance between benefits and detriments to different social groups:

- **Improve environmental awareness** regarding the collection of waste on the beaches
- **Reduction in the negative impacts of the local flora and fauna** located in beach areas
- With this project we guarantee a very important improvement in the **life quality for residents of the island**, as a result of lower volumes of solid waste to be disposed at the “Magic Garden” dump.

V - FINALLY

The aplicability of this project is not far away fome the actual reality of the main beaches in the island of San Andres. Therefore we can cualify (in a scale of 1 to 10) the aplicability of this project **with 9**, as we believe that it is very likely his execution by the simplicity of the activities and the great impact it can cause on the beaches and the users of them. However we do not give the score of 10 because as in every activity we can find opponents and lack of commitment of the different organizations that could be involved in the Project. Nevertheless we are confident that the success of this kind of project depends almost in the jointed work and effort of all the organizations eventually involved.