

# PAQUERA-TAMBOR MARINE AREA OF RESPONSIBLE FISHERIES



VOLUNTEERING PROGRAM IN LABORS TO ADAPT TO CLIMATE  
CHANGE IN THE COMMUNITIES OF PAQUERA AND TAMBOR

VOLUNTEER MANUAL

January, 2018



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## I- General Information

### Nicoya Peninsula



The Nicoya Peninsula is the country's largest peninsula, and is located South of Costa Rica's North Coast, on the outer side of the Nicoya Gulf across from the city of Puntarenas. Here are some of the most isolated and beautiful beaches of Costa Rica. This rugged peninsula is one of the most popular destinations, especially for those looking to spend a long time under the sun. Here you can find places such as impressive waterfalls, some of the Pacific coast's best surf spots and magnificent places to watch the sunset. You can also find from picturesque rural towns to world known wonderful reserves and five-star hotels.

### Paquera-Tambor Marine Area of Responsible Fisheries (AMPR for its acronym in Spanish).

The communities, organizations, tourist chambers, local governments and projects associated with AMPR, have assumed the challenge of making fisheries a sustainable activity where the recovery of the fishing resource, emphasis on the ecosystem, the environmental improvement of the maritime ecosystem, a productive diversity, a better quality of life for the fishermen and their families, the participation of all the partners in this project appropriately following what has been established in the Fisheries Management Plan, getting ready to face the effects of the climate change, and the search for unity with other productive groups and area institutions in order to improve the development conditions of the District of Paquera and the community of Tambor are the fundamental axis for development and strengthening AMPR.



It is important to point out that, since one of the initial tasks is to have order in the house, we are working in strengthening the basis, improving the administrative and organizational level of the groups, establishing the work goals of our Local Governing Committee which administrates AMPR and to generate the local conditions to improve the storage, health and harmlessness of the products from fisheries and aquaculture, to allow our project to reach a better business level for the commercialization of said products.

The great support given to the project by entities such as BID-GOLFOS-Marviva, Municipal Councils of the Paquera and Cobano Districts, the fishermen organizations, the Punta Cuchillo Oyster project, the Tourist Chambers of Paquera and Tambor, Incopesca and Turismo Curu, must be highlighted. And now, as we start one of the most interesting phases, you can help us make a difference.

## II- Information for the Rural Community Volunteer

### You can make the difference!

We need volunteers from all over the world who want to come and help us make the difference for the community of Paquera through the coordination of AMPR and the Paquera Divers Association.

### When can you come and volunteer with us?

You can come to do volunteer work with us any time of the year.

### Your work as a Volunteer.

Volunteers will have the possibility of working in labors to Adapt to Climate Change in the rural communities of Paquera and Tambor. There are four main labors that are performed all year long:

- Agricultural activities in micro farms
- Monitoring the catches brought to the distribution centers of the AMPR
- Maintenance activities in local reserves (Curu Reserve and the Reserve of the Technical Professional Highschool of Paquera)
- Coordinating and participating in labors to Adapt to Climate Change performed by the local water supplier (Asada)

We also support other efforts in both communities that are seasonal and will depend on your skills and certifications (PADI/NAUI). These activities include

- Monitoring Artificial and Natural Reefs
- Monitoring and reforestation of mangroves
- Monitoring and planting coral
- Monitoring cetaceans
- Marketing the activities and achievements of AMPR
- Practicing English with the host families

For more information on each activity, see section **IV – Volunteer Work Plan**.

### A day in the life of a Volunteer.

There is no such thing as a typical day in the life of a volunteer; as the Rural Community Volunteer project, your abilities, and the time of the year when you visit, will give a unique experience, specifically prepared for your visit.

As a matter of fact, you could come the following month and you will find a completely different work plan; however, what you can expect is to have a 6-hour 6-day program for each week.

- Here you can have an idea of what your day will be:
- Your day will start between **5:00 AM and 7:00 AM** with breakfast at your host home
- Immediately you shall leave for the **programmed activity**

- Sometime between **11:00 AM and 1:00 PM** will be lunch time, either at your host home or from a lunch box if you are far from Paquera
- During the afternoon you will continue your **programmed activity** or you might have a completely different afternoon activity.
- Sometime between **3:00 PM and 5:00 PM** your afternoon activity will end.
- The rest of the day will be **free** for you to enjoy in Paquera, with your host family or exploring the zone.
- Between **7:00 PM and 9:00 PM** will be dinner time at your host home.

### III- Your stay in Paquera

#### Language

English and Spanish are the official languages of the Rural Community Volunteer project. Although we have a bilingual coordinator, this experience will give you the opportunity to develop and/or practice your abilities with the Spanish language and/or share your knowledge of English with the local leader, your host family and your fellow workers in the activities of your Work Plan.

#### Weather

With its warm climate during most of the year, the Nicoya Peninsula is known for its good climatic conditions. Temperature ranges between 22 and 32 Celsius during the year, with an average 26 Celsius and 28 Celsius during April (the warmest month). Rainy season goes from May thru November, and from December thru April are the dry months.

#### Food



The host families prepare every day the typical Costa Rican food. In Costa Rica we eat a lot of rice and beans (either separately or in a mix called “Gallo Pinto”), tropical fruit, and vegetables starchy or not. Meat (chicken, fish, pig, etc.) eggs, cheese and other grains such as lentils and chick peas are also a part of the ingredients used in Costa Rican cuisine. Vegans or vegetarians will find our cuisine satisfactory. We will need you to give us potential food restrictions that you have in order to try to accommodate them as

much as possible.

#### Money, costs and expenses

Costa Rican currency is the Colon. When this manual was written, the exchange rate was \$1.00 = 575 colones. No matter your country of origin, is always convenient to “think” in dollars and assume that \$1.00 = 500 colones, or \$2.00 = 1,000 colones.

Let us remind you and all transportation expenses to get all the way to Paquera are yours; this includes international transportation and local transportation to and from Paquera. Any other expenses that you wish to make during your volunteer time such as phone calls, internet, snacks, souvenirs, tours, etc. will be yours also. During your stay your transportation to the volunteer activities of your Work Plan will be covered by the project.

The daily cost of the volunteer work, which includes three meals (breakfast, lunch and dinner) will be given to you separately when you receive this manual. You may also check the daily cost at the website of the Corcovado Foundation, under the Paquera Rural Community Volunteer program.

## How do you get to Paquera?

There are several transportation options to get to Paquera:

- **By air:** You can fly from the Juan Santamaria International Airport to the Tambor municipal airstrip and from there take a taxi to Paquera. Keep in mind that during the rainy season, airports can close at any moment during the day due to climatic conditions and you could face hours and/or days delays.
- **By land with your own car:** You can rent a car in San Jose and drive to the Tambor Ferryboat (Ferry Naviera Tambor – <http://www.navieratambor.com>). Once you have crossed the Nicoya Gulf and land at the Paquera wharf, it will be a 10-minute drive to Paquera. There is also the option of taking the Playa Naranjo Ferryboat (<http://www.coonatramar.com>) but keep in mind that it will be a 45-minute drive on a dirt road from Naranjo to Paquera. If you decide to rent a car, remember that during the rainy season, or from May thru November, many rural roads are closed due to river floods and/or landslides. During that time of the year the best option is to use the Tambor Ferryboat.
- **By land through public transportation:** You can ride the bus from San Jose to Puntarenas (<http://www.eupsacr.com>). The bus station in San Jose is located in Barrio Los Angeles, between Ave. 10 and 12, Calle (street) 16. Once you arrive in Puntarenas you can walk or take a cab to the Tambor Ferryboat wharf. Once you have crossed the Nicoya Gulf and arrive at the Paquera wharf, you can either take a cab or ride the bus to Paquera.



## Health and Security

Our recommendation is that you should have all your regular vaccines up to date before traveling to Costa Rica or any other international destination. The health and security of our volunteer friends is our priority.

Generally speaking, Costa Rica is a safe country, for sure is the safest one in Central America and many other Latin American countries. There is crime, there are thieves also that will be interested in your valuables and that is the reason why you should take the same security measures and precautions that you would take in any other cities of the world.

Regarding health, it is important that you keep in mind that Costa Rica is a tropical country and approximately 25% of its territory is protected. We have more than 615 animal species per each 10,000 square kilometers; this fact has the country on the list of countries with largest biodiversity specially birds and insects.

This also means that the following insects and animals are found in Costa Rica:

- Mosquitoes and many other blood sucking insects, thus we recommend that you bring a large supply of a good insect repellent.
- Snakes: are not easily found in populated areas, but more common in rural areas. Our recommendation is to always be alert and know that, although most of the snakes found in Costa Rica are not poisonous, some are very venomous.

Remember that Costa Rica has many beaches, some are very developed and other are pristine. Many beaches have dangerous undercurrents, so it is always wise to ask local people what to expect in whatever beach you are going to visit.

## **Recommended Things to Bring**

### **Documents**

- ✧ Passport valid for at least 6 months. Visa in those cases when is needed.
- ✧ A photo or photocopy of your passport, biographical information page, in case it gets lost.

### **Clothing**

- ✧ Appropriate clothing for a hot and humid climate. Try to avoid bringing denim pants (jeans), it is preferable to bring clothes that dry fast
- ✧ Enough underwear and socks
- ✧ Bathing suit
- ✧ Sun glasses and a cap or hat

### **Shoes**

- ✧ Sandals for when you are in town
- ✧ Beach shoes that can get wet
- ✧ We do not recommend that you bring new shoes, it is always better to bring old comfy shoes

### **Other**

- ✧ Personal toiletry
- ✧ First aid kit
- ✧ Sun block and mosquito repellent
- ✧ A bottle for water or juices

**Watch**

- ✧ A small backpack for those volunteer activities where you want to take food, snacks, extra clothes.
- ✧ Ziploc or dry bags in case your Work Plan includes aquatic monitoring activities
- ✧ Money for personal expenses

## IV- Plan de Trabajo del Voluntario

### Main 1: Agricultural Activities in Micro Farm

- a) Help in agricultural activities: You will be a member of our team that helps small farmers who, to adjust to climatic change, have started micro farms in order to not depend solely on dive-fishing or activities. These small farmers are all from the Paquera community and they do all the agricultural activities themselves, from sowing to selling their products in the local agricultures' markets/fairs.

### Main 2: Monitoring the catches brought to the distribution centers of the AMPR

- a) Monitoring catches: You will be a member of our team in charge of on-site auditing and monitoring the daily catches brought by fishermen to the distribution centers of the AMPR; one in Paquera and one in Tambor. This activity is key: distribution centers treat fairly all fishermen and, at the same time, monitor that catches meet minimum sizes which helps achieve a reasonable usage of marine resources.
- b) Data Entry: You will be a member of our team in charge of entering the data taken of the daily catch registry (from invoices to the data base).
- c) The members of the distribution centers have a great desire to learn more computer programs such as Excel or Word. If you know these programs quite well, you will help increase their skills by teaching them.

### Main 3: Maintenance activities in Local Reserves (Curu Reserve and the Reserve of the Technical Professional Highschool of Paquera)

- a) Curu Wildlife Refuge: You will be a member of our team that works supporting and/or maintaining the beaches of the Curu Wildlife Refuge which have been given a Blue Flag status.
- b) Reserve of Paquera Professional Technical Highschool: You will be a member of our team that works supporting and/or maintaining this reserve and productive alternatives they have to both support themselves and which are part of the students curriculum:
  - Limes micro farm
  - Tilapia production ponds
  - Chickens micro farm

### Main 4: Coordinating and participating in labors to Adapt to Climate Change performed by the local water supplier (Asada)

- a) The local water supplier (Asada) is a key organization to adequately manage fresh water resources in the community. This organization has already obtained two key certifications in the country which they must maintain: Sello de Calidad Sanitaria and Programa Bandera Azul Ecológica (<https://www.aya.go.cr/laboratorio/selloCalidad/Paginas/default.aspx> y <https://banderaazulecologica.org/> respectively). You will be a member of our team which

coordinates and participates in the activities this organization must do on a yearly basis to maintain both certifications.

### **Seasonal 5: Monitoring Artificial and Natural Reefs (will depend on a programmed monitor trip between December and April):**

- a) Reef monitoring: You will be a member of the team which monitors artificial reefs where, depending on your qualifications, you may:
  - a. Actively participate in the monitoring if you have an international diver certification, or
  - b. Participate as helper in the logistics of monitoring (helping divers, helping with the equipment, etc.)
  
- b) Data Entry: You will be a member of our team in charge of typing the data of the reef monitoring activity.

### **Seasonal 6: Monitoring and Reforestation of Mangroves (will depend on a programmed monitor or reforestation activity):**

- a) Reforestation: You will be a member of our support team in the management of the mangrove nursery where you can help:
  - a. Directly at the nursery in building or maintenance labor
  - b. Taking data at the nursery
  - c. Reforesting
  
- b) Monitoring the natural regeneration of the mangrove: You will be a member of our support team in inspecting mangrove areas where you can help:
  - a. Directly in the inspection of the mangrove areas
  - b. Capturing data
  
- b) Data Entry: You will be a part of our team in charge of typing the data taken at the mangrove nursery or in the mangrove area.

### **Seasonal 7: Monitoring Corals (will depend on a programmed monitor trip between December and April)**

- a) Coral planting: You will be a member of our coral planting team where, depending on your qualifications, you can:
  - a. Actively participate in the planting provided you have a valid international diver certification, or participate as helper in the logistics of monitoring (helping divers, helping with the equipment, etc.)
  - b. Typing data: You will be a part of our team in charge of typing the data taken during the coral planting.
  
- b) Data Entry: You will be a part of our team in charge of typing the data taken during the monitoring of the corals.

### **Seasonal 8: Monitoring Cetaceans (will depend on a programmed monitor trip between April and August)**

- a) Programmed monitoring: You will be a member of our team in charge of monitoring cetaceans, with departures programmed near the community of Paquera (departing from Curu or from Cabo Blanco).
- b) Accompany a Tour: You will be a member of our team in charge of cetacean monitoring in tours programmed by Curu Tourism. Depending on your financial capacity, that is if you can afford transportation, you may also be a member of the team in charge of monitoring cetaceans in tours leaving from Tambor or Montezuma.

### **Skill based 9: Marketing the activities and achievements of the AMPR (will depend on your web content management skills)**

- a) Marketing of the AMPR's activities: Depending on your abilities of editing content and photos, you will be a member of our team in charge publicizing, in different websites and social networks, the activities carried out by AMPR.

### **Skill based 10: English Practice (will depend on your English skills)**

- a) Practice English with the participants in the project: You will share your English knowledge with all the participants of the Rural Community Volunteer Project, and in this way, will help us to be friendlier and to communicate better with our volunteers.