“Facing today’s greatest threats, the climate crisis, loss of biodiversity and social inequality, it is essential not to lose hope that our actions can make a difference. Only through collective efforts we can rebuild a better world for all.”

Paola Ruffo Ruffo
Board of directors chairwoman
PRESENTATION

An essential feature of life on earth is water...

Water is a determinant component of all human activity. Without it we cannot survive, if we don't care for it and manage it sustainably, much or perhaps all of what we want to do in the future will not be possible. We have overexploited the scarce reserves of almost all the aquifers in Baja California Sur. We have already contaminated and wasted it. Climate change is indicating that much of what we assumed with respect to the availability of water and our strategies and decisions for its use are no longer viable. We are running out of water and we are not prepared to face such a simple notion. We have already taken the first step – identifying the problem. The second step was identifying solutions and the third is implementing them.

At Niparajá water is a part of all our programs; potable, salty and contaminated, it transversely joins and connects what we do. The solutions are available to every inhabitant. Collectively we are turning water into a nonrenewable resource. We are all responsible and we don't have much time left to resolve this enormous problem.

It is time for us to commit to change our behavior and induce the changes necessary to protect and care for the most valuable resource we have.

Water does not belong to us – we are its custodians.

Enrique Hambleton von Borstel
Founding member
OUR WORK

Our mission is to conserve the natural heritage and promote sustainable development in Baja California Sur.

To attain this mission, we promote the creation and implementation of conservation instruments, we encourage a society that uses its resources sustainably, and we generate models that show the value of conservation.

These objectives come to life through our four programs:

- LAND CONSERVATION
- MARINE CONSERVATION
- SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES
- WATER AND CITY
LAND CONSERVATION

This Program is the oldest and within it is the purchase of land for conservation, the first of our initiatives. We work to protect priority terrestrial and coastal habitats and promote sustainable development of communities. We promote the existence of strong conservation instruments and an adequate governance of natural resources. In order to achieve this, we collaborate with rural communities, researchers, local producers, the three levels of government and other civil society organizations.

This program’s geographical range of work extends throughout La Giganta and Guadalupe Sierras and the Coastal Corridor between Loreto and La Paz.

We chose these work areas for their great environmental, social and cultural value. Sierras La Giganta and Guadalupe capture the water used in one out of two BCS localities.

The Sierras and the Loreto-La Paz Coastal Corridor protect landscapes and unique sites: oases, glens, cliffs, streams, ranches, lagoons, beaches and small communities that seem oblivious to what is happening in other geographies. Careful observation highlights threats to the viability of this environment and its communities. With that said, the natural resources are still in a good state of conservation and it is the opportune time to prevent further deterioration.
CONSERVATION IN HARMONY WITH PRODUCTIVE DEVELOPMENT.

EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF EL PORTEZUELO NATURAL RESERVE.

We continue with the EFFECTIVE SURVEILLANCE. We ensure an adequate conservation state of the natural resources in El Portezuelo Natural Reserve by our FAUNA MONITORING in Sierra La Giganta's southern region. Their presence indicates a good state of habitat conservation.

We managed to produce more than 1,000 PALO FIERRO AND 9,000 PALO BLANCO PLANTS, in community nurseries installed in the southern region of Sierra La Giganta.

We have a REGIONAL WOOD PROCESSING CENTER which sustainably produces more than 30 different items.

We generated and collected information from the flora studies that are housed in El Portezuelo Natural Reserve.

We continue bighorn sheep, bura deer and puma in Sierra La Giganta's southern region. Their presence indicates a good state of habitat conservation.

We managed to generate a regional model that promotes CONSERVATION and the sustainable use of natural resources IN HARMONY WITH PRODUCTIVE DEVELOPMENT.

We collaborated with Producer Associations to open the 4TH “HECHO EN RANCHO” STORE in Cabo Pulmo.
MARINE CONSERVATION

It is well known that one of the greatest challenges of humanity today is to implement effective policies for the conservation of natural resources. Natural Protected Areas are today one of the most efficient instruments of conservation of socio-environmental systems in the world. Well managed and with participatory governance mechanisms, they can generate significant benefits that promote the sustainable development of the communities that inhabit or depend on them.

In the Marine Conservation Program we recognize that conservation, in itself, is a social and political process that falls within the scope of social construction, so we elaborate and implement joint and participatory strategies hand in hand with users and communities that directly benefit from the environmental services of protected areas; but we also collaborate with other sectors such as academia, organized civil society and the authorities of the three levels of government.

We concentrate our efforts in the Marine Zone of the Archipelago of Espíritu Santo National Park, Flora and Fauna Protection Area of Balandra and Cabo Pulmo National Park; their areas of influence and the communities that depend directly on them.
We helped promote and attain the candidacy of Cabo Pulmo National Park to the IUCN Green List of protected and conserved areas.

We continue to generate information on biophysical indicators from the Marine Zone of the Archipelago of Espíritu Santo National Park to be included on its Management Program’s update.

In collaboration with RED Sustainable Travel we concluded the business strengthening program and evaluated the service quality in most of the local diving and snorkeling companies in Cabo Pulmo.

We culminated the 2nd phase of the tourism management project in Cabo Pulmo in collaboration with community actors, allies and authorities, while ensuring its continuity with the participation of new partners such as IMPLAN, FITURCA and Conanp Central Offices.

We concluded water and land tenure studies in Cabo Pulmo and we socialized them by generating new community strategies to address these problems.

We have strengthened the management and the conservation of 68,231 ha of natural protected areas we work on.
SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES

Fishing is a complex activity in Mexico and the world. Baja California Sur is the state with the largest coastlines in the country where the social, economic and cultural relevance of this activity is reflected in a deep and ancient fishing tradition on which thousands of South Californians depend.

The Loreto-La Paz Corridor offers unique opportunities to implement sustainable fishing schemes focused on the well-being of communities. The Corridor represents what the Gulf of California was more than 50 years ago: few inhabitants in small isolated communities who take advantage of resources by hand. Fisheries are still at good levels of conservation. More than 80 commercial species of scale support the economy of more than 600 people distributed in eleven small communities, the largest of them of 260 inhabitants. Day by day there is a greater presence of fishermen with different techniques and without knowledge of the area, which generates overexploitation of resources. There are few regulations to prevent it and surveillance mechanisms are still insufficient to enforce existing regulations.

In this program we seek to create the conditions for the Corridor communities to be prosperous and resilient and to have tools to use marine resources responsibly. Advances in the Corridor have inspired and been replicated in other regions of Mexico.

Our work can only be achieved through partnerships. That’s why we work with an ever-expanding network of partners, including other civil society organizations, government institutions and researchers. At the center of these alliances are the communities of the Corridor, fishermen and cooperatives, who with their daily work show that it is possible to transition to sustainable fishing.
OUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

We continue to operate Baja California Sur’s Fishing Refugia Network and
PARTICIPATED IN MODIFYING NOM-049

that defines guidelines for establishing, evaluating and
renewing Mexico’s Fishing Refugia Zones.

The Loreto - La Paz Corridor’s FIP (Fishery Improvement Projects)

ACHIEVED B QUALIFICATION

on Fishery progress rank showing evidence of its fisheries progress towards sustainability.

We developed content and structure for the
NATIONAL STRENGTHENING PROGRAM OF FISHING ORGANIZATIONS

which will be used during 2022 in at least 6 fishing organizations.

We carried out TWO UNDERWATER MONITORING IN FISHING REFUGIA ZONES

with the participation of local partners from the Loreto - La Paz Corridor, allowing us to continue generating scientific information to evaluate its performance.

We strengthen the CORRIDOR’S COMMUNITIES PARTICIPATION

in fishing management allowing them to use their marine resources more responsibly.

In collaboration with EDF Mexico, Humint and INAPESCA, we promoted COMMERCIAL FISHING CONCESSIONS

and elaborated a procedures manual aimed for fishermen interested in using this tool.

We got the Corridor Fishing Management Committee TO HOLD SESSIONS DURING PANDEMIC LOCKDOWN,

to maintain a space of dialogue and the commitment of CONAPESCA to the region.
WATER AND CITY

We promote and create synergies between different actors to formulate solid strategies to preserve the natural resources that sustain life in the city of La Paz. We focus our efforts on water governance issues and in public spaces. We look for the existence of adequate management and conservation actions to ensure the watershed’s vital services.

Baja California Sur is the Mexican state in which it rains the least. To its great challenge of having quality water for all, we must add other factors such as population growth, overexploitation of the La Paz aquifer, its contamination by saline intrusion and the progressive affectation of recharging areas. Addressing these challenges is fundamental to our well-being.

Our quality of life is also defined by the existence of public spaces for recreation, coexistence and contact with nature. Balandra is one of the best examples. In the Water and City Program we work to achieve efficient management of water and public spaces and to promote active and informed participation of the society.
In collaboration with EPI Mexico, we adapted face to face educational workshops onto

**VIRTUAL WORKSHOPS.**

These will be integrated into SEP BCS school curricula and in www.agua.org.mx community.

We are leading the design of the La Paz Watershed Integrated Management Action Plan (PAMIC, for its syllables in Spanish), the first one that includes

**UNDERGROUND MODELING OF THE AQUIFER**

and an ecosystemic approach.

Thanks to the alliance with EPI Mexico and Urbanería, we built

**TWO URBAN OASES IN LA PAZ**

with three resting modules and an absorption capacity of

**201,000 LITERS OF RAIN PER YEAR.**

We participated in the

**WATER PUBLIC MANAGEMENT AT THE MUNICIPAL LEVEL**

with collective actions to improve the ecosystemic services the watershed offers and to improve life quality for La Paz inhabitants.

In collaboration with UABCS, we carried out

**TWO WATER QUALITY MONITORING ANALYSIS.**

For the first time one of them was from domestic intakes.

We developed a virtual workshop to

**CO-DIAGRAM LA PAZ WATER SYSTEM**

with representatives from seven sectors of society: tourism, academia, business, government, industry, primary production and civil society.
A proverb says that if you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together. In Niparajá, our objective is to go far and we have deep conviction that any change in our society requires collaboration and network construction by alliances.

During 2021, as we have done since 1990, we have worked intensely accompanied and accompanying a large number of people, organizations and communities. We thank all of them for their confidence, which we hope to see renewed in the coming years.

We still have a lot to accomplished and we can only continue with the generous support from our partners, donors, friends, supporters and critics. Hereafter we name those who had a fundamental role for the realization of our work during 2021:

- Alumbra Innovations Foundation
- National Forestry Commission
- FAO-GEF (Project: from fishhook to plate)
- Mexican Fund for the Conservation of Nature
- Gonzalo Rio Arronte Foundation
- Soriana Foundation
- International Community Foundation
- Marisla Foundation
- Paul M. Angell Family Foundation
- Resources Legacy Fund
- The David and Lucile Packard Foundation
- The National Science Foundation
- The Nature Conservancy
- The Sandler Family International Fund
- The Walton Family Foundation
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