

SURF BREAK CONSERVATION

An innovative approach to
coastal marine conservation





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coastal marine conservation**

**Peru is the only country in the world with a legal system
specifically designed to protect surf breaks.**

Thanks to the citizen-driven “Ley de Rompientes” (Surf Break Law) and our campaign Hazla por tu Ola, we’ve already protected 47 iconic surf breaks along our coast.

This is more than ocean protection — it’s an innovative strategy that blends marine conservation, culture, recreation, and activism to safeguard ecosystems and coastal heritage.

THE CHALLENGE

With over 2,500 km of coastline, Peru's ocean hosts unique ecosystems and world-famous waves like Chicama and Pico Alto.

Although more than 150,000 people surf in the country and the activity boosts local economies, many surf breaks are increasingly threatened by urban sprawl, port infrastructure, and inadequate coastal planning.

When a wave is lost or affected, it's not just a surf spot that disappears—it disrupts marine ecosystems, weakens cultural identity, and harms local economies that rely on coastal tourism and recreation.



A GLOBAL OPPORTUNITY

With more than 35 million surfers worldwide and an annual economic impact of USD 61 billion, surfing is a powerful platform for conservation.

Surfers love the ocean, understand its threats, and are ready to act to protect it. Tapping into this emotional connection is key: people protect what they love.



WHY SURF CONSERVATION?

Surf breaks are more than just waves—they are coastal marine ecosystems with ecological, social, cultural, and economic value.

- **Biodiversity conservation**

Over 75% of protected surf breaks are located in areas rich in biodiversity. Their conservation helps protect marine species and key ecosystems in the fight against climate change.

- **Sustainable livelihoods**

Surfing, artisanal fishing, and regenerative tourism generate income for communities, while strengthening local economies.

- **Human well-being**

Contact with the ocean improves physical and mental health, especially among young people. Surf breaks are spaces of connection, recreation, and community resilience.



OUR STRATEGIES

1. Legal protection of surf breaks

We safeguard iconic waves that are part of Peru's natural and cultural heritage by securing their legal status under national law.

2. Surf ecosystem management

We work hand-in-hand with local communities to care for the broader coastal ecosystems surrounding each surf break, promoting sustainable use and resilience.

3. International scaling of the peruvian approach

We share our tools, lessons, and impact to inspire and support citizen-led wave protection efforts in other countries.



1. LEGAL PROTECTION OF SURF BREAKS

We promote the official registration of surf breaks in Peru's National Register of Surf Breaks, managed by the Peruvian Navy. This legal status ensures that no other rights can be granted within the surf zone, securing long-term protection.

To achieve this, we develop technical dossiers that cost between USD 2,500 - 6,500. That's why we created the Hazla por tu Ola campaign, which mobilizes citizens and companies to fund wave protection.

When a surf break is legally protected, key marine habitats for coastal biodiversity are also conserved.





47 surf breaks

protected along the
Peruvian coast

+ 200,000

dollars raised under a
100% charity scheme to
cover technical files costs.

**+ 1,000
individuals**

and 50 companies
involved



Our goal:
**Protect
100 waves
by 2030**



Protected Surf breaks	Nº of Waves	Protected Area (ha)
Chicama	1	130.1
Huanchaco	1	82.8
Costa Verde	4	187.8
Cabo Blanco	3	22.1
Punta Rocas	1	38.6
Punta Hermosa	2	29.0
Punta Hermosa 2	6	100.0
La Herradura	1	6.9
Cerro Azul	1	11.7
San Pedro	2	22.8
Lobitos	5	46.5
Pacasmayo	1	117.3
San Bartolo	6	72.8
Puerto Viejo	1	25.7
Bermejo	1	18.6
Playa Grande	1	12.0
Máncora	2	16.7
Órganos	3	32.8
El Ñuro	1	11.5
Bahia Blanca	1	2.6
Negritos	3	325.3
Puémape	1	296.9
TOTAL	48	1610.50 ha

2. SURF ECOSYSTEM MANAGEMENT

Protecting a surf break also means protecting the ecosystem around it. We work with local communities and governments to ensure integrated management of coastal areas.

Key actions:

- **Empowering** communities, local leaders and surf schools.
- **Creating** public-private partnerships to improve coastal infrastructure.
- **Monitoring** coastal ecosystems and enabling local emergency responses.



3 local organizations

leading efforts in northern Peru

3 municipalities

working with us to improve
beaches and public spaces
in protected surf areas



3.

INTERNATIONAL SCALING OF THE PERUVIAN APPROACH

**Peru's surf break protection model
has gained international attention.**

We share tools and experiences with organizations and governments in other countries so they can adapt and implement this strategy.

**Countries exploring wave
protection frameworks:**

- Chile
- Ecuador
- Panama

For more information visit:
www.protegetusolas.com



PARTNERSHIPS

Collaborative work allows us to reach shared goals and scale our impact:

International partners:



National partners:



Local partners:





PERUVIAN SOCIETY FOR ENVIRONMENTAL LAW

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We defend nature and our right to a healthy environment

The **Peruvian Society for Environmental Law** is a nonprofit civil organization founded in 1986. Its mission is educational and scientific, focused on the protection of the environment, the promotion of the right to a healthy environment, and the sustainable use of natural resources for their conservation, proper management, and improvement.

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