



International Surfing Symposium

in association with
Global Wave Conference

Currumbin RSL
13 - 17 March 2017

- ABOUT
- MINISTER'S WELCOME
- PROGRAM
- SPEAKERS
- CALL FOR PAPERS
- SOCIAL EVENTS
- REGISTRATION
- PRIZES
- SPONSORSHIP
- SPONSORS
- VENUE
- ACCOMMODATION
- COMMITTEE
- PRESS RELEASES

Academic Session Speakers



Gregory Borne
Director, Plymouth
Sustainability and Surfing
Research Group



Robert Hales
Director, Griffith Centre for
Sustainable Enterprise



Javier Leon
Lecturer in Physical Geography,
Program Coordinator
Environmental Science,
University of the Sunshine
Coast



Don Munro
President, Lennox-Ballina
(Le-Ba) Boardriders



Ed Atkin
Director, eCoast,
New Zealand



Rebecca Olive
Lecturer, University of
Queensland



Lindsay Lyon
Managing Director &
CEO, Shark Shield



Samuel Wills
Assistant Professor,
University of Sydney



Guibert Christophe
Vice-Dean of Research,
University of Angers, France



Naomi Edwards
PhD Student,
Griffith University



Marcos Bosquetti
Professor of Management,
Federal University of Santa
Catarina, Brazil



Dario Nardini
PhD Student, University
of Milan-Bicocca



World Surfing Reserve Guarda do Embaú Brazil: challenges and opportunities for a developing country

Marcos Abilio Bosquetti¹, Marco Aurelio Gungel², Jess Ponting³, Mariana Bastiani⁴

Guarda do Embaú, southern Brazil was voted in 2016 as the next World Surfing Reserve (WSR) and will join the prestigious network of other WSR's starting with Malibu, USA; Ericeira, Portugal; Mainly-Freshwater, Australia; Santa Cruz, USA; Huanchaco, Peru; Bahia de Todos Santos, Mexico; Punta de Lobos, Chile; and the 8th WSR Gold Coast, Australia. World Surfing Reserves is a program that serves as a global model to preserve outstanding waves, surf zones and surrounding environments around the world. It is an initiative launched by Save The Waves Coalition in 2009 in conjunction with National Surfing Reserves Australia and other partners.

This paper presents the findings of a retrospective longitudinal study embracing 4 consecutive years of submission for Guarda do Embaú WSR - from its first application in 2013 to its final approval as the 9th WSR in 2016. This qualitative study aims to understand the development of this initiative through the lenses of stakeholder theory and points out the challenges and opportunities that a WSR represents to a surf village in a developing country. It highlights the results of face to face semi structured in-depth interviews conducted with six members of the Guarda do Embaú's WSR Special Committee and a comparative content analysis of the four application reports submitted in 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016 to the World Governing Body of World Surfing Reserve's Save the Waves Coalition and its International Vision Council. Submission for a Guarda do Embaú WSR is an initiative of the Association of Surfing and Preservation of Guarda do Embaú (ASPG) founded in 1987 for local surfers to protect the Guarda's surf zone and its surrounding environment when its world-class wave that breaks consistently year-round started attracting surfers from Brazil and abroad.

The comparative content analysis of the four application reports shows that among the four criteria developed by Save the Waves Coalition and its International Vision Council to evaluate and choose WSR candidates: i) quality and consistency of the waves, ii) environmental characteristics, iii) culture and surf history, and iv) capacity and local support – the fourth criteria has been the critical one in the pathway towards its approval as WSR. The first application report in 2013 had only 8 letters of support while the last application report in 2016 presented 23 letters of support coming from both primary and secondary stakeholders including Santa Catarina Government, at both state and local level. Among the challenges to implement WSR in a developing country like Brazil the interviewees point out: government's short-term view and weak institutional support; lack of a city master plan; poor infrastructure investments; and lack of tourism destination management.

The international recognition of Guarda do Embaú as a World Surfing Reserve will empower and legitimate the local community's demand for building and implementing a sustainable master plan to address potential coastal developments and tourism exploration as well as water quality issues such as sewage and agricultural pesticides threatening the Guarda do Embaú's waves and its stunning natural environment, including the Da Madre River, an intact estuary ecosystem, and a mature sand dune system. As the first WSR in Brazil it holds the promise to deepen the commitment to coastal activism and protection amongst the Brazilian surf world and policy-makers. Suggestions for further research includes a comparative study of WSR's initiatives between developing and developed countries as well as studies of WSR's best practices of planning and implementation of conservation programs to contribute to the knowledge building on sustainability and surfing, which has emerged as a promising field of study and research due to its potential contributions for both the environment and society.

(1) Federal University of Santa Catarina, Brazil; (2) Association of Surf & Preservation Guarda do Embau, Brazil; (3) San Diego State University, USA; (4) University of Wollongong, Australia