

## Environmental Volunteering and awareness as a contribution to the conservation of Spanish National Parks 2020



MINISTERIO  
PARA LA TRANSICIÓN ECOLÓGICA  
Y EL RETO DEMOGRÁFICO

ORGANISMO  
AUTÓNOMO  
PARQUES  
NACIONALES



Year: **2021/22** Country: **Spain**

Action Area:  
**National Parks**

Action Line:  
**Volunteering & Conservation**

Funding:  
**Autonomous Body of  
National Parks**

Main supports:  
**Doñana NP, Atlantic Islands of Galicia  
Maritime-Terrestrial NP and  
Sierra de Guadarrama NP**



### PROJECT SUMMARY:

The inefficient generation and management of waste has become a critical problem in recent decades. With a strong impact on terrestrial, freshwater and marine habitats and ecosystems, they affect a large number of living beings. Litter dispersion is so wide that it also impacts protected areas that preserve ecosystem services and fundamental species. Education and training are essential tools to minimize the problem and raise awareness among the population, promoting changes in habits in order to reduce waste generation, improve product design (ecodesign), as well as waste management systems and recycling. This program is carried out in the Doñana National Park, the Atlantic Islands of Galicia Maritime-Terrestrial National Park and the Sierra de Guadarrama National Park, where it has support from the managing entities, as well as from local organizations. In the case of Guadarrama, we are in contact with the Montes de Valsain Center and the National Center for Environmental Education (CENEAM).

The specific aims and objectives of this program are:

- Strengthen the knowledge and awareness of volunteers about socio-environmental problems that affect National Parks and promote their role as multipliers of awareness in society.
- Raise awareness among the population living in the vicinity of national parks or visitors about their essential functions and the values they protect, as well as about socio-environmental problems that affect them .
- Promote the environmental involvement and solidarity of civil society and the Volunteer Program in National Parks.
- Promote changes in habits towards a more sustainable development and a more circular economy, seeking a socioeconomic development in the surroundings of the national parks as demonstrable examples of sustainability.

To achieve the objectives, volunteer training activities are carried out on the problem of waste and on sampling and monitoring methods (Doñana and the Atlantic Islands), as well as clean-ups on beaches (Doñana and the Atlantic Islands), clean-ups on trekking paths, collection and characterization of micro-waste (Guadarrama), raising awareness among attendants to Romerías (pilgrimages), visitors and local entities (Doñana), and improvement of the accessibility of water points for amphibians (Guadarrama). With all these activities, we want to help to contribute to social and environmental awareness in order to maintain the status of conservation of National Parks, seeking the active involvement of civil society.