

Environmental Volunteering and awareness as a contribution to the conservation of Spanish National Parks 2021



MINISTERIO
PARA LA TRANSICIÓN ECOLÓGICA
Y EL RETO DEMOGRÁFICO

ORGANISMO
AUTÓNOMO
PARQUES
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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:

One of the main problems of the current economic system is the generation of huge amounts of waste and its inefficient management. So much waste that it has become a critical issue globally. This waste, especially plastics and microplastics, has a strong impact on both terrestrial and aquatic habitats and ecosystems, affecting a large number of living beings and at different levels of the food web, even in protected areas.

Within the program, the Doñana National Park, the Atlantic Islands of Galicia Maritime-Terrestrial National Park and the Sierra de Guadarrama National Park have been selected to contribute with the support of volunteers to social and environmental awareness and to maintain their status of conservation, promoting a more balanced and circular development of society.

The aims and objectives of this project are:

- Strengthen the knowledge and awareness of volunteers about socio-environmental problems that affect national parks and their areas of influence and promote their role as multipliers of awareness on civil society.
- Raise awareness among the population living in the vicinity of national parks or who visit them about their functions and the values and resources they protect, as well as about socio-environmental problems that affect them and that must be minimized with the collaboration of civil society.
- Promote the environmental involvement and solidarity of civil society in the Volunteer Program in National Parks.
- Promote changes in habits for a more sustainable development and a more circular economy, seeking socioeconomic development in the surroundings of the national parks as a demonstrable example of sustainability.

To achieve them, 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 cleaning of beaches (Doñana and the Atlantic Islands), collection and characterization of micro-waste (Guadarrama), raising awareness among attendants at Romerías (pilgrimages), visitors and local entities (Doñana), improvement of accessibility of water points for amphibians (Guadarrama) and training for the recognition and record of fauna trails (Guadarrama). These activities are aimed at contributing to the conservation and knowledge of National Parks as examples of compatibility between development and conservation of habitats and species.