

# Destruction at all co[a]sts 2006

July 2006

Greenpeace report about  
the Spanish coast situation



**GREENPEACE**

## **DESTRUCTION AT ALL CO[A]STS 2006**

*Greenpeace report about the Spanish coast situation*

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## **The coastline has no one to protect it**

*As every year, Greenpeace is again publishing its diagnostic about the situation of the coastline. One more year we travelled along the 8,000 kilometres of the Spanish coast point by point; we compiled and analysed the information published throughout the whole year and have studied dozens of cases. The facts do not show big changes to the actual situation in relation to previous years. Between general sorrow and lack of political action to protect it, the coastline continues to slip through our hands.*

*Once again it is essential to remind of the environmental, social and economic importance of the coastal area for our country. The adequate preservation of the coasts is a key factor for a number of economic sectors. Fishing, for example, cannot be sustained without preservation of the marine ecosystems; tourism depends largely on an adequate environmental preservation, and thereafter.*

*Why, we ask, there being a broad consensus among citizens about the high degree of degradation of our coastal line, no administration takes on seriously the need to put a stop to so much outrage. The best news in the last months was of the proliferation of local Platforms that are dedicated to stopping dozens of cement projects that hover over our coast. Few times they receive a positive answer from the politicians who are responsible but, being small strongholds of unremitting fighters, those groups strive to protect the territory, even suffering many times attacks and disqualifications. They have managed notable accomplishments, such as, for example, that the European Parliament show deep concern about the Valencian Community urban legislation. We have no doubt that there will be many more.*

*While the territory is being destroyed, those in charge of the several public offices continue to discuss who takes the responsibility. Eventually, it will not matter who is managing a crushed and impoverished territory from the search for short-term benefits. However, citizens are increasingly and strongly demanding for well-preserved coasts and for the protection of the coastline. Does anyone pick up the gauntlet?*

Juan López de Uralde  
Executive Director of Greenpeace Spain

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# Intro duc tion

The problems faced by our 8,000 kilometers of coastline repeat every year: an organization of the territory where bricks take precedence over everything else, poorly planned tourism development with an infinite occupied horizon, serious coastal erosion problems that have no solution, planning of the means of transportation based on unlimited expansion, destruction of protected natural areas, non-compliance with the environmental legislation and serious contamination problems due to limited purification of industrial and urban waste water.

The report was closed on May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2006; so as for today, there may be new developing projects, sports ports, golf courses, or relevant contamination episodes that would have been left out of the report. Unfortunately, due to the speed of the aggressions to our coasts, surely more than one will be not reflected.

This year there is a surprising exponential growth of attacks against the coast's integrity, an area that little by little handles a larger population load, and all of the interrelated pressures.

The largest of all of them is, certainly, the urbanization pressure. Perhaps, this year the report should be named "Corruption at all co(a)sts", in view of the multiple cases of urban corruption and money laundering that came to public light recently. In April, there were 50,000 million Euros in 500 bills in Spain –a fourth of the bills issued by the European Central Bank–, a true record that has motivated the launch of an investigation by the Tax Agency. Urban speculation on the coast is undoubtedly one of the phenomena that most contributes to this situation.

The efforts to introduce some good sense in the irrationality which has developed on the

coast are scarce, and quickly neutralized by the large economic pressures surrounding the actions carried out on the seashore.

It is essential to revert the destructive tendency that is destroying our coasts.

The measures the Government is preparing to stop the municipal corruption, the renewal of the counter-tendency to defect pact and the new Land Act are good news, but the solution to the current urban situation will not solely be achieved with reforms to the urban legislation and the organization of the territory, even though these are essential.

It is necessary that all of the political forces, who have little credibility regarding this subject nowadays, rework their proposals and speeches and include aspects such as the need to organize the territory based on the respect for the natural spaces, a transparent municipal management, participative and open to the society, the relentless fight against corruption, the application of measures to control and sanctions, and the demand of responsibilities of those whom are stubborn and confuse public office with their personal benefit. It is essential to consolidate a new territorial culture.

# Ana lysis

of the situation  
on the spanish  
coasts



Sole economic benefits informed by the tourism industry during more than four decades have left the Spanish coastline in a delicate state due to the degradation of the physical environment and to the exhaustion of natural resources.

In this analysis of the situation on the coasts, there is a review of the main pressure indicators suffered by the Spanish coastline: urbanization, tourism, actions on the coastline, ports, and contamination.

When analysing the main variables and the information gathered in this report, taking into account the lack of access to all of the data in all the autonomous communities, we can make specific mention about the Valencian Community and Andalusia as those coastline regions that least take care of their coastline, especially in the sections related to the building of new houses, golf courses, and sports ports. In third place is the Region of Murcia, which adds a very troublesome characteristic to the previous indicators: the total disdain for the protected natural spaces, whether they are on the coastline or not. Galicia follows, due to the high number of projects initiated this year, through which it can be observed that the bad practices observed in the Mediterranean have been “imported”.

From the rest of the autonomous communities, Cantabria, the Balearic Islands, and the Canary Islands demonstrate lower amounts of aggression to their coastline, but many of the presented projects will inflict serious damage to their coast. Lastly, Catalonia, Euskadi, and Asturias would be situated in the lower part of the chart, with positive measures for their coastline reflected in their corresponding legislation, but with some chapters, such as the excessive number of sports moorings or the contamination problems to their coastal waters threatening the integrity of their coasts.



In the Valencian coastline there has been as much construction for the last five years as in its entire history.

## Urbanization

The free housing data checked by the College of Architects in Spain reveals that, during the last five years, 2,630,000 houses have been started or built, 812,000 of them in 2005 (breaking its sixth consecutive record). It is calculated that there are 124,000 million Euros in loans buried in real state activities. The consultant DBK estimates that in 2006, 700,000 houses will start construction.

The coast's unyielding occupation has not been stopped by the evident limitation shown in the exhaustion of available land, but it has been extended towards the interior. The coastal strip is now 50 kilometers wide due to the thousands of real state promotions and the hundreds of kilometers of new highways to connect them with the desired beach. Those municipalities that keep the coastlines "undeveloped", as the town councils like to call them, opt for catching up in the shortest possible period of time.

According to the Housing Ministry's 2004 *Statistics Atlas of Urban Areas in Spain*, the purchase of second residences increased 28% between 1991 and 2001, an increase that is higher than that for main residences (22%). The average of second residences built on the Mediterranean coastline is 35%, a number

that increases in certain points. The second residences are mainly concentrated in areas such as Roses or L'Escala, where they are higher than 70%, and Torrevieja, Gandía, Dènia or Xàvia where they exceed 50% of the built houses.

The building and urban promotion sector leads the town councils to think only in the short term, in the immediate benefits that have nothing to do with general interest. Nevertheless, the experience should have already taught us that urban developments must take into account the long-term vision, otherwise any economic, social and environmental balance is impossible.

The current urban situation shows a great lack of respect for the natural environment. Where is the sustainable development idea that may conciliate urban development with environmental protection, the cultural heritage, and the quality of life? Urbanism's daily reality takes us further away from the European guidelines that bet on new forms of democratic government and the prudent management of the territory and the natural resources.

Spain, the eighth economic power of the world, is in the 23<sup>rd</sup> place of 159 countries in the 2005 Perception Index of Corruption prepared by the International Transparency Organization. The urban corruption and the illegalities related to



Buildings in Corralejo, Fuerteventura.

local financing through the sale of public land are the main reasons for this situation, which our coasts are not free of.

The corruption typology has a common factor in many cases: mayors and councilors that confuse the management of public resources with personal interests in coastline municipalities, where tourism is an excuse for the illegal enrichment of only a few “privileged” ones.

But they are not the only guilty ones. The large promoters continuously have a larger influence on the town councils, and the reclassifications outside of the development projects are the order of the day. It is almost impossible to quantify the millions of square meters to which the town councils have labeled as building land.

The different urban scandals experienced this year, among which stand out the cases of Marbella (Málaga) and Orihuela (Alicante), as well as the sentence of the European institutions to the urban model of the Valencian Community and many other ones where the environmental protection figures are used to “mask” the destruction, and the building of protected housing as a destruction alibi, must serve to open a serene and sincere in-depth debate about the territorial and urban dynamics that are finishing the coastline as a reference identity and as a heritage and cultural legacy.

The creation of a Public Prosecutor’s Office specialized in corruption, urbanism, and environment this year will permit cracking down on offences, known by everybody, but ignored by the courts until now. In April, the Ministers Council also agreed upon the creation of 25 new spaces of this type distributed among different legal institutions.

The town councils are not only determined to transfer the public resources to the builders and promoters on occasions, but also they embark in the defense of illegal buildings, spending large quantities of the Treasury. The political parties and the administrations should demand responsibility from the managers that waste money when there area sentences against them. Cases like the ses Covetes, in Mallorca, where the town council has spent half a million Euros defending 67 illegally built apartments in sea-land public domain, must carry out a more strict control of the municipalities’ performance.

Likewise, there should be a cracking down on the building companies who are accused of resuming paralyzed works by the different High Courts. Greenpeace suggests the creation of black lists with these companies so this information is available for all of the municipalities and the citizens.

The town councils’ financing problems can not cover the illegalities. Their difficulties must be



The driest areas of the Iberian peninsula are becoming abundant in Golf courses.

approached from different areas. The modifications in the Autonomy Statutes should approach this question if they want to solve the serious organization problems that the territory is facing.

### Golf: The “green” speculation

While Spain suffers the worst drought in the last fifty years, and the Environmental Ministry constantly makes announcements about the decrease of the water reservoirs and the measures to save water consumption, Andalucía, Murcia and the Valencian Community are determined in becoming 18, 27, and even 36-hole greens.

The number of golf courses planned in the coastline deeply contrasts with the low level of penetration of this sport in the Spanish (barely 0.6%) and European (1.1% plays golf) populations. Therefore, it is about reinforcing the sale of real state products with a powerful tool of reassessment, or speculation, as you wish to call it.

Valencia’s Promoters Federation has warned that building a golf course without related housing is not profitable. 80% of the golf courses planned to 2010 is related to the building of a residential complex. A house in a “resort” with “green” costs up to 40% more

than in another one without these facilities. On an average, a golf course’s annual water consumption of 700,000 m<sup>3</sup> is equivalent to the water consumption of a population of 15,000 in a year.

As regards this, the Autonomous Communities ensure that the golf courses are irrigated with purified water, but a simple glance at the situation of the water treatment plants on our coastlines negates this argument.

Even that way, the Autonomous Communities, specially the Mediterranean ones, are devoted to obtaining water for the golf courses while they maintain a public speech about the water needs for agriculture. False reports assuring water from desalting plants that do not exist, and destruction of protected natural spaces to locate golf courses are only samples of the disdain for the natural resources shown by some politicians, who should be “fined” each time they use the expression “sustainable development”.

As long as there is no specific legislation regulating golf courses and prohibiting that they are used as a speculation development tool, nothing change.



Buildings on the sand leave a small space for tourists. Mazarrón (Murcia).

## Tourism

The tourism industry in 2004 held 11.4% of the economic wealth produced in our country. The sun and beach segment still is the highest bet for the tourism industry in Spain, taking 50% of the tourism publicity from the Ministry of Industry, Tourism and Commerce.

The occupation figures from last August serve to mask of the tourism season, but they do not hide that this industry, specially the hotel sector, is experiencing a decline for the third consecutive year during the summer months. This time the blame was directed at the increase of the oil price and at the instability of international politics, without wanting to accept that the tourism hen does not lay “golden eggs” anymore.

The change of the tourism habits seems to be consolidated. The figures of the number of tourists in Spain keep increasing each year, but they no longer serve to mask the reality: the tourism industry is continuously less profitable due mainly to an excess of clearly devaluated offers. 70% of the foreign tourists visiting the Spanish coasts state that they do not intend to return, and the main reason stated is the overcrowding of the coast.

There are more sales, but less profitability. According to the Exceltur lobby's calculations,

in 2005 the hotels collected more than hundred million less Euros due to the decrease in the foreign tourists' stay, which was reduced from an average of 12 days to nine.

Despite that, the number of hotels keeps increasing. The Andalusian coastal towns recorded the highest increase of new hotel vacancies between 2000 and 2004. If the national average was 14%, in Andalusia this figure was of 29%. In second place was the Valencian Community with 22%, followed by Canary Islands with 19%. Afterwards, they resort to lowering prices, now extended throughout Europe, or they resort to the “all included” mode, that causes so much damage to all of the services sector developed around the hotels.

The excessive building of second residences constitutes the largest threat to the tourism industry; firstly, due to the competition it embodies, and secondly, due to the related overcrowding on our coasts. The Exceltur report published last year warned that there is land classified as developing on the Spanish coastline in order to triplicate the current urbanization levels.

Tourism can not maintain the same logic of unlimited and indiscriminate growth that it has had in the last 40 years. The destinations considered “mature”, those that are saturated,



Construction of the Barcelona zoo, invading the sea.

must be analyzed from a global and critical perspective that permits learn by those who are not yet mature. This lack of analysis is leading the managers of the coastal spaces that are kept undeveloped to keep betting on the short-term enrichment at the expense of destroying all of the natural resources that may guarantee its future, not taking advantage of the opportunity of re-orienting the development model in more interesting and sustainable directions.

## Actions on the coastline

Throughout the last year, a change in the management made by the Ministry of Environment on the shore, the so-called sea-land public domain, could be observed. This change of attitude has been followed by the announcement of several measures aimed to recover the coast's characteristics. However, certain actions undertaken by the Ministry of Environment reveal that there are powerful political and economic forces that push it to continue with the coast's traditional denaturalization.

Some of the measures are announced but they never come through. The **Manager Plan for the Coast's Sustainability**, presented by the

Coasts' General Manager, José Fernández, a few months ago, states the objective of setting the model to be implemented in the Spanish coast for the next five years. However, the presentation was not followed by any document that demonstrate the criteria to be followed by the ministry. And until these are not clearly established, the actions of the Coasts' General Office will follow the path of partiality that has traditionally marked its work.

And other measures, even expected by all those who believe in the coastline conservation as a future guarantee, do not seem to be in the agenda of the Ministry of Environment. Greenpeace has demanded that the ministry revoke the **changes introduced in the Coasts' Act** by Jaume Matas, camouflaged in the Act of Accompaniment of the 2002 State General Budget.

Proposals such as that the development rules prevail in the franchises and authorizations in the public domain, that only deny the occupation of the coast when it is proven that the proposed activity is harmful, or the building authorization in the spaces left between the buildings located at a distance of less than 20 meters from the seashore limit were introduced in the Coasts Act. The good-intention speeches are useless when there is no work towards the rectification of such serious mistakes.



Machinery working on the sand in Escollera Beach, Cullera (Valencia).

The Ministry of Environment has advanced this year in one of its main tasks: to conclude the **sea-land public domain delimitation**, called demarcation. The delay in finishing this job is creating many situations in which the “owners” of public lands according to the Coasts Act are determined to claim their possession, and in many cases, they are supported by the municipalities.

Another of the projects started this year is the **demolition of illegal buildings** on the coast. The Ministry of Environment has a list of 80 demolitions of stands, hotels, houses, walls, quays, factories, and even a Civil Guard quarter. The initiative is good but, once more, the lack of clear and defined criteria makes us think more in advertising campaigns than in a true and firm will to end the illegalities that smear the coastline.

Last May, a good initiative was made public from the Ministry of Environment: the decision of demanding the owners of areas or building located in unused lands<sup>1</sup> in the sea-land public domain to report their sale so the ministry can exercise the right of first refusal and redemption.

The Ministry of Environment has also developed a **plan for the purchase of lands along the coastline** this year in order to avoid their disappearance, a similar measure to the one

developed on the French coast for 30 years. In order to purchase farms, the minister Cristina Narbona has requested a list of the available lands from the autonomous communities, and currently she has a list of 122 lands. The amount of the plan is 20 million Euros, an insignificant amount if compared with the amount intended for the usual works performed by this ministry on the coastline, such as parking lots, outdoor bars or promenades that further even more in the conquest of any gap of inaccessible coastline for the human being.

The General Office’s budgets that awards some 35 million Euros to artificial regeneration and promenades did not initially include any amount intended for this land acquisition plan. On the contrary, only one of the projects financed by this General Office, the “Improvements in the Barcelona’s olympic beaches consolidation system”, has a total cost of 50 million Euros, which is more than double than that intended for the purchase of lands in the 8,000 kilometers of the Spanish coastline for 2006.

The Ministry of Environment should invest these amounts and direct a much larger quantity to the coastline’s recuperation. The huge amount directed to the recreational-type performances should disappear from the budgets, as well as the protection strip the Coast Law states, and they should articulate the

<sup>1</sup> De-activate: formally or tacitly state that a public domain asset is not to be used or is not for public service.



Port of Algeciras.

bases so these types of works are financed by the town councils or the autonomous communities. Something is being done wrong if the members of the Ministry of Environment are incapable of understanding the importance of the coastline conservation, for later explanation to the citizens.

The **artificial beach regeneration** chapter is one of the great blemishes in the Ministry of Environment's file. The Coasts General Office actions are clearly in non-compliance with the legality so as to obtain sand to regenerate the battered Spanish beaches. Disregarding the protected spaces in the immersed coastline, it tries hard to extract sand, avoiding the necessary environmental evaluation of the projects. It even dares to ignore the European environmental guidelines, disregarding the protection awarded to the Sites of Community Importance (SCI), like in the case of the project to extract 20 million cubic meters of sand from the Málaga coastline, a project that should make this ministry fire the Coasts responsible party.

The artificial beach regenerations are destroying frail and millenary sea habitats in many cases, such as the meadows of *Posidonia oceanica* and other phanerogam plants, and promoting the fast disappearance of the biodiversity they host. Throw sand to cover the serious erosion problem suffered by our

coasts without fighting the causes is not the solution.

*The impact of the climatic change on the coastline areas* report, prepared by different universities for the Ministry of Environment, shows that the sea would have made the beaches recede between 10 and 70 meters on the Spanish coastline in the year 2050 due to the rise of the sea level. The ministry should have this data in their projections, and should develop their actions in accordance with this fact.

## Ports

The port infrastructures, commercial as well as industrial or sports ports, are great destroyers of the coastline, together with urbanization.

The port authorities, in the hands of the Autonomous Governments and the municipality corporations, try hard to turn the more developed port areas into recreational areas and luxury houses (not in vain they are located in a privileged area), and move the port business to macro-ports free of high costs and environmental impacts.

Left to its fate by the Ministry of Public Works, which has prepared legislation so that





Extractions in Port of El Musel, Gijón.

they are determined to search for the financing independently instead of introducing coherence and unified management criteria, each project turns into a mammoth work that “will never arrive safe in port”.

Each proposal exceeds the previous one. New projects like the Pasajes (Gipuzkoa) and Granadilla (Tenerife) have one common factor: they lack an economic justification, and they will cause the destruction of Sites of Community Importance in the 2000 European Nature Network. At the moment, only the citizenship’s complicity with the environmental groups’ accusations has been able to stop projects like the extension of the Ciutadella Port, in Menorca.

Currently, a modification to the Act Nº 48/2003 is being debated in Congress, of the economic and services regime of the general interest ports, which grants great prerogatives to the Port Authorities on the coastline strip where the ports are, the port public domain.

Among the changes proposed by the Ministry of Public Works, the following stand out:

- The incorporation of a new section to Article 47 which enables the port authorities to exercise the power of division that was awarded by Coasts Law to the State Administration, which until now was reserved for

the Ministry of Environment. Thus it opens the door to the assets that the State has transferred to the port entities for their management, which can now converted into each port’s assets.

- The Law’s Article 2 is modified so that the port authorities include the profits coming from the “transfer of their assets” as part of their own resources. The public domain lands that the State had transferred to them for their management are included among them, as shown in the previous point. Therefore, the public domain becomes a common and public asset that the administrations have the obligation to manage as part of a port’s economic resource, that they can transfer, that is, cede or hand over to whom they deem fit.
- Article 96 of the newly proposed text makes reference to the utilization Plan for the port spaces, and it states that it must include the space necessary for the future extensions of each port for a ten-year period. This way, the port authorities are able to claim the sea-land public domain that “they might need in the future”. It is redundant to say that if they reserve coastal lands that afterwards are considered unnecessary, the two previous articles enable the port entities to include these lands in their assets, and may proceed to transfer them.



Extraction and spilling of polluted muds in El Perelló Beach, Valencia.

The Ministry of Environment, incomprehensibly, protects all of these modifications in a document addressed to Greenpeace.

### The sports ports: the “sports” destruction of the coastline

In Spain, there are 321 sports ports that host 106,800 moorings. The highest number of facilities is concentrated in Catalonia (47 ports with 27,208 moorings), the Balearic Islands (68 ports with 19,342 moorings), and the Valencian Community (47 ports with 17,716 moorings). But they are never enough. According to the data gathered in this report, the new projects presented this year to build new ports or to extend the existing ones reach almost a hundred, and they presume the construction of around 40,000 new moorings.

The proliferation of sports ports along the Spanish coastline, whose building permits are awarded by the autonomous communities, lacks the coordination with the environmental administrations and leads to an evident detriment for the coasts, specially for the beaches and natural spaces close to the sports ports.

The managers of these facilities would do good to promote priority measures aimed to protect

the territory and tourism, to put measures against contamination into practice, and to avoid the location of ports at those places where environmental damage is certain. They would be ensuring their own future.

## Contamination

The contamination of the Spanish coasts constitutes a serious problem. In April, the European Commission's decision to start disciplinary proceedings against Spain for the closing of 675 swimming areas was made public. In thirteen years, Spain has closed 68.22% of its internal swimming areas (365 of the initially existing 535), and 14.51% of the coastal zones (310 of the 2136 accounted for). The closings are firstly due to an effort to hide the waters' contamination data, and secondly, to not proceeding with its clean-up.

More seriously is the purification situation of Spain's wastewater. Since the beginning of this year, the European guideline regulating purification states that all populations with more than 2000 inhabitants must purify their wastewater with a secondary treatment that eliminates solids and dissolves organic matter.

But the Spanish coast is far from achieving this goal, unfulfilled by 1079 municipalities



Spillings in Santa Cristina Beach, A Coruña.

throughout Spain, of which 706 lack a wastewater treatment plant. 13% of the wastewater is directly poured into the sea or the coast without purification.

There are few wastewater treatment plants, and many of the existing ones are obsolete or are insufficient for the population they serve.

There are thousands of dumping points along the coastline that are authorized by the autonomous communities.

However, the administrations do not immerse themselves into looking for a solution to this problem, when they should be the first ones in acknowledging that we are poisoning our coasts.

### Situation of the Autonomous Communities

	Towns without wastewater treatment	With insufficient wastewater treatment	Inhabitants without wastewater treatment
Andalusia	212	99	2.924.100
Valencian C.	15	44	681.200
Catalonia	44	16	586.600
Euskadi	6	8	280.500
Asturias	8	5	270.300
Balearic Islands	1	16	174.300
Canary Islands	14	13	164.100
Galicia	8	11	139.600
Murcia	2	2	104.400
Cantabria	9	7	60.300



# An dalu sia

More than 26% of the first kilometer of the Andalusian coast is urbanized according to a report from the Environmental Department, which provides data up to 1999, and is the reason why the urbanized percentages are considerably higher. Some coastal municipalities have more than 60% of their first coastal kilometer urbanized: Torremolinos (73.8%), Fuengirola (73.37%), Málaga (72.3%), Benalmádena (69.3%), Mijas (61.7%), and Cádiz (60.4%).

The Andalusian Board keeps exercising an unsustainable territory model, especially on the coastline. This model is based on a maximizing the use of the developmental possibilities of the spaces with a higher potential of tourism growth, with a strictly economic criteria. They only see the short term, and they forget to introduce environmental and social sustainability criteria.

The preparation of laws to limit urban speculation is reduced to the sole exercise of good intentions, as shown by the modification proposed in the Act of Measures for Protected Housing and Land, or the new Infrastructure Management Plan. These measures remove initially proposed obstacles from the promoters for the building of second residences, limit the creation of protected housing, and give water preference for watering golf courses. The Andalusian Board must withdraw the modifications of this Act.

The building of golf courses related to urban promotions are imposed on the coastline, which are instantly re-valued. The quantity of newly planned courses is simply shocking. Including those being built or in the process of being built, Andalusia intends to reach 210 golf courses. And meanwhile, the Board keeps delaying the Decree for their regulation and limit. They are still in time to decree an delay to the construction of new installations of this type, and to prohibit that they are associated with second residences.

Similarly shocking is the number of Andalusian municipalities, mayors, and councilors that should answer to the Courts regarding alleged offences of corruption, corrupt practice, use of privileged information... Among all of them, the Marbella case stands out.



Constructions in San José, Almería; inside the Cabo de Gata-Níjar Natural Park.

### Marbella: chronicle of an announced corruption

No town council has produced as much money as **Marbella**, but this amount is only comparable with its debt. Of its millionaire budget, only 2% has been invested in the municipality in the last decade. In 2001, the National Audit Office declared the town council in technical bankruptcy.

With 30,000 illegal houses being contested before the Courts, the Andalusian Board announced the withdrawal of the urban responsible parties in the famous Málaga county, governed by an amalgam of defectors, in December of last year.

The three last mayors of Marbella have been at legal and police premises, accused of allowing all types of urban excesses. Jesús Gil and Julián Muñoz were disqualified as mayors, and Marisol Yagüe is currently in jail due the largest municipal scandal to date. And not only the mayors; since 1991, when Gil arrived at the town hall, eight councilors have been convicted, and another 27 accused, plus those recently charged in the “Malaya Operation”, for which the mayor, the Town Council Secretary, the Urban consultant, and a score of other people were arrested between Marbella, Madrid, and Murcia.

The alleged mastermind of the operation, Juan Antonio Roca, ex Urban consultant, amassed the fourth largest fortune in Spain with his illegal dealings. During 14 years, Roca granted illegal urban permits in exchange for money or part of the land; afterwards, he re-classified his part multiplying its value by ten, and he proposed the urbanization of this plot to the next promoter that called at his door, in exchange for 25% to 50% of the resulting real state promotion.

Tourism continues to suffer from the saturation, especially in zones like the Costa del Sol; despite this, they keep authorizing the building of new hotels and second residences.

But the larger problems come with saturation, when the excessive competition inexorably accompanied with the destruction of the territory prevents exploitation of the capacity. Then, they resort to price decreases or to “all included” type packages that lead the sector to ruin.

The Andalusian coastal areas recorded the greatest increase of new hotel vacancies between 2000 and 2004.

The tourist locations that had not succumbed to the urban whirlwind in name of tourism are in a rush to fill their coast with bricks (Huelva, the virgin segments of Cádiz, Granada, and the east of Almería).



Concrete blocks to fight erosion in Cádiz.

In Almería, the urbanization threat suffered by the Cabo de Gata-Níjar Natural Park stands out, where the Andalusian Board tries to modify its legislation to allow the urbanization of 200 hectares of land that has been protected until now. The most shocking case this year has been that of the hotel on the El Algarrobo beach. In November 2005, Greenpeace activists occupied the hotel's illegal works during two nights and three days, demanding their demolition. The action ended when the Ministry of Environment acknowledged that the hotel illegally occupied the Coasts' protected zone. Later, the hotel works were paralyzed in as a precaution by the Judge of Almería's Contentions Court Nº 2 due to an accusation presented by the Salvemos Mojácar y el Levante Almeriense Association [Let's Save Mojácar and the East of Almería Association]. Recently, the Andalusian Board announced the purchase of the lands where the hotel is, and its demolition.

The Andalusian Board must prepare a Coastline Plan that withdraws the urbanization line to 500 meters. Thus, it would be ensure the survival of many coastal segments, where the sand no longer reaches. The Ministry of the Environment's desperate and illegal attempts to provide sand from protected spaces should be completely rejected, and it should look for real solutions to the erosion problems, targeting the causes.

The goal of the Empresa Pública de Puertos de Andalucía (EPPA) [Andalusian Ports Public Company], responsible for the management of the Andalusian sports ports, is to duplicate the current amount of moorings until reaching the 25,000 mark by 2015. The lack of coordination existing among the managers of the sports ports and the environmental administrations results in serious conditions for the coasts, that lead to the disappearance of entire beaches in the most extreme cases. It is essential that the Andalusian Board establishes criteria that prevent the installation of these facilities when there is significant environmental damage. Thus, their own future would be guaranteed.

This year, the Ministry of Environment and the Andalusian Board have signed an agreement to invest 319 million Euros in hydraulic and cleaning up works. Thus, the purification of wastewater on the Andalusian coastline will be promoted, where large municipalities like Algeciras or Nerja do not purify their wastewater, which is dumped into the sea.



Polluting spills in Barbate, Cádiz.

It is incomprehensible that the administrations pay little attention to the contamination which causes appalling episodes, to which vacationers are accustomed, like the daily “scum” of the Málaga beaches, or that named as “UFOS” (unidentified floating objects) which prevent swimming, and come from under capacitated wastewater treatment plants, and reduced purification ability.

Large municipalities of the **Cádiz** coast still do not purify their wastewater. Counties like **Barbate, Conil, Chipiona, Puerto Real, El Puerto de Santa María, Sanlúcar de Barrameda, or Tarifa** have wastewater treatment plants that either do not work, or if they do, are clearly insufficient which means they keep dumping wastewater onto the coastline. Of all of the wastewater dumped onto the coastline in this province, only 4% are reused!

#### Links of interest:

AGADEN: [agaden.e.telefonica.net](http://agaden.e.telefonica.net)

Amigos del Parque Natural de Cabo de Gata-Níjar [Friends of the Cabo de Gata-Níjar Natural Park]:  
[www.cabodegata.net](http://www.cabodegata.net)

Asociación Cultural La Laja [La Laja Cultural Association]:  
[www.lalaja.org](http://www.lalaja.org)

Ecologistas en Acción [Environmentalists in Action]:  
[www.ecologistasenaccion.org](http://www.ecologistasenaccion.org)

Grupo Cóndor [Cóndor Group]:  
[www.grupocondor.org](http://www.grupocondor.org)

Plataforma Pinar de Hierro [Pinar de Hierro Platform]:  
[www.pinardehierro.com](http://www.pinardehierro.com)

Salvemos Mojácar y el Levante Almeriense [Let's Save Mojácar and the East of Almería]:  
[www.salvemosmojacar.org](http://www.salvemosmojacar.org)

Red Andaluza en Defensa del Territorio [Andalusian Network in Defense of the Territory]: [www.radete.org](http://www.radete.org)



## Black spots on the andalusian coastline. *Huelva and Cádiz*



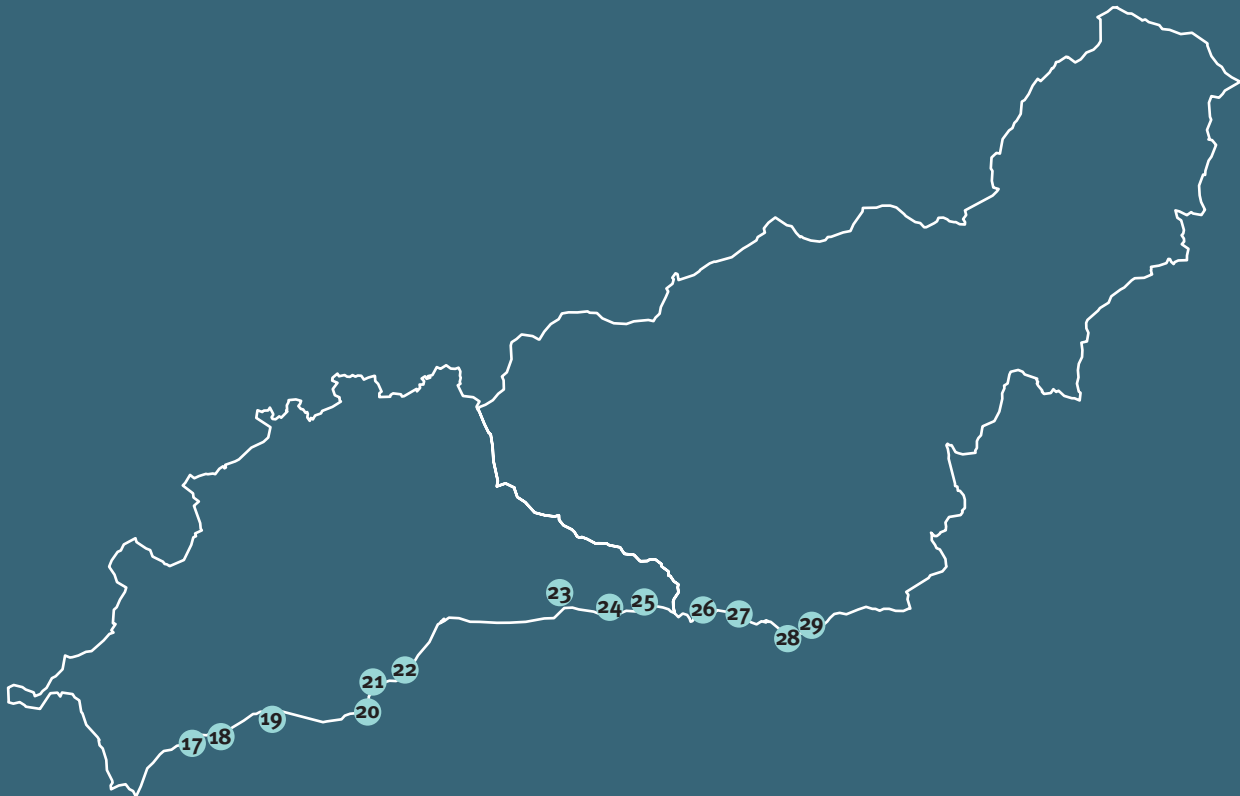
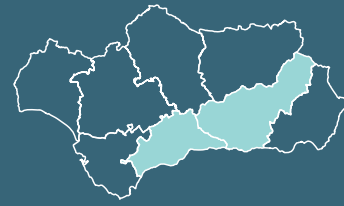
### Huelva

1. Ayamonte. Urbanization of 5 million square meters
2. Isla Cristina. Massive urbanization.
3. Cartaya. Urbanization affecting protected natural spaces
4. Huelva. Contamination in the Odiel's salt marshes.

### Cádiz

5. Sanlúcar de Barrameda. Numerous urban irregularities. 18,000 new houses Incorrect wastewater purification.
6. Chipiona. Sports port that will destroy Micaela beach. Incorrect wastewater purification.
7. Puerto de Santa María. Numerous urban irregularities. Golf course in protected habitat. Sherry Port: urbanization. Incorrect wastewater purification.
8. Puerto Real. Las Aletas: Industrial polygon in sea-land public domain. Incorrect wastewater purification.
9. San Fernando. La Casería lotting plan: 7 16-floor towers that are a few meters from the coastline. Wastewater dumping.
10. Chiclana. PGOU annulled, it presents 40,000 new houses and the legalization of 10,000 more. Project to urbanize Pinar de Hierro.
11. Conil. 5,000 houses (1,000 this year). Incorrect wastewater purification.
12. Vejer. Urbanization of the virgin coastline.
13. Barbate. Building of hotels on the beach's first line. Montenmedio (Barbate-Vejer) Urbanization: built without permits, and with demolition sentence. Now they are trying to legalize it. Wastewater treatment plant in poor state.
14. Tarifa. Atlanterra: around 2000 new houses and a golf course. Port extension. Incorrect wastewater purification.
15. Bahía de Algeciras. Constant episodes of contamination by hydrocarbon dumping.
16. Gibraltar. Urbanization on lands reclaimed from the sea through filling that affects the La Línea de la Concepción coastline dynamics.

## Black spots on the andalusian coastline. *Málaga and Granada*



### **Málaga**

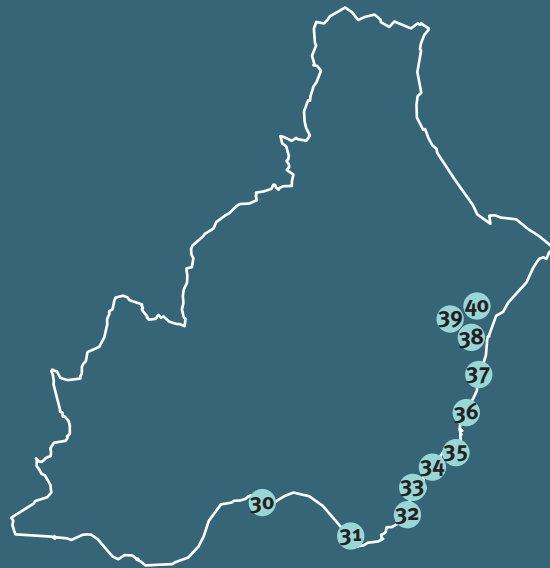
- 17.** Estepona. Massive urbanization: 82,000 new houses and legalization of 3,000 illegal houses. Incorrect wastewater purification.
- 18.** Punta de la Plata Beach (Bahía de Estepona). Pier in front of the Monterroso stream's mouth.
- 19.** Marbella. Illegal urbanization: 30,000 illegal houses. Many building companies are accused of disobedience for not stopping the works despite the final judgment. Corruption. Extension of the La Bajadilla's sports port.
- 20.** Fuengirola. Sports port's extension.

- 21.** La Cala. Mijas. New sports port destroying beaches. Incorrect wastewater purification.
- 22.** Benalmádena. Sports port's extension.
- 23.** Vélez-Málaga. Urbanization at the mouth. Extension of La Caleta's sports port.
- 24.** Torrox. Lack of wastewater treatment plant.
- 25.** Nerja. Lack of wastewater treatment plant.

### **Granada**

- 26.** Almuñécar. Massive urbanization: 28,000 new houses, 6,000 hotel vacancies, four golf courses, and two sports ports.
- 27.** Salobreña. Massive urbanization: 16,000 new houses, two golf courses, and one sports port.
- 28.** Motril. Massive urbanization: 12,000 houses.
- 29.** Calahonda-Cabopino. Extraction of 20 million cubic meters of sand for artificial regeneration is affecting SICs [Sites of Community Importance].

## Black spots on the andalusian coastline. *Almería*



### Almería

**30.** Aguadulce. Roquetas de Mar. Urbanization of three blocks with 600 houses on cliffs.

**31.** La Fabriquilla. San Miguel de Cabo de Gata. Urbanization with favorable judgment in protected natural space, and it is invading the coastline.

**32.** San José. PN Cabo de Gata. Sports port's extension.

**33.** La Isleta del Moro. PN Cabo de Gata. Illegal urbanization in protected natural space.

**34.** Las Negras. PN Cabo de Gata. 30 hectares of protected land illegally declared available for urbanization by the Níjar's Town Council. The natural park's new PORN would legalize them.

**35.** Aguamarga. Níjar. PN Cabo de Gata. Urbanization of 48 hectares in a doubly protected zone with favorable judgment not appealed by the Board.

**36.** El Algarrobico. Carboneras. PN Cabo de Gata. Illegal urbanization in protected natural space, and it is invading the coastline.

**37.** Macenas Beach. Mojácar. Urbanization in sea-land public domain and water public domain.

**38.** Antas. Massive urbanization: 60,000 new houses and five golf courses.

**39.** Vera. Halted massive urbanization plans (118,000 houses).

**40.** Cuevas del Almanzora. Halted massive urbanization plans (148,000 houses).



# As tu rias

The unstoppable urban pressures cause the largest threat to the Asturian coastline, which faces a dilemma: succumb to the short-term benefits by sacrificing its land and culture, or make an effort towards planning and management which allows it to face the urban and tourism development with the adequate wastewater treatment facilities, taking into account the use of natural resources, waste generation, and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

Asturias must not hide behind an alleged benefit for the tourism industry as an excuse to allow the occupation of its coastline. The transformation to be suffered by the Asturian coast in the coming years can not be decided solely based on bricks.

But at the moment, this seems to be the path that is being followed. Thus the figures prove it: 60,000 houses will be built on the Asturian coastline in the coming years. Many of the projects are not free of controversy as shown by the fifteen cases of possible urban corruption investigated by the Asturias' High Court Public Prosecutors Office, which centers their investigations mainly between Villaviciosa and Llanes.

The Asturias' Coastline Order Plan (POLA), which protects the first 500 meters of coast from building, permits the construction of golf courses in this strip, thus turning the coast into a private "garden", object of the promoters' greed. The plans known up to this point include about 17 new installations, which will be added to the eleven already existing.



Regeneration in Salinas Beach, Castrillón (Asturias).

There is still time to prevent Asturias from repeating the situations common at many points of the Mediterranean and Andalusian coastline, where too many town councils let themselves be handcuffed by the down payments the building companies pay in the urbanization agreements. Thus, municipality financing becomes dependant on building, reaching between 30 and 65% of their revenues. The administrations have the obligation to work together, in a transparent and participative manner with the civilian society and all of the players involved in the good development of the communities.

In the chapter regarding the port infrastructures, the extension works of the Gijón port, whose environmental impact was reported on many occasions by the environmental groups, but minimized by the administrations, are starting to make them pay, being one of the most damaged fishing sectors.

The extension works of El Musel port might be affecting the quality of the Gijón Bay's swimming waters and the sea bottom. The analysis performed by the Port Authority shows high levels of mercury in swimming areas such as the San Lorenzo beach.

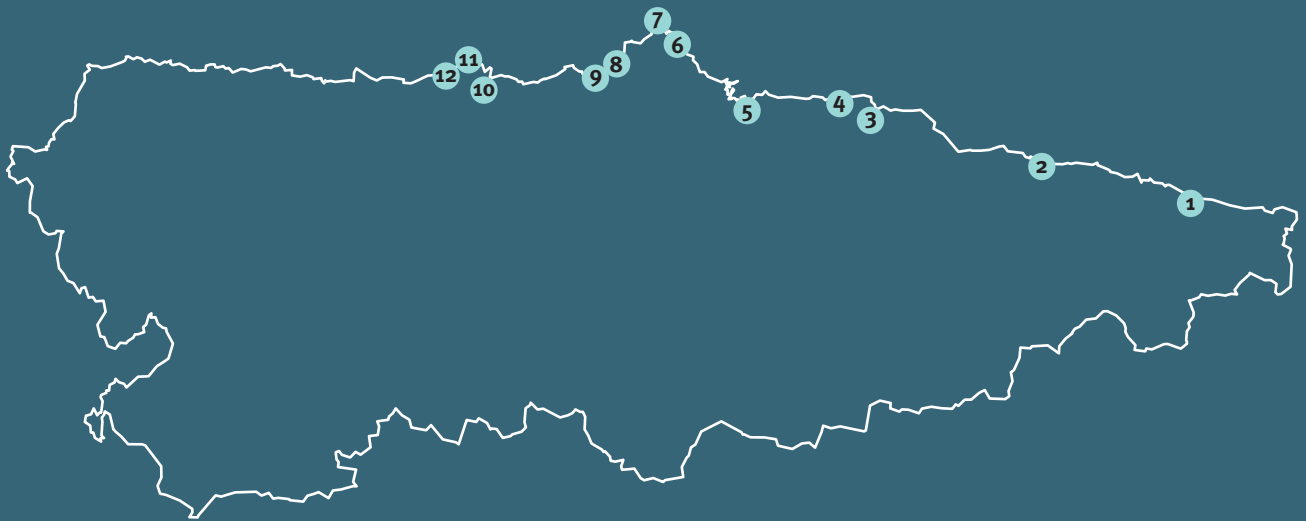
### Links of interest

Ecoloxista d'Asturies Coordinator:  
[www.ecoloxista.org](http://www.ecoloxista.org)

GREEN: [www.asturiasverde.com](http://www.asturiasverde.com)

Sueve Verde: [www.sueveverde.org](http://www.sueveverde.org)

## Black spots on the asturian coastline



**1.** Llanes. Massive urbanization: 15,000 houses. La Tala: urbanization on the cliffs.  
**2.** Ribadesella. Massive urbanization: between 5,000 and 9,000 houses.  
**3.** La Rasa (between Villaviciosa and Colunga). Urbanization, hotel, and golf course.  
**4.** San Martín del Mar. Urbanization on land not suitable for urbanization. Golf course.


**5.** Gijón. El Musel Port extension. Contamination.  
**6.** Luanco (Gozón). Coto de Peroño. Urbanization with golf course. Los Laureles: urbanization affecting the beach.  
**7.** Gozón. Massive urbanization. PGOU reported.  
**8.** Verdicio. Urbanization with golf course.  
**9.** Podes. Urbanization with golf course.

**10.** Muros de Nalón. Massive urbanization: 2,000 houses.  
**11.** Cudillero. “Cudillero Ciudad-Jardín”: urbanization in protected space.  
**12.** Cabo Vidío. Plans to build a golf course within the first 500 meters from the coast.



# Can ta bria





Urbanization advances in Cantabria, especially focused on residential tourism in the coast municipalities. At the same time, the rulings of the High Court annulling the Urban Organization General Plans (PGOUs) occur, and only two municipalities have adapted their urban plans to the 2001 Land Law, showing the urbanization cravings devastating the Cantabric coast.

The start-up of special urban plans, the regional projects of special interest, with the approval of the regional government without the participation of the town boards are sometimes being used to urbanize protected spaces or places where private interest seems to prevail over the general interest. The El Bojar case in Camargo, with corruption suspicions that smear the President of the Cantabria Government, demonstrates the worst coastline urbanization practices directly imported from the Mediterranean.

Similarly serious is the granting of permits for illegal work by the town halls without approved urban plans, which tries to allow a policy of final results. Colindres and Udías are two examples. It is the regional government's competence to follow up on these actions, and punish them with force.

As regards the actions on the coastline, the signing of an agreement between the Ministry of Environment and the Government of Cantabria to perform sustainable coastline management and to promote its conservation and protection is good news; likewise is the announcement of advances in the delimitation of the sea-land public domain. Now, these intention statements must be converted into concrete actions that go from the elimination of illegal buildings distributed along the coastline, the recovering of damaged coast spaces, and the giving up of hard engineering works on the coast that do not help

these purposes and constitute determined support to the urban overcrowding.

This year two very positive decisions for the Cantabria's coast have been made public. On one hand, the new demarcation performed by the Ministry of Environment has declared the golf course built on the dunes of the Oyambre Natural Park illegal, and, on the other hand, a judgment from the High Court that has equally declared the wastewater treatment plant built in the Cortegada salt marsh, in Suances, illegal which should be demolished. Both actions were backed in their day by the administration people who should assume responsibility for them.



Parcial sight of Oyambre Natural Reserve.

Lastly, the regional government continues with its plan to build four large sports ports in the Cantabric coast: Castro Urdiales (637 moorings), Laredo (580 moorings at sea, and 200 on land), Suances (1,135 moorings), and San Vicente de la Barquera (700 moorings), without taking into account the environmental consequences that these actions will have.

The General Office for Hydraulic Works and the Complete Water Cycle of the Cantabria Government has counted 174 enrollments in the contaminating dumping coming from the land registry. The high number of dumping gives an idea of the little attention paid to the elimination of contamination<sup>2</sup>.

Of the 32 coastal municipalities, only San Vicente de la Barquera, Piélagos, Santander, Camargo, Astillero, Guriezo, and Castro Urdiales are connected to urban wastewater treatment systems, but some of these counties do not comply with the requirements stated by the European Wastewater Guideline, which demands secondary treatment<sup>2</sup> in all those populations that exceed 2,000 inhabitants<sup>3</sup>.

### Links of interest

ARCA: [www.iarca.net](http://www.iarca.net)

Ecologistas en Acción de Cantabria  
[Cantabria's Environmentalists in Action]:  
[www.ecologistasenaccion.org](http://www.ecologistasenaccion.org)

<sup>2</sup> The primary treatment of wastewater consists in the withdrawal of solid and insoluble waste, like sand and materials with grease and foam by sedimentation and filtering through screens. The secondary treatment breaks down the organic matter present through micro-organisms. It implies the oxidation of organic matter dissolved through the biologically active mud, which is later filtered; and the tertiary treatment uses advanced biological methods for the elimination of nitrogen, and physical and chemical methods, such as granular filtering and absorption by activated carbon.

## Black spots on the cantabrian coastline



- 1. Castro Urdiales. Playa de Mioño: building of a wastewater treatment plant. Insufficient wastewater treatment.
- 2. Guriezo. Insufficient wastewater treatment.
- 3. Laredo. New sports port. Insufficient wastewater treatment.
- 4. Santoña. Insufficient wastewater treatment.
- 5. Colindres. PGOU cancelled. building of sports port.
- 6. Noja. Ris' sea border recovery project with damages to the dune cordon.
- 7. Ajo. It receives the spillage from Meruelo's wastewater treatment plant.
- 8. Bareyo. Ajo. Urbanization on the coastline's protected land. Dumping ground.
- 9. Ribamontán al Mar. Construction of a swimming pool on the dune system. Insufficient wastewater treatment.

- 10. Marina de Cudeyo. Insufficient wastewater purification.
- 11. Astillero. Insufficient wastewater purification.
- 12. Santander. Insufficient wastewater purification.
- 13. Camargo. Insufficient wastewater purification.
- 14. El Bojar. Camargo. Urbanization, suspicions of corruption.
- 15. Santa Cruz de Bezana. Insufficient wastewater purification.
- 16. Parque Natural de Liencres. Piélagos. La Picota Urbanization.
- 17. Piélagos. Insufficient wastewater purification.

- 18. Suances. New sports port. Cortiguera's Wastewater Treatment Plant: built on sea-land public domain, and declared illegal by the High Court.
- 19. Santillana del Mar. Insufficient wastewater purification.
- 20. Alfoz de Loredó. Insufficient wastewater purification.
- 21. Comillas. Insufficient wastewater purification.
- 22. Valdáliga. Oyambre's Dunes. Golf course in the dunes declared illegal.
- 23. San Vicente de la Barquera. Urbanization in protected natural space. New sports port. Insufficient wastewater purification. Insufficient wastewater purification.
- 24. Val de San Vicente. Insufficient wastewater purification.

The background of the page is a photograph of a beach. It features a variety of seashells of different sizes and shapes scattered across a surface of small, light-colored pebbles. The overall color palette is muted, with shades of blue, grey, and white, giving it a serene and natural feel.

# Catalonia

In Catalonia, an unprecedented measure has been initiated in order to protect the coastline; it is a regulation that should be imitated by all of the Autonomous coastal Communities. During 2005, two Urban Management Plans were approved which include all of the Catalonian coastal system, and whose objective is protecting those parts of the territory located in the 500 meter linear strip from the coast that is still not urbanized.

However, except in those zones which are now protected, the urban plans on the rest of the coast continuously allow more urbanization and overcrowding of buildings. Most of the town councils extend the land suitable for urbanization in their new municipal urban organization plans, where the criteria for obtaining immediate financing for their coffers prevails (fees and taxes), through land re-classification from not suitable for urbanization to suitable for urbanization, and by avoiding the posing of long-term benefit control and the occupation limitation for their territory.

In recent years, the largest concentration of new buildings on the Catalonian coast is in Tierras del Ebro, where in a few years, this over-building has caused a continuous barrier in front of the southern coast of Catalonia. Additionally, in this zone, a series of urban developments surrounding golf courses in a zone with water shortage have been occurring and continue to occur. Other coastal zones, like Costa Brava with 60% of its coastal strip urbanized, keep requesting more bricks for their coastline.



Erosion in La Barceloneta Beach, Barcelona.

Tourism-urbanization projects like the Universal Mediterranea on the Daurada Coast, which proposes the building of 2,400 houses, hotels, and golf courses, show how tourism continues to be an excuse to mask that which is simple and plainly an unsustainable urbanization process that seems to have no end.

And the coast is the one who most suffers from all of these actions. The Catalan beaches continue to irreversibly lose sand. The most outstanding case is Barcelona, which continues to fill its coast with cement, with sand between the holes. The Ministry of Environment's complicity with the actions along Barcelona's coastline, despite its non-compliance with the Coasts Law, sets a regrettable precedent.

Unfortunately, Catalonia has not renewed the moratorium on new sports ports. Far from it, it has started building 5,000 new moorings distributed along its coastline. The new plan for these installations leaves the door open to new projects until reaching 32,000 moorings in 2015 (currently it has 28,000).

The first environmental report on Catalonia, prepared by the Generalitat's Environmental Department, shows that the contamination problems represent one of the largest threats for the Catalan coastline. It especially high-

lights the high levels of environmental pollution and the contamination of the underground water reservoirs, due to the nitrates coming from the purines.

#### Links of interest

DEPANA: [www.depana.org](http://www.depana.org)

GEPEC: [www.gepec.org](http://www.gepec.org)

SEO/BirdLife: [www.seo.org](http://www.seo.org)

## Black spots on Catalonia's coastline



### Girona

1. Empordà. Urban growth in Palafrugell, Mont-ras, Palamós, Santa Cristina and Sant Feliu de Guíxols.

### Barcelona

- 2. Premià de Mar. Sports port.
- 3. Sant Adrià del Besòs. 4,000 houses in Besòs' left margin.
- 4. Barcelona. Consolidation project of the Olímpic Beaches, artificial regeneration, and dam construction. Barcelona Port: drying of the Llobregat riverbed.
- 5. El Prat. The coastline strip has not been protected in order to extend the Barcelona airport.
- 6. Gavà. 2,249 houses in forestal zone.
- 7. Sitges. Sports port extension.

### Tarragona

- 8. Coma-Ruga. El Vendrell. Sports port.
- 9. Roda de Barà. Sports port.
- 10. Torredembarra. Building in a floodplain.
- 11. Tarragona. Playa Llarga. Promenade that ends in a protected natural space threatened by the pressure from visitors.
- 12. Universal Mediterranea. Salou and Vila-seca. 2,400 houses, three hotels, and three golf courses.
- 13. Mont-roig del Camp. 9,100 houses and one golf course.
- 14. San Jordi d'Alfama. L'Ametlla de mar. Sports port extension.
- 15. Tortosa. 1,100 houses, one golf course, and one luxury hotel.
- 16. San Carles de la Ràpita. 1,100 houses. Sports port extension.



# Va len cian Community



The Valencian Community's coastline is strongly conditioned by an overwhelming urbanism. In the last five years on the Valencian coast, they have built as much as that throughout all of its history.

From each 100 Euros produced in the Valencian Community, 26 correspond to the construction and real state sector, 10 Euros over the Spanish average<sup>IV</sup>. This policy carried out by the Generalitat Valenciana (regional government) has been criticized by many, who understand that the excessive dependence on the brick masks a dangerous absence of industrial policies (that only assume 2% of the GDP). The Coastline's Territorial Action Plan presented this year by the Generalitat Valenciana acknowledges the lack of investment in the industry sector, both by public entities as well as private ones, and that these investments are lower than the national average, and even lower than the European Union's average.

The Generalitat Valenciana practices a territorial policy where the maximum beneficiaries are the cement and the concrete (and all who have something to do with them). The most visible result has been the European Union's conclusive sentence on the urban policy. An unprecedented sentence that should make us think about the territorial model from which this autonomous community suffers. But far from that, the Generalitat has answered by looking the other way, talking about "conspiracies" against the Valencian Community, despite the abundant evidence in the form of accusations related to urban corruption cases presented to the courts.

Last April, it was made known that the Ministry of Finance kept proceedings open on eight urban irregularities in Alicante. Only two of these cases are public, that from Orihuela (with about thirty open cases against the mayor for offences derived from his urban and accounting management), and Torrevieja

(where the mayor's bank movements are being investigated).

This year, the Valencian Community's Coastline Territorial Action Plan was published, which is an instrument that supplements the urban law to finishing cementing the Valencian coast.

Building goes hand in hand with tourism, and is used as a justification for almost any type of project. In the Valencian Community, the political sign does not matter; the projects presented through urban plans outside of the local urban planning are countless. Each project for thousands of new houses is usually accompanied with the construction of at least one golf course.

The building of new golf courses is decidedly supported from the Valencian Community. This year 65 new projects have been made public. Also, there is a proposal for them to be subsidized with funds from the European Union's *Life Program*, the EU's financial instrument to contribute to the expansion of the environmental community policy. Another example of the lack of respect and the little importance given to the environment.

It is widely known that there is a shortage of **hydraulic resources** on the Valencian Community's coastline, but what will happen in a few years when they have built the tens of thousands of houses planned for this region? According to the experts, the answer is simple: with the current pace of construction, the natural resources will not be sufficient in a very short time.

The Ministry of Environment forces the hydrographic confederations (responsible for water management) to prepare water consumption feasibility reports for each new urbanization project stated in an area with an hydraulic deficit. Said reports are not binding, even when they warn about the lack

of the valuable liquid, and therefore, they do not prevent urbanization nor the building of a golf course. The Ministry of Environment has reported that in Valencia and Alicante, the cases in which a warning is given about the unsustainability of a project are repeated, and despite the warning, the project goes forward.

The analysis performed from different fields show that the tourism model currently developed in the Valencian Community, specially on the coastline, is unsustainable. Beyond developing strictly tourist activities, the Valencian Community has been developing a gigantic real estate operation since the mid fifties, which is still under way. The lack of evaluation of this model's consequences, based on unlimited growth, is leading the coastline to an accelerated deterioration situation and lost of identity, which are characteristics that are little desired by tourism.

The bad relations between the Ministry of Environment and the Regional Ministry of Territory and Housing have marked many of the actions that have been developed in the last year in the Valencian Community's coastline. Each opportunity for collaboration has become a sad dispute, where the returns to be obtained have been political, and not environmental. Maybe the most significant case is the program launched by the Ministry of Environment to purchase lands on the coastline, and thus protect them. Narbona's request to Blasco was settled with a list of lands that included spaces in Daimús, Guardamar, Miramar, Piles, and Xeraco which have been totally urbanized for years, without the municipal councils being informed about it.

The port infrastructures, distributed on this coast in one of the country's highest densities, keep increasing in number and damages to the coastline environment. The Valencian coastline has more than 40 installations under its charge, approximately 10 ports every 100 kilometers, and a density of 36 sport moorings per kilometer, well above the rest of the Spanish regions.

The contamination, especially as insufficient wastewater purification, has taken the opening of a file by the Europe Commission for granted, exposing that despite the fact that the beaches and coasts keep being used as the main tourist attraction, there is no real interest in their protection and conservation.

As regards swimming waters, each year the same coastline points repeat, where the coastline waters are of bad quality: Sud beach (**Peñíscola**), Barri dels Pescadors and Medicalia beaches (**El Puig**), Patacona beach (**Alboraya**), and **El Perelló, Motilla and Guardamar de la Safor** beaches (**Sueca**). Their bad state usually coincides with the existence of main discharge outlets, irrigation channel, or with the outlets of Valencia's "golas".

The document about the "Sustainable Mediterranean Development Strategy", presented at the end of April, showed that the Valencian Community's environmental future is "extremely uncertain" due to land erosion, the increase in tourism, and climatic changes.

### Links of interest

Abusos Urbanísticos No  
[Urban Abuses No]: [www.abusos-no.org](http://www.abusos-no.org)

Acció Ecologista Agró:  
[www.accioecologista-agro.org](http://www.accioecologista-agro.org)

Ecologistas en Acción  
[Environmentalists in Action]:  
[www.ecologistasenaccion.org](http://www.ecologistasenaccion.org)

Per l'Horta: [www.perlhorta.org](http://www.perlhorta.org)

Salvem el Cabanyal-Canyamelar:  
[www.cabanyal.com](http://www.cabanyal.com)

## Black spots on the Valencian Community coastline. *Castellón*

### Castellón

1. Vinarós. Lack of a wastewater purification plant.
2. Benicarló. Lack of a wastewater purification plant.
3. Peñíscola. Urb. Las Atalayas built within the SCI [Site of Community Importance], without an environmental impact evaluation. Sports port. Lack of a wastewater purification plant.
4. Alcalà de Xivert. PAI de Solplason, company linked to the Urbanization council (investigated for fraud).
5. Alcossebre. Lack of a wastewater purification plant.
6. Cabanes. Insufficient wastewater purification.
7. Oropesa-Cabanes. Mundo Ilusión Project, granted to Marina d'Or, with corruption accusations. 47,800 houses, 7,500 hotel vacancies, 3 golf courses.
8. Oropesa. Suspicions of corruption. Insufficient wastewater purification.
9. Benicassim. Insufficient wastewater purification.
10. Castellón. Playa del Pinar: rehabilitation project turned into parking lots.
11. Betxí (int). Seven PAI and 4,000 houses.
12. Burriana. Urban plan stopped by the courts. PAI Golf San Gregori: excessive building, affecting the coastline strip. Sports port.
13. Nules. Urban plan stopped by the courts.
14. Moncofa. Urban plan stopped by the courts. Plans to build 31,500 houses, 2 hotels, a golf course, and a sports port (Dragados and Mogar). PAI Golf de Moncofa: 12,500 houses between two humid zones. Insufficient wastewater purification.
15. Xilxes. Insufficient wastewater purification.
16. Llosa de Castelló. Urban plan stopped by the courts.



## Black spots on the Valencian Community coastline. *Valencia*

### Valencia

**17.** Estivella, Algimia and Torres-Torres (int). Hotels and 3 golf courses in SCI [Site of Community Importance].

**18.** Canet d'En Berenguer. Lack of a wastewater purification plant.

**19.** Llíria (int). Urbanization of 2,2 million square meters in a protected forestal area.

**20.** Puçol. Insufficient wastewater purification.

**21.** Bétera y San Antonio de Benagéber. Three PAIs to build 11,450 houses.

**22.** El Puig. 22,000 houses (16,000 in a humid zone), and a golf course on the first strip in front of the beach.

**23.** Beniguasil. PAI Molí Nou: urbanization of 2.6 million m<sup>2</sup> of farmland.

**24.** Riba-roja. PAI Mas de Porxinos (int). 2,800 houses and Valencia CF's sports city.

**25.** Vilamarxant (int). 4,107 houses and hotels in protected forestal land.

**26.** Alboraiá. Urbanization will affect protected farmlands. Sports port. Insufficient wastewater purification.

**27.** Manises. 10,000 houses.

**28.** Catarroja. Nou Mil.lenni Project: 12,000 houses.

**29.** Sueca. Insufficient wastewater purification.

**30.** Guadassuar (int). Blauverd PAI withdrawn by fraud in the lands purchase price.

**31.** Cullera. 13,000 houses, 4 golf courses, and a sports port. "Manhattan de Cullera" Project: 33 25-story towers, and one sports port in the Júcar mouth.

**32.** Tavernes de Valldigna. La Vall del Mar PAI, withdrawn for corruption suspicions.

**33.** Gandía. Playa de l'Ahuir: project to extract sand from the dune cordon. Sports port.



**34.** Villalonga. 4,000 houses, 2 hotels, and 2 golf courses reported to the TSJ.

**35.** Pego. 1,400 houses, golf courses, a hotel and a horseback riding center, 500 meters from the Pego-Oliva marjal.



## Black spots on the Valencian Community coastline. *Alicante*

### Alicante

**36.** Dènia. Artificial regeneration of the l'Almadraba beach in SCI [Site of Community Importance] without environmental impact evaluation. this beach receives wastewater dumping.

**37.** Xàbia. 1,716 houses in a floodplain.

**38.** Fontanar de Alforins. Urbanization in SCI [Site of Community Importance].

**39.** Benigembla (int). Ballester Group PÁI withdrawn. Resignation of all of the councilors except the mayor.

**40.** Teulada. Lack of a wastewater purification plant.

**41.** Calpe. 2,200 houses in the coastal humid zone. Cala Manzanera receives dumping.

**42.** Altea. 5,760 houses around a specially protected humid zone. Building project for the Luis Campomanes sports port.

**43.** Finestrat. 10,650 houses.

**44.** Benidorm. Theme Park: Terra Mítica [Mystic Land]: corruption. Building around it.

**45.** Xixona. 7,700 houses and one golf course.

**46.** La Vila Joiosa. 1,653 houses and one golf course without an ensured water supply. Building in Cala Bol Nou is invading the sea-land public domain. Atrium Beach Building: Excess of building and built without a permit.

**47.** Elda (int). 7,500 houses and a golf course on land considered to be protected.

**48.** El Campello. Cala Baeza. Sports port.

**49.** Albufereta. Sports port on the SCI [Site of Community Importance] limit.

**50.** Alicante. Rabassa Plan: 15,000 houses. Insufficient wastewater purification. San Gabriel beach receives wastewater dumping.

**51.** Elche. Insufficient wastewater purification.

**52.** Santa Pola. El Pinet partial plan canceled by TSJ. Insufficient wastewater purification.

**53.** Dolores. 5,000 houses. Another 2,664 and one golf course on the El Hondo Natural Park protection perimeter.

**54.** Orihuela. Corruption. Thirteen PAIs, some invade SCI [Site of Community Importance]. Flamenca Beach receives dumping.

**55.** San Miguel de Salinas (Torrevieja). 50,000 houses (being verified) very close to the Torrevieja salt flats.

**56.** Torrevieja. Corruption. Two projects will affect the Torrevieja Lagoon PN. Extension of the wastewater purification plant on lands protected by the Coasts Law.

**57.** Pilar de la Horadada. 7,000 houses and a golf course. La Horadada Golf PAI invading an SCI [Site of Community Importance]. Insufficient wastewater purification.





# Euska di

More than half of the Basque population, approximately 1.1 million people, is concentrated in 12% of its territory, the coastal strip, which explains the degradation occurring in this zone due to the concentration of industrial, fishing, residential, and infrastructural use.

Between 1994 and 2005, the total artificial area in Euskadi has gone from 5.2% to 6.5%. During the last year, its natural characteristics have been lost, 425 hectares of land.

Even so, the Basque coast has large areas where all of its environmental richness is preserved, and which should be the target of protection in the face of the growing pressures. With this in mind, the Land Law as well as the Coastline's Organization and Protection Sectorial Territorial Plan are both good news, as they are also the two sentences from the High Court which were made public this year regarding illegal urbanization in Plentzia and Urdaibai.

Together with urban evolution, there are two large threats for the Basque coastline: the sports ports, which multiply exponentially, and contamination, which makes some beaches and estuaries achieve a very deficient qualification as regards their quality.

The Coastline's Organization and Protection Sectorial Territorial Plan considers 16 actions related to sports or commercial ports; undoubtedly an excessive number, taking into account the environmental impact they cause to the coastline. From 1985 to date, Euskadi has experienced the greatest growth of moorings in all of the Spanish State, going from 1,280 to 4,825.

Three counties, **Bakio, Orio, and Zarautz**, have plans to build new sports facilities. The **Bilbao and Lekeitio** ports extend their port infrastructures, while **Orio, Armintxa, Deba, Mutriku, Ondárroa, Zarautz, San Sebastián, and Pasajes** have planned extensions to their ports.



Expansion works in Port of Mutriku, Gipuzkoa.

Of all of the planned port works, the projects for the Mutriku's sports port and the Pasajes' external port are, without a doubt, the worst. The serious conditions they pose to the beaches and cliffs, which enjoy the highest levels of environmental protection –at least on paper–, should be rejected by the Basque Government who assures the public that it is doing everything possible to recover its coast.

The contamination problems in Basque waters, estuaries, and beaches are not resolved. In previous years, there were water quality improvements with the initiation of wastewater treatment plans that introduced significant improvements, especially visible in Nervión's case. However, the Basque Government's latest available data indicates a worsening in the water quality in the year 2004. This worsening occurs in the estuary as well as in the coastal waters.

As regards the beaches, each year the same bad qualification repeats for certain beaches, where the contamination problem is generalized: **Getxo, Sukarrieta, Ondárroa-Saturarán, Deba, Santiago in Zumaia, and Oribarzar in Orio**; others such as **Zarautz** and **Zurriola** also present problems in some of their segments, which periodically disqualifies them for swimming.

### Links of interest

Txipio Bai Association:  
[www.geocities.com/rainforest/jungle/3575/index.htm](http://www.geocities.com/rainforest/jungle/3575/index.htm)

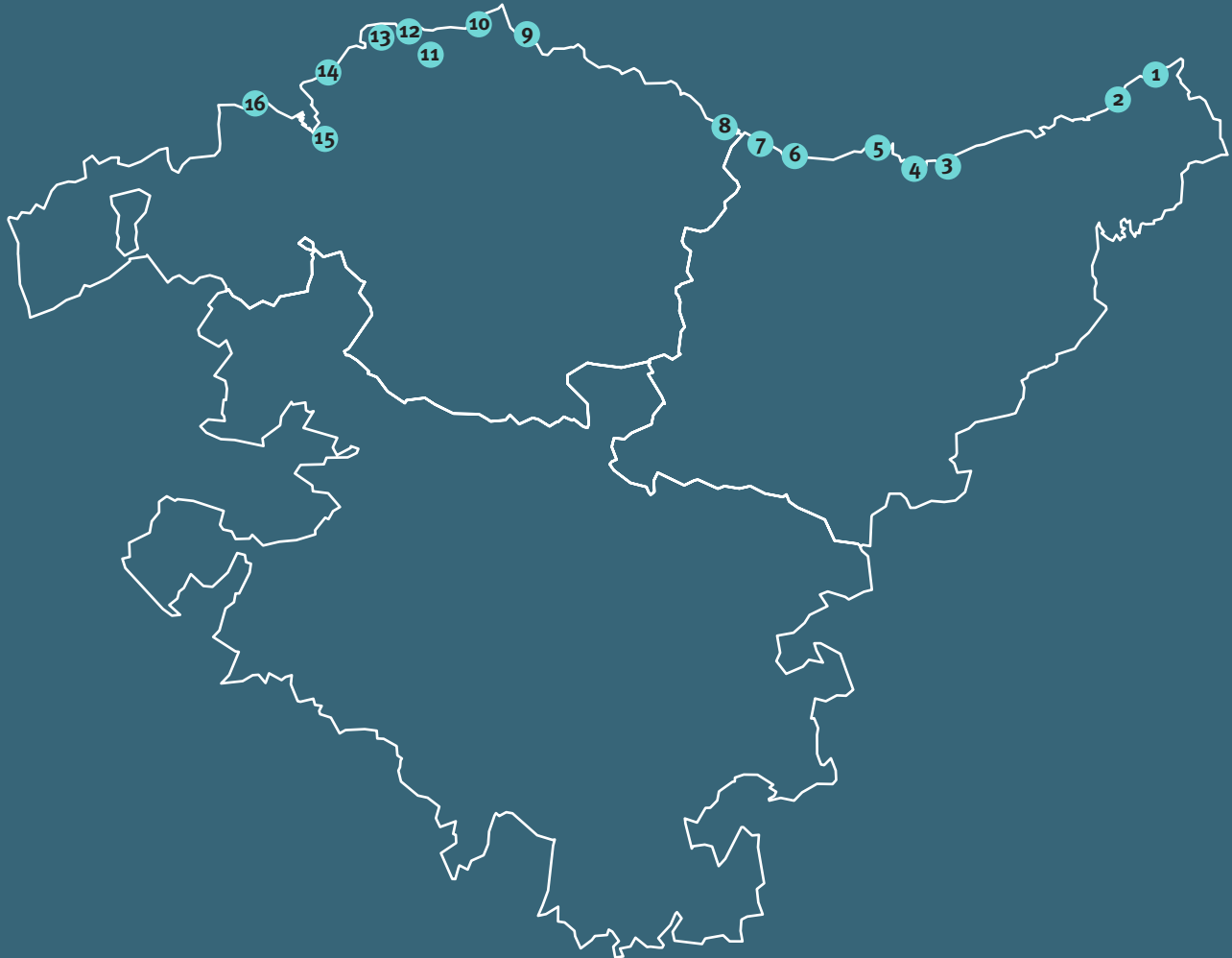
Ekologistak Martxan:  
[www.ecologistasenaccion.org](http://www.ecologistasenaccion.org)

Jaizkibel Bizirik:  
[www.nodo50.org/jaizkibel/](http://www.nodo50.org/jaizkibel/)

Getxo Bizia Popular Platform:  
[www.getxobizia.org](http://www.getxobizia.org)



## Black spots on the basque coastline



### Gipuzkoa

1. Pasajes. External port project.
2. San Sebastián. 21,000 houses. Sports port project.
3. Orio. Expansion of the sports port.
4. Zarautz. Expansion of the sports port.
5. Zumaia. Contamination on beaches.
6. Deba. Expansion of the sports port.
7. Mutriku. Expansion of the sports port.

### Bizkaia

8. Ondárroa. Expansion of the sports port.
9. Toña Beach. Sukarrieta. Bathing water quality is bad.
10. Bakio. Sports port project.
11. Lemoiz. Council convicted for denying information about building in non urban land.
12. Armintxa. Expansion of the sports port.

13. Plentzia. Promenade and breakwater illegally built.
14. Getxo. 8,000 houses. Promenade.
15. Bilbao. 9,000 houses
16. Santurtzi. 1,800 houses.



# Ga li. cia

The use of a new term has become widespread on Galicia's coast –“marbellization”–, used to express the danger of urban saturation that is threatening to disintegrate its natural values and riches. The data is here, and it gives a scare: 600,000 houses, 17 golf courses, and 24 sports ports are planned on Galicia's coastline in the coming years. 1,200 of its 1,720 km of coast are threatened by cement.

From Xunta de Galicia, it is assured that there will be a remedy to the matter, but the presentation of all of these urban projects as a consequence of the two year deadline given by the Fraga Government Land Law to “adapt” the municipalities' urban plans has transferred the image of a rising or Costa del Sol urbanism to Galicia's coast.

The Xunta's commitment to prepare some Territory Organization Guidelines in a one-year period must be accompanied with an **extension on the new urban plans** until their approval; otherwise, we will be watching the same farce we've already seen in other coastline zones: the deadlines for the validity of the new laws only serve to promote building even more.

As regards tourism, Galicia's coasts, recovered from the “Prestige effect”, are facing a new threat: massive urbanization. The Xunta de Galicia's challenge is to end the urban chaos on Galicia's coast without substituting it with overcrowding, a complicated issue in view of the current situation in which the coastline segments that have been protected are not respected. The spaces declared as Sites of Community Importance (SCIs) to be included in the European 2000 Nature Network are facing their degradation due to the location of urbanizations, golf courses, or aquiculture plants in their interior.

Recently, Galicia's Parliament has requested the transfer of state competences on sea-land public domain, but in view of the complex and dense urbanism situation in this community's coastline, it does not seem the best measure as it is in reference to the preservation of the coastline.

Urbanizations, golf courses, and sports ports to attract more tourists. In the case of the latter, it is indispensable that the announced Sports Port Management Plan is made public. As with construction, the Xunta should decree a moratorium on the new installations until the Plan is commissioned.

The Ministry of Environment's actions on Galicia's coasts have not been aimed to effectively protect them from cement. Scores of projects for recovering natural spaces have come together with numerous promenades, which costs exceeds the budget provisions the ministry has for purchasing farms and protect them along the Spanish coastline. Given this fact, one must ask if the promenades or the coast protection “purchase” more willpower. If so, this administration is doing something wrong, and it should explain the importance of coastline conservation to the citizens, and the fact that is not being done by cementing it. To finish with the multitude of illegal houses and buildings that have come up in the Galicia's coastline in the last two decades should be a priority for this ministry.



Machinery working on the sand in Santa Cristina Beach, A Coruña.

The new projects of aquiculture plants deserve a special mention. The Fraga government approved a sectorial plan that tripled the current installations, and it located a large part of the new plants in protected natural spaces. The protests have obtained that the Xunta de Galicia commits itself to review these projects. The president himself has stated that aquiculture can not be developed at the expense of protected spaces. The Xunta has the obligation and the duty of turning these protected spaces into a source of richness for its inhabitants through diverse actions.

The Galicia coastline's largest unresolved matter is contamination. Galicia does not comply with the European regulation as regards wastewater purification, up to some limits that cross the barrier of the intolerable. 40% of the Galicia's main urban centers do not treat their wastewater, and more than fifty municipalities, which group 650,000 inhabitants, dump their untreated waste directly into the sea. Neither the fines or the sentences from the European Union seem to be enough to make Galicia's administrations understand the seriousness of the problem. Perhaps the promise of tourism will achieve it.

### Links of interest

Adega Galiza: [www.adegagaliza.org](http://www.adegagaliza.org)

Foro social por la defensa do pobo [Social forum for the defense of the population]. Cangas de Morrazo: [www.cangasnosevende.org](http://www.cangasnosevende.org)

Salvemos Monteferro [Lets Save Monteferro]: [www.salvemosmonteferro.org](http://www.salvemosmonteferro.org)

Sociedade Galega de Historia Natural [Galicia's Natural History Society]: [www.arrakis.es/~alcrique/sghn.htm](http://www.arrakis.es/~alcrique/sghn.htm)

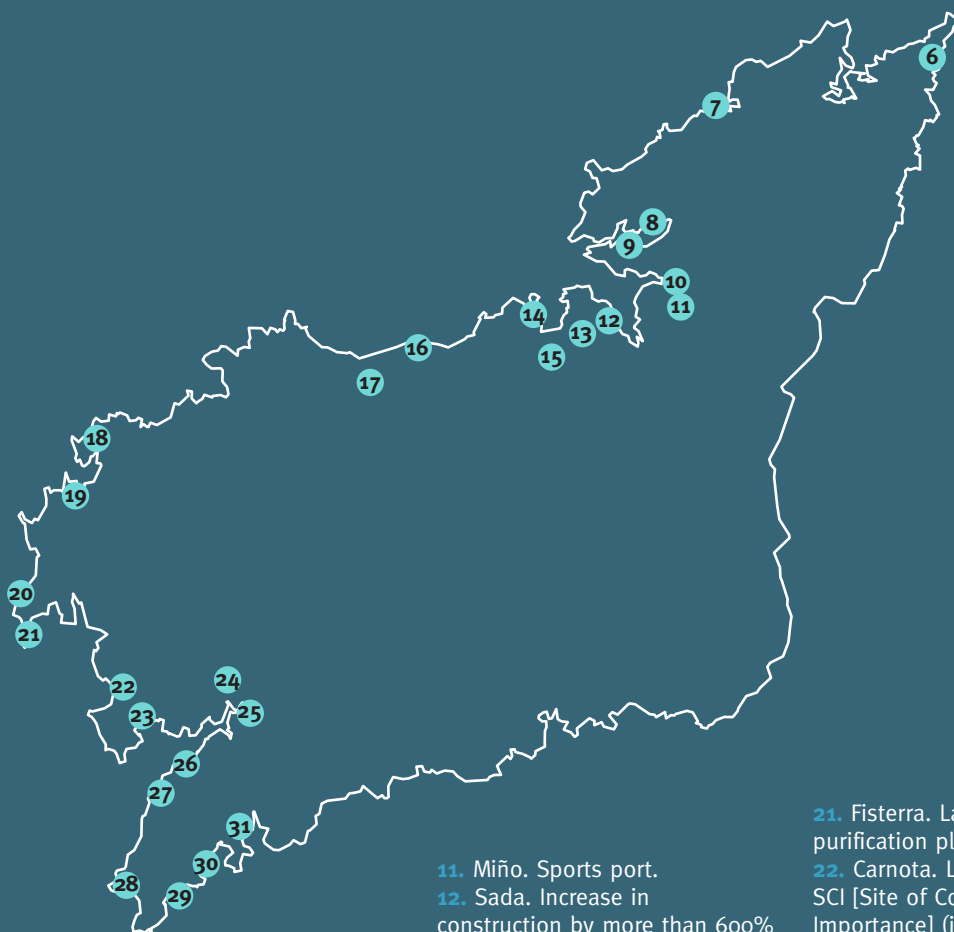
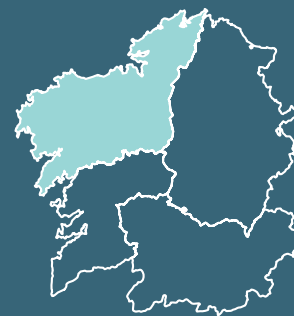
## Black spots on Galicia's coastline. *Lugo*



### Lugo

1. Ribadeo. Hoyo Longo: Fish farm in SCI [Site of Community Importance] (in review). Rinlo: Fish farm in SCI [Site of Community Importance]. It does not comply with the wastewater purification regulation.
2. Foz. It does not comply with the wastewater purification regulation.
3. Burela. It does not comply with the wastewater purification regulation.
4. Cervo. San Cibrao. Sports Port. It does not comply with the wastewater purification regulation.
5. Viveiro. Suspension of the urban rules due to illegality. It does not comply with the wastewater purification regulation.

## Black spots on Galicia's coastline. A Coruña



### A Coruña

**6.** Ortigueira. Building of 65,000 houses. Increase of construction in 1,230%.

**7.** Valdoviño: Fish farm in SCI [Site of Community Importance] (in review).

**8.** Ferrol. Covas: golf course in SCI [Site of Community Importance]. Lobadiz: golf course in SCI [Site of Community Importance]. Promenade in a humid space. Lack of a wastewater purification plant.

**9.** Mugardos. Increase in construction by more than 200%.

**10.** Perbés-San Xoán de Vilanova. FADESA's Urbanization has caused damages to shellfish banks.

**11.** Miño. Sports port.

**12.** Sada. Increase in construction by more than 600% (31,481 houses). Suspension of the urbanism subsidization rules due to speculation and favoritism. Sports port.

**13.** Oleiros. Lack of a wastewater purification plant.

**14.** A Coruña: Construction of an external port. Lack of a wastewater purification plant.

**15.** Culleredo. Lack of a wastewater purification plant.

**16.** Caión. Sports port.

**17.** Carballo. Razo: sports port.

**18.** Camariñas. Punta do Corno: Fish farm in SCI [Site of Community Importance] (in review). Lack of a wastewater purification plant.

**19.** Muxía. Corruption suspicions regarding the urban plan. Sports port.

**20.** Corcubiión. The estuary suffers from contamination by hydrocarbons.

**21.** Fisterra. Lack of a wastewater purification plant.

**22.** Carnota. Lira: Fish farm in SCI [Site of Community Importance] (in review). Quilmas: Fish farm in SCI [Site of Community Importance] (in review). Lack of a wastewater purification plant.

**23.** Muros. Lack of a wastewater purification plant.

**24.** Outes. Increase in construction by more than 200%.

**25.** Noia. Lack of a wastewater purification plant.

**26.** Porto do Son. Lack of a wastewater purification plant.

**27.** Caamaño. Urbanization invading SCI [Site of Community Importance].

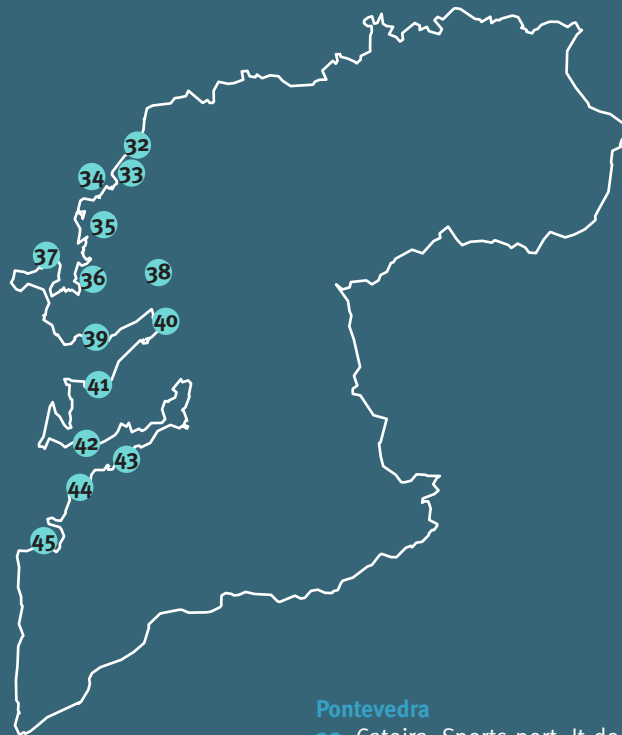
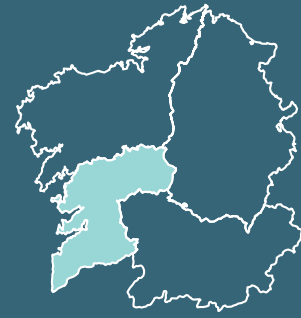
**28.** Corrubedo. Fish farm in SCI [Site of Community Importance].

**29.** Ribeira. Increase in construction by more than 200%.

**30.** A Pobra do Caramiñal. Increase in construction by 200%.

**31.** Boiro. Sports port's extension.

## Black spots on Galicia's coastline. *Pontevedra*



### Pontevedra

**32.** Catoira. Sports port. It does not comply with the European requirements for wastewater purification.

**33.** Vilagarcía de Arousa. It does not comply with the European requirements for wastewater purification.

**34.** Illa de Arousa. Increase in construction by more than 200%.

**35.** Cambados. Bico da Ran: Fish farm in SCI [Site of Community Importance] (in review). Sports port. It does not comply with the European requirements for wastewater purification.

**36.** Meaño. Building of 21,818 houses. Increase in construction by 1,000%.

**37.** O Grove. Ardía: Fish farm in SCI [Site of Community Importance] (in review). Sports port. It does not comply with the European requirements for wastewater purification.

**38.** Poio. It does not comply with the European requirements for wastewater purification.

**39.** Sanxenxo. 1,200 illegal houses. Building of 7,000 houses.

**40.** Combarro. Sports port.

**41.** Bueu. Sports port.

**42.** Cangas de Morrazo. 6,000 houses and a sports port in the Aldán estuary.

**43.** Vigo. 144,000 houses. Port extension with filling works. The Vigo estuary receives untreated urban and industrial wastewater.

**44.** Canido. Sports port.

**45.** Baiona. It does not comply with the European requirements for wastewater purification.



# Ba lea res Islands



The policies of the Balears Islands Government has focused on the excessive construction of public buildings during the last three years, such as highways and freeways, that will leave the archipelago in debt for many years. A BBVA report has revealed that the Balears Islands is the territory with the least public capital in the State, below Ceuta and Melilla.

As a result of President Matas' desire to build, great demonstrations have taken place in places such as Ibiza, where the response of the citizens against the construction of new highways and freeways has been massive. The platforms for safeguarding the territory have submitted a Popular Legislative Initiative (ILP) to try to save the natural areas in the archipelago that represent an essential part of their society, and manner and quality of life, even when this is not understood by the majority of its cultural managers.

The constructors open the new roadways and see how for each kilometer of roadway built, there are more and more meters of rustic land become urban. Mallorca continues down the path of saturation, but its wake spreads towards Ibiza, Formentera, Menorca...

In Balears, all that is done is on behalf of tourism, even those measures that are taken regardless of the advice given by consultants such as Exceltur: the restructuring of hotels into houses, the adoption of models such as "all included" – that ruin the restoration sector and small businesses, or the option to continue with urban saturation, which is becoming less and less appealing for tourists (not to mention the citizens of the areas in which it is performed).

As regards tourism, Greenpeace considers that the Balears Islands should bet on quality and avoid "all included" packages and

construction of second residences, and start retiring some of the hotels. Balears is the self-governing community with the largest quantity of hotel rooms in Spain, including more than 300,000 beds and an availability that in most cases is "almost obsolete", according to recent studies on this sector. To face this situation, the study proposes a "sponging up" of those hotel areas, and this should not be ignored either by the industry or the administrative sector.

Such actions as the one proposed by the Calvià City Council, which insists on sinking a frigate in from of their coast –in an area of a exceptional environmental value– shows the lack of discretion and future vision that the managers of the Balears Islands' culture show. Greenpeace and the GOB Associations have started a campaign against this project, and have presented arguments against the sinking of this 3,000 tons of scrap<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> Greenpeace allegations available at <http://www.greenpeace.org/espana/reports/alegaciones-contras-el-hundimie>



Port Adriano, in Calvià (Mallorca), has an expansion project.

Saturation in the sea and on land. And, along with the saturation, the illegalities. The Ministry of Environmental assesses that there are about 10,000 buildings or constructions built in the strip protected by the Coastal Law, and only 500 of such buildings have been permitted by law.

Forecasts for the construction of new sport ports estimate that there are almost 5,000 new moorings as a consequence of the Balears Port Act. And there is no way to determine how many more will arrive, since the government does not limit the development of these installations even when the proposals from private investors are rejected by the municipal councils (as the Viver case in Ibiza).

The submitted proposals estimate that there will be an increase of about 4,500 moorings in Mallorca. In **Menorca**, the plans designed for the sport ports could mean more than a thousand new moorings. In Ibiza, four new projects will add 2,061 moorings.

And it is unknown how many more will come. The Balears Islands government does not limit the nautical tourism growth. Thus, they ignore the serious impact this has on the sea bottom and the posidonia plains, and to the destruction of the few virgin lands that are left on their coastline.

The enormous amount of works in the Balears coasts does not go hand to hand with the effort made by the Balears Islands government to put an end to the spills on their coastline.

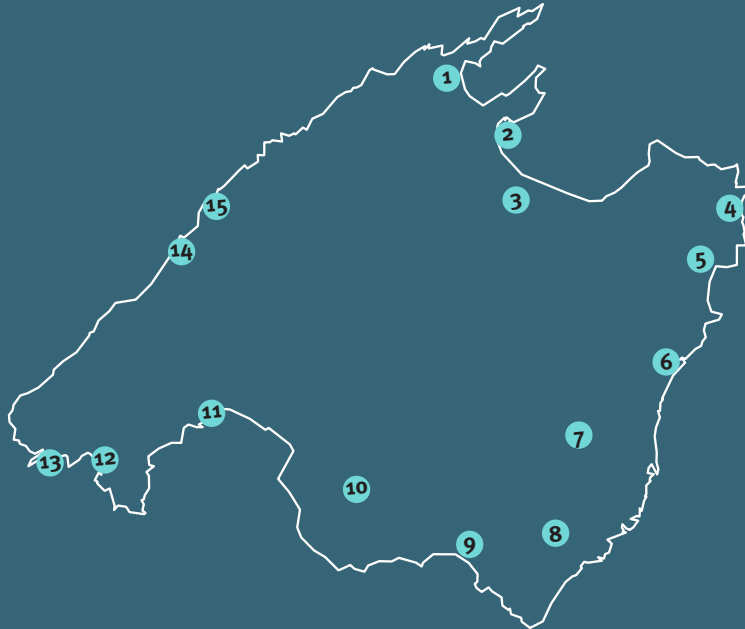
#### Links of interest

GOB Mallorca: [www.gobmallorca.com](http://www.gobmallorca.com)

GOB Menorca: [www.gobmenorca.com](http://www.gobmenorca.com)

Grup d'Estudis de sa Naturalesa (GEN): [www.gengob.org](http://www.gengob.org)

## Black spots on the Baleares coastline



**12.** Calvià. Marine urbanization of Margaluf; 3,000 tourist and residential squares. The Barceló Cala Viñas Hotel has privatized a section of the beach. Project to sink a frigate. Extension of two sports ports (Port d'El Toro and Palmanova).

**13.** Andratx. Urbanization in Cala Blanca. Sant Elm's sports port.

**14.** Deià. Cala Deià. Hydrocarbon spills.

**15.** Sóller. Sports port.

### Menorca

**16.** Ciutadella. Cala en Busquets. Sports port.

**17.** Fornells. Sports port.

**18.** Mahón. Sports port.

**19.** Binidali. Cala Binidali: receives of wastewater spills.

### Ibiza

**20.** San Joan de Labritia. Benirràs. Urbanization on the coastline.

**21.** Eivissa villa. Es Viver: sports port.

**22.** Sant Josep. Sa Caixota: urbanization on the cliffs. Punta Xinxó: sports port. Cala Tarida: receives wastewater spills.

**23.** Sant Antoni. Expansion of the Nautic Club. Ses Variades: sports port.

### Formentera

**24.** Ca Marí. Campground in the first line from the beach.

### Mallorca

**1.** Pollença Sant Jordi's Torrent: wastewater spills.

**2.** Albufera's Natural Park. Footbridges made with wood coming from the destruction of the Amazonian forests.

**3.** Santa Margalida. Facts: urbanization and the building of a golf course in rural and forestal areas with archaeological artifacts. Two sport ports.

**4.** Capdepera. Cala Rajada. Sports port.

**5.** Son Servera. Cala Bona. Sports port.

**6.** Manacor. Urbanization and building of a hotel and golf course. Project to build a sports port in Porto Cristo.

**7.** Felanitx. Sports port.

**8.** Santanyí. Sports port.

**9.** Campos. Ses Covetes. Illegal urbanization in the sea-land public domain.

**10.** Lluçmajor. Urbanization.

**11.** Palma de Mallorca. Ses Fontanelles: urbanization in humid zones. Five golf courses. Moll Vell Sports port.





# Ca na ry Islands

The Canary Archipelago is facing a long history of urban illegalities and saturation in many areas of its coastline. Even so, the administrative authorities do not seem to be willing to put an end to this situation, which has a negative impact on the tourism industry. On the contrary, they choose to make short-term profits through the destruction of the rich environmental and social heritage on the islands.

This year, many cases of corruption have been made public, all in relation with the urbanization in the Balears Archipelago. One outstanding case is that of Telde (Gran Canaria), in which the councilor of Urbanization and Contracting from the municipality, together with five other public officers, are all being investigated for bribery, fraud, rules violations and influence peddling.

In **Fuerteventura**, the municipality is characterized by a large amount of accumulated urban irregularities. La Oliva has inherited more than 20 urban agreements signed by the previous mayor, **Domingo González Arroyo**, who has been recently accused before the Anti-corruption Office for granting illegal urban permits. **Lázaro Cabrera**, the Environmental Councilor from the inter-island town hall in Fuerteventura, has also been accused of corruption.

The fever to build golf courses has spread throughout the islands. The most serious is from Gran Canaria, whose inter-island town hall has submitted a Special Territorial Plan for Golf Courses which plans for the construction of 18 new installations on the island.

The drop in the profits made from the tourist industry in the archipelago is not being handled coherently by the island administrative authorities, since they only submit proposals for tourism that are focused exclusively on the increase of hotel and residential availability,

as well as the number of golf courses and sports ports. In addition, all this is followed by the construction of new infrastructure, which contributes even more to the greatest problem the islands must face: saturation.

In the coming years, the Ministry of Environment will invest 200 million Euros in works carried out on the Canary coastline. This quantity is ten times higher than that destined by this organism to buy areas of land along the 8,000 km of Spanish coast in order to preserve them from destruction. The disproportion existing between the two mentioned amounts shows the little real interest from the administrative authorities to conserve the coast.

The application of the law is always according to the criteria of the one who applies them. Thus is the case of the Coasts Act and the Ministry of the Environment, whose arbitrariness in decision-making makes us doubt about the intentions of this administration. An example of this would be the construction of two hotels on the dunes of Corralejo in Fuerteventura, whose demolition was announced on many occasions by the Minister of Environment, Cristina Narbona, and will not take place. This is one of the cases in which the performance of the Ministry of Environment can be characterized as disappointing and fraudulent.

The archipelago is accumulating the most damaging port infrastructure projects in the whole State. The Granadilla Project, in the South of Tenerife, implies the destruction of the south coast and the abandonment of the port that is currently operating in the north. It is ridiculous from the environmental, economic and social points of view. The other project, that refers to the expansion of the Arinaga Port in Gran Canaria, is like Granadilla's project in many aspects, and it will bring about



Riu hotels built in sea-land public domain inside Dunas de Corralejo Natural Park (Fuerteventura).

serious environmental effects: the introduction of natural gas on the islands through the construction of compression plants in both ports. Paradoxically, Endesa, the organization in charge of the project, discards the *off shore* technology that they promote in Italy, were land-based compression plants are not required.

In the Canary Islands, the number of sports ports is growing. Gran Canaria has submitted a special sports ports plan that includes the building of 2,311 moorings, so as to reach 5,000 on the coastline. Fuerteventura proposes to reach the amount of 1,000 moorings on the island in their tourist plan. Teguiise has proposed the construction of a sports port on their coastline, even though it is not included in the Lanzarote Territorial Tourist Plan.

Contamination is still a black chapter in the history of the Canary coastline. Little has improved throughout the years. A recent report about spills from the Canary's Environmental and Territorial Policies Council shows a dramatic situation: 80% of the systems that discharge into the sea on the Canary Islands are irregular. This report detects 330 spills, of which 267 are illegal.

Per island, the figures are the following: **Tenerife** has 25 authorized spills out of 115; **Gran Canaria**, 20 authorized out of 105;

**Fuerteventura**, 8 authorized out of 47; **Lanzarote** 4 officially registered out of 44; **El Hierro**, only 1 registered out of 12; **La Palma**, 3 authorized out of 15; and **La Gomera**, 2 authorized out of 7.

#### Links of interest

Asamblea por Tenerife  
[Tenerife's Assembly]:  
[www.yaestabien.org](http://www.yaestabien.org)

ATAN: [www.atan.org](http://www.atan.org)

Ben Magec-Ecologistas en Acción  
[Ben Magec-Ecologists in Action]:  
[www.benmagec.org](http://www.benmagec.org)

Plataforma ciudadana contra el puerto  
Industrial de Granadilla  
[Citizen platform against the Industrial  
Port of Granadilla]:  
[www.nopuertogranadilla.org](http://www.nopuertogranadilla.org)

WWF/Adena: [www.wwf.es](http://www.wwf.es)

## Black spots on the Canary coastline



### Gran Canaria

1. Las Palmas-Araucas-Telde. Two new golf courses.
2. Telde. Corruption.
3. Ingenio. Golf course.
4. Agüimes. Golf course.
5. Santa Lucía de Tirajana. Golf course.
6. San Bartolomé de Tirajana. Five new golf courses.
7. Arinaga. Arinaga Port: expansion project with serious environmental effects (waiting for Environmental Impact Assessment).
8. Meloneras. Sports port.
9. Arguineguín. Expansion of the sports port.
10. Mogán. Two new golf courses. Expansion of the sports port.
11. Balito Beach. Sports port.
12. Anfi Tauro. Urbanization and sports port.
13. La Aldea de San Nicolás. Golf course.
14. Agaete. Two new golf courses. Expansion of the sports port.
15. Guía de Gran Canaria. Golf course.
16. Gáldar. Two new golf courses.
17. Gran Canaria: 105 spill points.

### Fuerteventura

18. La Oliva. Golf course. Majanicho. Origo Mare Urbanization, with serious environmental effects.
19. La Oliva. El Jablito. Sports port.
20. Corralejo. Oliva Beach and Tres Islas hotels: concession to occupy the sea-land public domain, against the Coastal Act.
21. Puerto del Rosario. Golf course.
22. Antigua. Golf course.
23. Pájara. Two new golf courses.
24. Fuerteventura: 47 spill points.

### Lanzarote

25. Haría. Charco del Palo. Urbanization with serious environmental effects.
26. Tegüise. Sports port.
27. Lanzarote: 44 spill points.

### Tenerife

28. Las Teresitas beach. Urbanization with suspicions of corruption.
29. Granadilla. Granadilla's Port: coastal destruction with effects in the SCI [Site of Community Importance].
30. San Miguel de Abona. Los Abrigos. Sewer water spills from the Golf del Sur urbanization.
31. Arona. Las Américas. Bunker beach: shopping center (currently halted).
32. Tenerife: 115 spill points.

### La Gomera

33. Gran Rey Valley. Urbanization of the whole coastline.
34. La Gomera: 7 spill points.

### La Palma

35. Los Cancajos. Sports port.
36. Santa Cruz de La Palma Port. Expansion called off by the Supreme Court. New works have been proposed.
37. La Palma: 15 spill points.

### El Hierro

38. El Hierro: 12 spill points.

An aerial photograph of a coastal region, likely in Murcia, Spain. The image shows a large, dark, rocky mountain peak in the center, surrounded by a bay or inlet. The water is a deep blue, and the surrounding land is a mix of dark and light tones, suggesting a rugged terrain. The sky is a clear, light blue. The text 'Region of Murcia' is overlaid in large, white, sans-serif font, with 'Mur' on the top line, 'cia' on the bottom line, and 'Region of' in a smaller font above 'Mur'.

# Region of Mur cia



According to data collected by INEM regarding the growth of the different areas in Spain, between the years 2000 and 2004, Murcia was the region that most grew, and the most outstanding activity was construction, which increased 31%.

The Region of Murcia has rapidly become a part of the building mania. Figures related to building are almost incredible, ranging from 300,000 to 800,000 new houses, which means a doubling or even tripling of today's population in the region.

According to urbanization plans, seven of Murcia's municipalities will grow more than 50% between 2005 and 2014: Alhama de Murcia (121%), Águilas (84.5%), Los Alcázares (79.7%), Santomera (69.7%), Abarán (64.2%), and San Javier (51.1%). The increase in the population over the next 15 years will be 51.7%, surpassing the amount of two million inhabitants.

During this last year, many municipal administrations and even the regional Government have been affected by corruption cases associated with urbanization. The High Court of Justice is studying the cases of a dozen towns where urbanization corruption has taken place. All signs point clearly to the legislation regarding the land, urbanization and environmental protection, which have been designed to allow urban speculation. In the case of the Region of Murcia, there is also a lack of safeguarding regarding protected natural areas, a situation which makes this region different from other Self-governing Communities such as Valencia or Galicia, although they all share a similar legislation. If the Constitutional Court does not act quickly, the situation in Murcia will lead to the destruction of the best environmental resources of the area.

The District Attorney of the High Court of Justice of Murcia, Manuel Lopez Bernal, has initiated twelve investigations related to presumed urban irregularities in several town councils in the Region of Murcia to date. **Cieza, Mazarrón, San Javier, Águilas, San Pedro del Pinatar, Murcia, Los Alcázares and La Unión.**

The tourism figures in the Region of Murcia are increasing, and this seems to be the only issue that matters, since the environmental costs resulting from the unsustainable consumption of natural resources such as water, land or energy are not incorporated into the real price of the projects. In addition, the Council of Industry and Environmental Issues –which should be concerned with these issues– only serves as an alibi for the meter by meter destruction of the cultural and environmental heritage of this region.



La Manga del Mar Menor, a unique place altered by urbanism.

During Francisco Marques' conduction of Environmental Issues in the past, the region suffered a series of violations performed in protected natural areas, many of which are now in the courts. Greenpeace believes that the creation of a Council of Environmental Issues is essential in order to work for and protect the environmental heritage of the Region of Murcia.

In the same manner, an urgent review of the regional Land Act is necessary, as well as the temporary moratorium of all urban plans until such review is finished.

Greenpeace, along with the ANSE Association, have asked the regional Government for a moratorium to be applied to the creation of new sports ports on the Region of Murcia coastline until a Ports Plan approved by all administrative authorities and agencies interested has been accepted.

The most serious pollution problems on the Murcia coastline are concentrated in the Mar Menor and its surroundings, where the purification plants play are completely inefficient. Coastline towns receive millions of Euros from building permits and surplus generated by urban developments. However, they still request financing for purification infrastructure from the Government or the European Union.

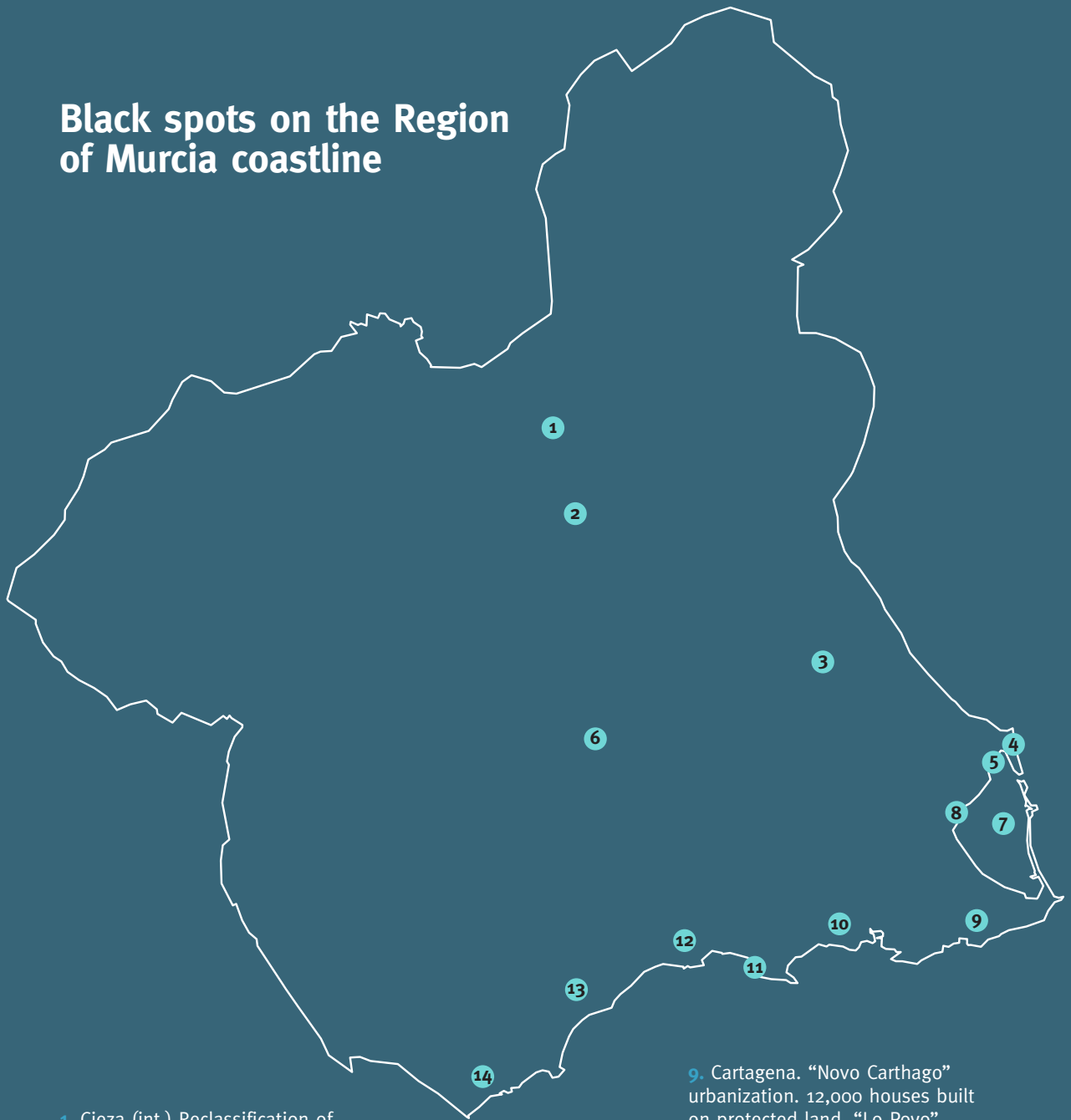
### Links of interest

Asociación de Naturalistas del Sureste (ANSE) [Southeast Naturalists' Association]:  
[www.asociacionanse.org](http://www.asociacionanse.org)

Ecologistas en Acción de la Región Murciana [Ecologists in Action in the Region of Murcia]:  
[www.ecologistasenaccion.org](http://www.ecologistasenaccion.org)

Plataforma La Región de Murcia No Se Vende [Platform The Region of Murcia is not for sale]:  
[www.um.es/eubacteria/murcianosevende.html](http://www.um.es/eubacteria/murcianosevende.html)

## Black spots on the Region of Murcia coastline



- 1.** Cieza (int.) Reclassification of 20 million m<sup>2</sup> for urbanization. The District Attorney is investigating urban irregularities. The Mayor is accused of corrupt practices and falsifying public documents.
- 2.** Valle de Ricote (int.) 62,000 houses.
- 3.** Murcia (int.) 120,000 houses and 14 golf courses. The District Attorney is investigating urban irregularities.
- 4.** San Pedro del Pinatar. The District Attorney is investigating urban irregularities. Expansion of the sports port and the road that cuts through the regional park.
- 5.** San Javier. Urban growth of 51.7%. The District Attorney is investigating urban irregularities. Puerto Mayor's sports port.

- 6.** Alhama de Murcia (int.) Urban growth of 121%. 28,000 houses and 6 golf courses.
- 7.** La Manga. Receives dumping of non-purified wastewaters.
- 8.** Los Alcázares. Urban growth of 79.7%. The District Attorney is investigating urban irregularities. Two lawsuits against the Mayor related to falsifying of public documents, corrupt practices and fraud upon a public entity. "Torre del Rame" golf course. Proceedings for irrigation with well water. Insufficient purification of wastewaters.

- 9.** Cartagena. "Novo Carthago" urbanization. 12,000 houses built on protected land. "Lo Poyo" urbanization. 7,000 houses and hotels.
- 10.** La Unión. The District Attorney is investigating urban irregularities.
- 11.** La Azohía. Santa Elena sports port.
- 12.** Mazarrón. The District Attorney is investigating urban irregularities.
- 13.** Lorca: 35,000 houses.
- 14.** Águilas. Urban growth of 84.5%. The District Attorney is investigating urban irregularities. La Zerrichera Urbanization (SCI [Site of Community Importance] and SPA [Special Protected Area for Birds]. Marina de Cope: 11,000 houses, 24 hotels, 5 golf courses and a sports port. Casica Verde sports port.

# A ppen dix I

**2006 Global Corruption Report. References to urban corruption**  
Transparency International - Spain

Manuel Villoria (Political Science Professor at the Rey Juan Carlos University, Madrid)

In any case, it would now be convenient to analyze in detail four aspects of corruption and the struggle against corruption in Spain that we consider especially relevant.

Local corruption: urbanism and speculation.

On March 10, 2005, in Marbella (Málaga), the greatest operation against money laundering in all of Europe took place, with ramifications in the United States and Canada. The Spanish police thwarted a crime organization which center of operations was located in a lawyer's office in Marbella, where millionaire sums for investment were received from groups related to organized crime. In that office, and with the cooperation of three notary offices, an intricate puzzle that included more than a thousand companies, whose branches extended up to Gibraltar, investing preferably in the real state business of Costa del Sol. This place has been identified by European police experts as one of the most important areas for organized crime.

To understand this, it is important to take into account that generally speaking, the local governments in Spain are the ones characterized by the highest level of corruption. In these governments, especially those on the coast—Marbella's case is known worldwide—and near big cities, the classification of urban land generates the greatest cases of corruption. Among the countries of the OCDE, Spain is the one in which the housing prices have increased the most in recent years. In diverse reports—including the one from the Public Defender—warn about this constant corruption. The report from the Public Defender shows that the agreements consist in “the owner of some lands transferring them, irregardless of the regulations regarding ownership, or even making payments to the Urban Administration, if a determined plan related to some areas specified within the agreement (including certain sections on classifications, uses, intensity...) is approved or modified by said Administration”. These practices are generating a large amount of corruption.

In summary, regarding this complex subject, we could confirm (Vercher, 2004):

1. Almost all mayors are in favor of urban agreements as a way to generate income.
2. The modification of plans is frequent; in Mallorca alone, municipalities have modified their plans 227 times in the past four years.
3. The supervision of illegal construction and project deviations is very light.
4. Penalties are usually fines, and almost never include demolitions.
5. In Spain, there is a lot of illegal money invested in the building sector. Usually, a third of the total price of a house is paid illegally, so the loss to federal agencies is substantial.
6. The private sector has been allowed to monopolize the land in order to show an apparent lack of availability, and thus generate an increase in prices.
7. Individuals have been expropriated from their lands in order to grant them to companies with social goals. These companies, once they had the land in their power, sold it at astronomical prices.
8. Builders have created fictitious political parties so as to run for local elections and gain representation on the urban council. Then they make decisions that are more favorable to them. In other occasions, they infiltrate the traditional political parties so as to achieve the same objectives.
9. Urban corruption is spreading and no institution is respected. Thus, in those places where such corruption is outstanding, courts of law have suffered the consequences, as the well known case of Marbella.

# A pppen dix III

Protected marine areas: tools for conservation

“Protected Marine Area” is a term that is becoming more and more common within the context of biodiversity conservation, protection of habitats and fishing management. It covers a wide range of protection measures and the same wide range of benefits provided by it.

Marine Reserves are a type of protected marine area, and they offer the highest level of protection for the marine and coastline zones. Marine Reserves are coast or sea areas that are completely safeguarded against damaging human activities.

The need to create protected marine areas has been acknowledged both at the national and international levels, with the organization of forums such as the UN World Meeting for Sustainable Development, emphasizing the need for the creation of protected coastline and marine areas, and setting goals and deadlines for their creation.

The World Parks Congress suggested the establishment of a representative and well-managed network in charge of protected marine areas for the year 2012. The Congress demanded complete protection of at least 20-30% of the coasts and oceans around the world.

Conservation has to do with the protection of biodiversity and the quantity of living organisms on earth. This means not only the protection of specific species, but also all habitats and species, as well as the conservation of all complex interactions between the different living organisms that make up an ecosystem. Marine Reserves contribute to achieving these goals, making them a unique conservation tool.

In order to safeguard an important amount of habitats and species, it will be necessary to establish a certain number of marine and coastline reserves, and it is important that they are located within a network that guarantees their connection with each other.

In order to protect all of the coastal and marine biodiversity, it is essential that the most important habitats are represented within a network. Researchers have developed certain criteria to facilitate the identification of priority areas in the coastal and marine environments that should be protected. These criteria are:

- areas that include vulnerable habitats, e.g., underwater mountains;
- areas that include vulnerable life stages, e.g., areas of egg-laying and breeding;
- areas that support the development of over-exploited or scarce species;
- areas that provide certain ecological services.

In the coastal zone, the same ecological principles are applied when setting-up a reservation network. These principles are:

1. A network that covers an adequate proportion of the sea.
2. The protection of every kind of habitat, and not only those with unique characteristics or virgin, but also those common habitats that are frequently degraded.
3. The protection of each habitat must cover an adequate proportion of such habitat, and include a sufficient number of emplacements.

## Benefits of Marine Reserves

Marine reserves can help reestablish the ecological balance altered by human activities.

Control of biodiversity in the marine ecosystems that are protected from extraction activities is of great educational value and gives the coastal communities the opportunity to obtain property rights over the marine reserves in their area.

Marine reserves provide a habitat that is not subject to alterations, which can provide very valuable information for scientific research. Additionally, these habitats provide a unique and long-term source of data, offering researchers the opportunity to monitor species and their habitats, which is essential to provide true information for conservation and future management policies.

The no-extraction of elements from the sea can also mean a benefit for marine reserves. Activities such as scuba diving, underwater photography and the observation of cetaceans will all benefit from a diverse and plentiful marine life. These activities may provide economic alternatives for coastal communities without damaging the coastline and marine environments. The positive impacts from the marine reserves may also include valuable economic benefits.

## Greenpeace's Proposal

Greenpeace is promoting a worldwide network of marine reserves that covers forty percent of the oceans on the planet, in order to maintain oceans and seas that are clean and well preserved.

One specific proposal makes reference to the establishment of the marine reservation representative network in the Mediterranean Sea, and that includes large-scale reserves on the high seas and a group of marine reserves in a minor scale in conjunction with well-managed and sustainable fishing areas in the coastal zone, including a total of 40%

of the Mediterranean Sea. Said network is essential if we want to stop and change the drop in the wide range of biodiversity of the area.

As a first step towards the establishment of the Mediterranean network, Greenpeace has created a map in which key areas to be designated as marine reserves are indicated. The proposed network includes examples of the different habitats found in the area, as well as the areas known as important places for reproduction and breeding, which are fundamental for an adequate functioning of the ecosystem.



## References

- <sup>i</sup> “Golf and urbanism in Cádiz province: the unsustainability of a new tourism model”. Ecologistas en Acción de Andalucía [Andalusia’s Environmentalists in Action].
- <sup>ii</sup> Written communication with the General Hydraulic Works and Integral Water Cycle Directorate. May 2005.
- <sup>iii</sup> “Purification of wastewaters on the Cantabria coastline”. ARCA.
- <sup>iv</sup> Presentation of the book *Los Límites del Territorio [Territorial Limits]*. Universitat de València. November 2005.