



DESTRUCCIÓN

A

TODA COSTA

JULY 2005

GREENPEACE REPORT ABOUT THE SPANISH COAST SITUATION

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Edition: Laura Pérez Picarzo.

Design and Layout: De Dos. Espacio de Ideas.

Photo Cover: hotel in El Algarrobico's beach (Carboneras). Natural Park Cabo de Gata-Níjar.
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REPORTS OBJECTIVES



The main objective of this report is to denounce the bad situation in which the Spanish coasts are. Our denounce materializes in "black spots" placed along the 8.000 kilometers of the Spanish coast, that draw a dark map of constant aggressions to a strip of land as rich and valuable that it has a specific law that protects it, The Shores Act 28/1988. The fulfilment of this law should be the best guaranty to ensure the conservation of the coast.

Our second objective is to determine the causes that have brought the coast to this situation. The lack of planning and management of several activities done in the coast has resulted in non-fulfilment the Shores Act and the rest of the environmental regulations referring to contamination and protection of the natural spaces, and the species that live on it.

Our third and last objective, once the problems have been identified, is to try to find solutions. Stop the building on the coast's first strip of land, stop dumping to the sea, don't allow damaging works for the coastal ecosystems and protecting the natural spaces.

All the stakeholders, the administration, the local population, the ecologist and environmentalist organizations and the companies have to start working immediately in a coordinated way in order to start running solutions trough an integrated coast management, aiming to protect the natural ecosystems running, increasing at the same time the social and economic welfare of the coastal regions.

INTRODUCTION



THE SEA AND ITS COASTAL ECOSYSTEMS PROVIDE A GREAT VARIETY OF SERVICES AND WEALTH TO THE SOCIETY AT A GLOBAL LEVEL THEY HAVE AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE CLIMATE REGULATION AND AT A REGIONAL LEVEL THEY CONTRIBUTE TO THE DIET, THEY PROTECT FROM THE COASTAL EROSION AND THEY BRING CONSIDERABLE BENEFITS THANKS TO ACTIVITIES LIKE THE TOURISM, WHICH MEANS JOBS AND ECONOMIC WEALTH.

THE DEGRADATION OF THE COASTAL AND MARINE SPANISH ENVIRONMENT IS DUE TO HUMAN ACTIVITIES. THE CONTAMINATION PROBLEMS, THE OVERCROWDING URBAN DEVELOPMENT, THE FISHING OVEREXPLOITATION AND THE RIVERS ESTUARIES ALTERATION ACT, IN A SYNERGIC WAY, AMPLIFYING ITS ECOLOGICAL IMPACTS AND SITUATING THE COAST IN A PRECARIOUS SITUATION.

SOCIETY AND ADMINISTRATION HAVE MOVED FORWARD IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE PROBLEMS THAT AFFECTS TO THE COAST, BUT VERY FEW SEEM READY TO APPLY THE SOLUTIONS IN THE STRIP OF TERRITORY THAT CORRESPONDS, THEY ARE MORE WORRIED ABOUT THE SHORT TERM THAN ABOUT THE FUTURE THAT THE NEXT GENERATIONS EXPECT.

URBAN DEVELOPMENT



“We only have a planet and it's our duty to take care of it, for us, for our children and the future generations. The European Union environmental legislation can help us to preserve our planet, but for that they have to be fully applied. Spain has a great biodiversity, we should do our best to protect those resources and we have to make a bigger effort to improve its level of application in the environmental legislation.”

Margot Wallström, Ex- European Commission. Commissioner of Environment. 20 July 2004

The urban development of the coast involves a chain of problems: contamination, destruction of wetlands, the beaches are becoming narrower... The Spanish ecosystem of the coast is being weakened. This phenomenon, unstoppable since four decades is extending now to the last intact spots of the coast: Murcia, Almería, Cádiz and Huelva.

A lot of Laws, Plans and guidelines are drawn up to try to stop the urban development saturation of the coast. But those, although they are appropriately publicized, very often are not followed by regulations to allow their application, so those guidelines aren't worth the paper they're written on, they are worthless.

The local administrations and the companies resort to the “shortage of” the infrastructures to claim new roads, more marinas or golf courses. It is a situation that arises from the autonomous self-governed organs lack of control of the urban development in coastal municipalities.

One of the subjects that we have to deal with without delay is the financing methods of the coast councils. The current model is based on obtaining a large percentage of the incomes through taxes and fees related to the construction and housing (IBI –Spanish tax over immovable assets–, added values, planning permissions and land selling). This model moreover isn't either transparent nor efficient.

Greenpeace considers that a new local financing system should be enforced, allowing the town councils not to depend on building to obtain incomes, as it happens at the moment. That way we would achieve having the local administrations not considering anymore the coastal fringe as a source of quick incomes, without worrying about the development possibilities that they leave to future generations. The mechanisms to change the current system are very diverse and some have already been pointed by governments as some of the ones from the Generalitat, the autonomous government of Catalonia, that has talked about establishing an “ecotax” to bring financing to the municipalities, allowing to regenerate the stagnant model of sun and beach and benefiting the environmental conservation and protection.

The Ministry of Environment announced last summer a plan to protect the Spanish coasts from housing development and building proceedings in the coastal public property, that is, in the first 100 meters of the seashore. This is a good measure, although insufficient since the saturation of the Spanish coast strip. Actually, it isn't something new, the 1988 Shores Act already obliges to comply that, but the reality shows that there are hundreds of illegal constructions situated in that narrow strip of land. The municipalities are the ones that have the urban development legal authority, and it's up to them to change the

model with the rest of the regional and central administrations' help.

Another measure announced by the Spanish Minister of Environment, Cristina Narbona, at the beginning of this year was the intention to introduce a compulsory report issued by the Hydrographic Confederations guaranteeing the water supply before starting urban development plan. That measure highlights the problem of the urban development saturation suffered by the Spanish coast. 34% of the first kilometer of Mediterranean coast is built-up. Melilla, Málaga and Barcelona raises that number to a little above 50%.

One of the phenomena associated to the coast development boom is the never-ending increase in prices of the famous “beach apartments”. The prohibitive prices of more “traditional” areas as the Balearic Islands or the Costa del Sol, in the Málaga region have transferred the demand to areas as Murcia and Almería, where the prices are still “competitive”, even at the expense of destroying the last virgin coast stretches.

TOURISM



“The hotel and catering trade sector is going through a critical state, being accused of a predatory property development policy, the increasing competition of the emerging destinations and the fall of the foreign markets overnight and average number of stays. All this, added to the growth of a kind of offer that the current legislation does not provide for (11,5 million tourists take accommodation of this kind), has consequently a drop of the profitability”

José Guillermo Díaz Montañés. President of the Spanish Confederation of Hotels and Tourist accommodation (CEHAT)
Inauguration Speech of the Confederation Congress of April 2005

The tourist sector of “sun and beach” is still in crisis. This tourism model, traditionally associated to Spain, includes 75% of the Spanish coasts hotel and catering business offer. The data shows that this model is not exhausted yet but already stuck and obsolete.

Years ago, the tourism market was experiencing a demand situation, hotels and apartments were filled up with people by themselves and the competition was between very similar prices. It was a situation in which the unlimited growth predominated over everything, no matter the resources consumption and the environment degradation. Now we have an over supplying market, in which it is much more difficult to obtain good occupation and profitability. Now the companies of the sector themselves claim that the present model of sun and beach should evolve towards another one in which a sustainable environment should take precedence over the rest.

Another outstanding information is that the tourist sector data numbers keep preserved thanks to the seasonal nature phenomenon alteration, which implies an increasing tourists tendency of coming out of the summer period. The data analysis shows that between 2002 and 2004 five million tourists less visited Spain in the summer period¹. Moreover, the average occupation in the summer months accumulates five consecutive years of decrease in despite of the “prices slowing down”, that almost even bordered on defla-

tion in the Balearic and Canary archipelagos and the Comunidad of Valencia.

Between 1990 and 2000, the Spanish population increased 5%, but the urban development increased 25,4%, a number that shoots up as we approach to the coast. Tourism experts state that not even another more house should be allowed to be built in the coast if it doesn't provide value to the soil. Some coast areas start going towards that direction, but in general, municipalities are still eager for cement that turns into money in the municipal coffers.

From very different sectors the alarm has been raised about the over offer of tourist places supply in the Spanish coast. Various experts in the tourist scene recognize that the small and medium tourist companies are facing very difficult moments because of the excessive rise of the competitors. The full entry of property developers in the tourism industry has generated a price war that has caused a fall of profitability in the last three years of between 15% and 30% for 70% of the hotels and tourist accommodations in Spain.

The report about tourism presented by the Spanish Alliance for the Tourism Excellence (Exceltur) warns about that problem pointing at concrete spots as the Costa del Sol and the Costa Tropical in Andalusia, some areas of Mallorca, Gran Canaria, Tenerife and Fuerteventura, the Costa Brava, the Costa Dorada and the Costa Calida.

That tendency has to be reversed. We can't go on building sacrificing our best resource: the coast. There are other ways to obtain a tourism of quality for the coastal towns that have no relation with those urban development “bombshell” that happen in the coast. Cities as Barcelona or Bilbao, that have bet for a recovery and restoration get the best qualifications of the tourists.

GOLF AND TOURISM

In Spain the minimal yearly consumption of the totality of the golf courses is 30 cubic hectometers of water. The projects planned increase an average amount of 21 facilities a year (today there are 293) and the estimation point that in ten years there will be 500 golf courses in Spain, despite of the fact that today we are already talking about saturation and rivalry among the courses to attract customers.

Experts indicate that the tourist that plays golf spends 6 times more money than the one that doesn't practice that sport. The key data in this equation is that the golf player that is accommodated in hotels leaves a big amount of money where he spends the summer. However, the model that is spreading in almost all the Spanish coast associates building golf courses to houses and not to hotels and, according to the experts, it doesn't generate a sustainable economic model, as the water and land consumption, limited resources of the Spanish coasts, is far higher above the profit generated for that tourist sector.

(1) Considered from the month of June until the month of September both included.

INSTALACIONES AND WO



RKS IN THE COAST

The Ministry of Environment is undertaking some in order to recuperate the Spanish coast, based on the respect of the environmental and landscape characteristics of each zone. Nevertheless, not the same conscientiousness to finish with illegal or harmful works for the Coastal public property is appreciated in all the autonomous provinces. So, for example, whereas in the Balearic Islands they carry out demarcations² that stop the works (Ses Fontanelles, Mallorca), in Andalusia roads in the Coastal public property are authorized (Chiclana and San Fernando) and in Galicia they bet on filling up the coast with cement, seafront promenades-shaped.

The announcement last year by the Minister of Environment of not accreting artificially beaches that loose sand because of artificial causes (dykes, marinas...) was taken as a declaration of war. The municipalities, pressurized from the businessmen, demand having their beaches in "good conditions" for the tourist season. Those demands forget that too much building or the location of the seafronts are responsible for the loss of environmental quality of the sandy areas and that artificial sand replacement aren't a solution but an expensive temporary patch.

Those pressures to continue with the accretion of the beaches has brought the Ministry of Environment to maintain practically almost the same policy as always.

The beaches accretion are still undertaken in its majority from the economical perspective forgetting the environmental recovery component of the natural coastal ecosystems, the only future guarantee for the Spanish sandy areas.

The Ministry of Environment is still undertaking sand extraction to the artificial accretion of beaches, even when there are official reports that denounce the damages to marine flora and fauna species, as in the Almadrava beach, in Denia (Comunidad Valenciana), a Site of Community Importance for the Natura 2000 Network where the Directorate for Coasts Authorities didn't elaborate a survey on the environmental impact and have obviated the damages on the *Posidonia oceanica* meadows.

For the first year of government celebration, the Ministry of Environment announced that a Plan for the sustainable coasts management had started. That coasts plan, demanded by Greenpeace for years, can not be delayed, as it is an essential tool that will draw the guidelines proceedings in the 8.000 kilometers of Spanish coast and will avoid to a large extent the arbitrariness to which it is now exposed.

(2) Delimitation of the Coastal public property according to The Shores Act of July 28, 1988.

PORTS



The Ministry of Development is responsible for the coastal ecosystems degradation.

The Ports Law envisages that any port enlargement has to be defrayed by the port authority funds. That has brought that the Spanish coast that is still free of building is becoming a dock reserve, that's how port administrations are trading given its lack of liquidity. The new ports as the Exterior Port of A Coruña not only have none environmental viability, but neither economic, but they are built thanks to the European generosity and the huge building businesses devised by city councils and port authorities. Ports finance their enlargements gathering large stretches of public coastline where they do and undo their own way without respecting the environmental regulations and then they sell to the highest bidder without the environment organization acting anyhow to stop one of the biggest drama of the Spanish coast.

The Ministry of Development, responsible for the ports of the State, didn't still present a management plan for all the ports. That fragmentary policy brings each Port Authority to undertake a race on their own in order to get financial viability for their installations, fighting against the rest and without paying any attention to the social, economic and environmental consequences of their proceedings. The result can be easily seen: scandalous property operations in

Las Palmas de Gran Canaria (Canary Islands), fish and shellfish shoal destruction in Galicia and Barcelona (Catalonia), enormous dredging of submarine areas for ports stuffing as in Bilbao (Basque Country) or Gijón (Asturias), port installations enlargement plans that destroy kilometers of virgin coast as in Pasajes (Basque Country), building new ports without any justification as the ones of A Coruña (Punta Langosteira Exterior Port) or the south port of Tenerife (Industrial Port of Granadilla). This lack of management from the Development Department, fostered by the Ports Law reform, is moreover approved by the laxity shown by the Ministry of Environment and autonomous region administrations to protect and preserve the environmental and economic national resources of the Spanish coast.

POLLUTION



Dumping to the sea despite of being forbidden by the Shores Act³ is still happening. Recklessness growth of many developments in the coast without the necessary sewage water treatment installations is usual in the coast towns, that doesn't usually consider as part of water treatment plans the massive influx of tourists during the summer period. Far from solving the problem, the persons responsible for the sanitary plans of the city council, use that lack of foresight, that should be punished and corrected, as an excuse to justify the dumping, and they usually contribute with resignation as only answer when faced with the neighbours and tourists complaints.

New sewage treatment plants are built and the existing ones are enlarged and repaired, but at a rhythm much slower than the what's necessary, not even to comply with the European regulation in water treatment, but to correct the coastal pollution serious problems.

The period given by the European Commission to the municipalities with a population over 2.000 inhabitants to be equipped with secondary sewage treatment plants ends this current year. The real situation, six months before the limit date, can be described as catastrophic. Big coastal municipalities as Algeciras (Andalusia) lack those systems and the situation worsens as the size of the town goes down. In July 2004 the European Commission announced that almost 200 Spanish

municipalities didn't respect the period imposed by the Guidelines about urban sewage in order to establish an adequate treatment for the sewage of towns with a population over 15.000 inhabitants, which has brought about the European Commission decision to initiate sanction process against Spain

In view of that situation, the Ministry of Environment should devote its efforts and budgets to improve the sewage treatment that threatens beaches and coasts in several spots of the coast or to repair the hundreds of underwater outlets that periodically fills the coveted Spanish sandy areas with sewage.

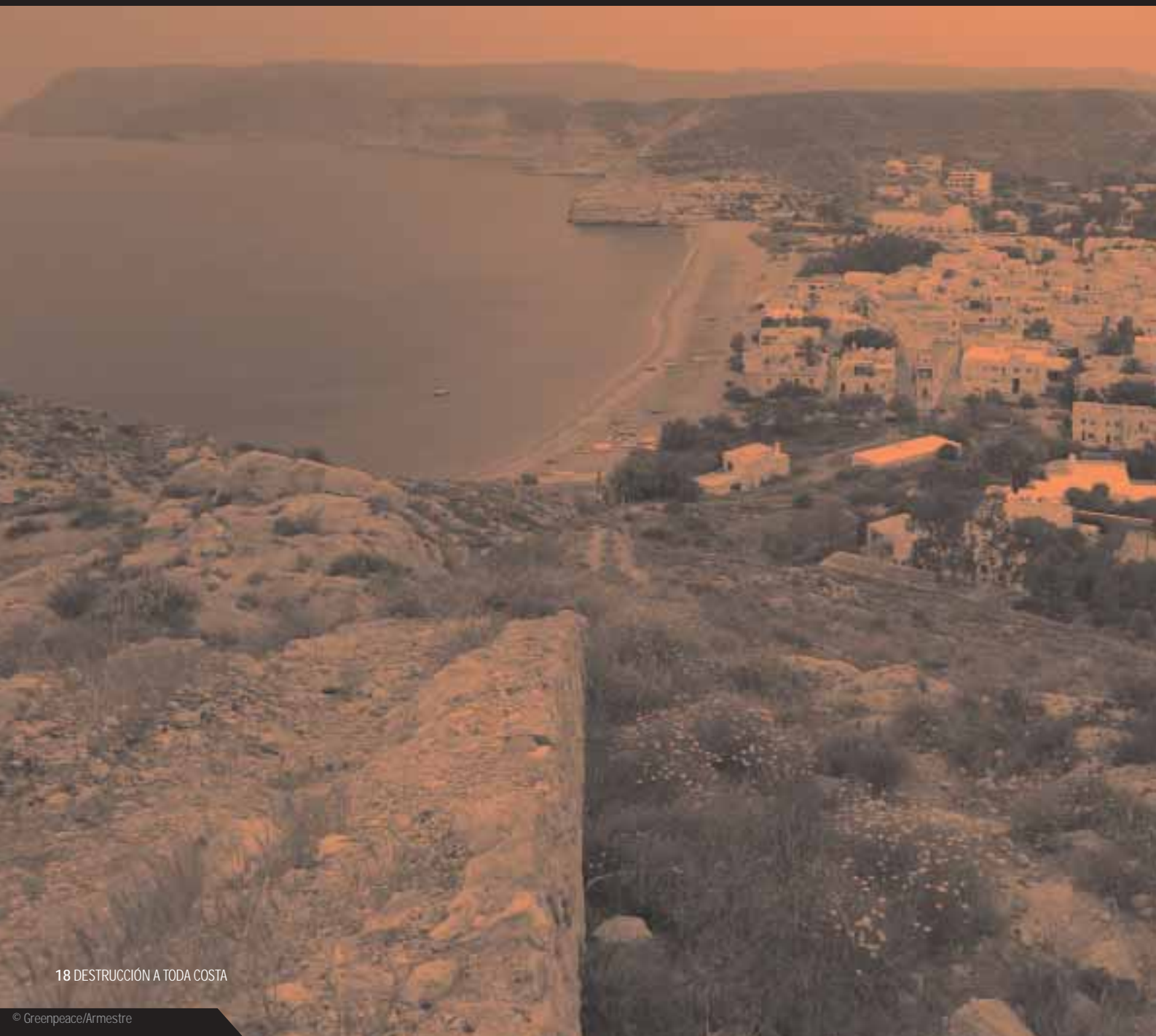
The annual report about the quality of the bathing waters issued each year by the EU emphasizes that in the year 2004, 17 beaches with pollution problems that didn't satisfy the European requirement were found . In four of them bathing is not permitted.

The situation of the Spanish coasts is serious and, at least because of the huge benefits they bring, they deserve the effort of preserving and protecting them from being destroyed. Greenpeace offers its support and full collaboration to all the ones that commit for the recovery of the public nature of the beaches, the defense of the natural spaces, –dunes, marshes, cliffs, estuaries...– and the natural and economical regeneration of our damaged coast .

(3) Article 25.1 of the Shores Act of July 28, 1988.

ANDALUSIA

THE VAST ANDALUSIAN COAST LIVES PRISONER OF THE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY, AN ECONOMIC SECTOR THAT IS STARTING TO STRANGLE THE TOURIST SECTOR AND THAT HAS DEPLETED A BIG PART OF ITS NATURAL CHARACTERISTICS FROM ITS BEST LURE: ITS NATURE AND BEACHES.





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The regional Government of Andalusia, the Junta de Andalucía, is largely responsible for the lack of urban development control that occurs in its coast. A delay of 20 years in the drafting of plans that would determine the coastal building development has allowed municipalities to develop its coast without any territorial coordination, with the result that we all know. The modifications announced by the Junta de Andalucía have to start without delay. Likewise, the various sub-regional program of coast planning have to come out urgently. Until then, The Junta de Andalucía should show that its intentions are not only a mere declaration and should impose an urban development moratorium. Equally all the demolition sentences on the illegal housing development and buildings have to be obeyed.

According to data from the Spanish National Institute of geography 59% of the Andalusian coast has already been built and the existence of four thousand proceedings about development infractions opened in the urban development offices of the coast, indicates that the majority of the coastal towns and cities are not betting on a development compatible with nature.

Building in the coast strip goes on at an unstoppable rhythm. Practically exhausted, the ground of the coast of Málaga⁴ (in Fuen-girola or Torremolinos 100% of its ground has been developed), the urban developments transfer to the coasts of Granada, Almería, Cádiz, and Huelva. The natural park of Cabo de Gata-Níjar (Almería), that is in the Ministry of Environment list of candidates to become a National Park, is currently one of the natural spaces more beset by urban development projects.

The general recognition that cities as Marbella (Málaga), El Puerto de Santa María (Cádiz), Barbate (Cádiz) or Almuñécar (Granada) are seized with urban development speculation is a poor help for the tourism industry that sells worse and worse the saturation and the lack of consideration towards the natural spaces.

The two main engine of the Andalusian economy, building and tourism, are closely related. They consume the main resource, the ground, and they go together with an excessive consumption of energy and water. The consumption of those three basic resources along with the negative

impacts that they have in the coast spaces are greater than the benefits that they report to the Andalusian society, and so they are unsustainable.

Despite the bad tourist statistics, new hotels are being built in the coast. Only in the Costa del Sol (Málaga), and despite last year it had its lowest tourist occupation level since the year 2000 (69,39%) there are 29 projects up and running which will add 2.681 hotel rooms to the over 90.000 already existing in that stretch of the Málaga coast.

Anyway, building and tourism are the greater source of secure incomes for the city councils, specially the coastal ones. It is so necessary to redistribute the public resources that will ensure the city councils the necessary mechanisms to stop depending on the money that cementing the coast provides and that will stimulate the environment preservation and the sustainable development.

The over hotel supply and the excessive second house residency in the coast does not play in the Andalusian tourism industry favor. Experts in that subject have alerted

(4) According to informations given by the National Geographic Institute, Málaga has 51% of its coast developed.

about the fact that the sector has been taken by storm by promoters and construction companies that threaten to ruin the initiatives of respect towards the coast started by the administrations.

The golf courses and the marinas have to be considered as well from a territorial point of view. Their requirements have to be defined founded on an economic and environmental rigorous criteria base. Until those guidelines aren't drawn up, not even one more project can be approved.

Pressures for continuing with artificial accretion of the Andalusian beaches still carry on. The municipalities forced by businessmen, demand having its beaches in "good conditions" for the tourist season, forgetting that the heavy development excesses, the marinas or the wrong location of promenades are responsible for the loss of environmental quality of its sandy areas. Only in the beaches of Málaga, 150.000 cubic meters of sand will be added.

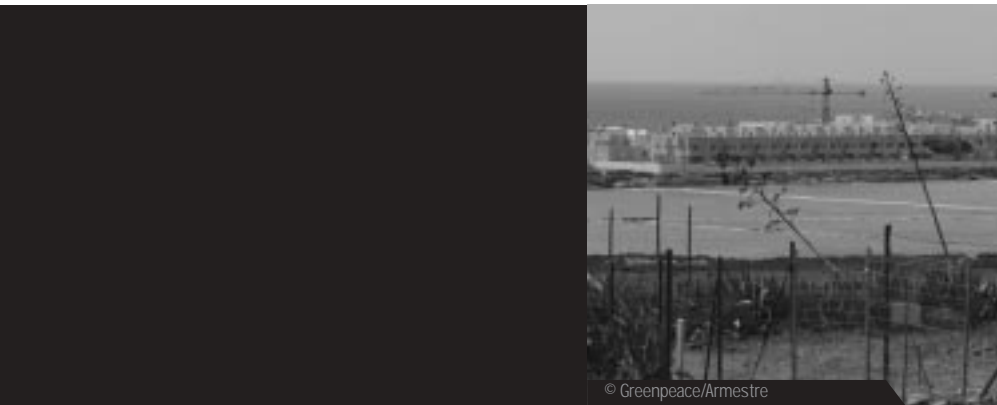
The sewage cleaning up plan, with stipulated periods clearly defined by an European regulation, is still the last of the administration worries, as it doesn't act in a determined way in order to eradicate this serious pollution and deterioration of its best tourist resource: the beaches.

THE ILLEGAL MARBELLA ´S TOWN PLANNING

There isn't any urban development situation similar to the one that occurs in Marbella, where there are 20.000 houses in an illegal situation. The regional government, La Junta de Andalucía, Board of Andalusia has appealed against 370 building permissions, 110 of them correspond to the last city council period. La Junta denounces that licenses are given by administrative silence. The sentences that pronounce illegal developing permissions are systematically appealed against by the city council. Judicial sentences aren't upheld either.

Despite the good statistics obtained by the Andalusian beaches regarding the bathing waters' quality, dumping to the sea continues although they are forbidden by the Shores Act, fostered by the recklessness growth of many urban developments in the coast, without the necessary installations for treating the sewage. Sixty kilometers of the coast of Málaga lacks of comprehensive cleaning up.¹ Five municipalities of the coast of Cádiz dump 20 million cubic meters a year to the sea without any kind of treatment: Chipiona, Vejer, Barbate, Tarifa and Algeciras. Four other towns have sewage treatment systems that doesn't work properly: El Puerto de Santa María, Puerto Real, San Roque and Los Barrios.² Another Andalusian coastal source of pollution is the industrial area of Huelva, one of most environment damaged spots of the Andalusian coast.

- ### BEACHES WITH A BAD BATHING WATERS' QUALITY
- (Information drawn from the European Commission's report on the bathing waters quality)³*
- Beach of El Pozuelo. Almuñécar. Granada.
 - Beach of El Cable. Motril. Granada.
 - Beach of Campo de Golf. Málaga.
 - Beach of Venus-Majadilla. Marbella. Málaga.
- ### BEACHES WITH BATHING WATERS WHICH QUALITY LEVEL DECREASED ON 2004
- Beach of Palmones. Los Barrios. Cádiz.
 - Beach of Río San Pedro. Puerto Real. Cádiz.
 - Beach of Guadarranque. San Roque. Cádiz.
 - Beach of El Pozuelo. Almuñécar. Granada.
 - Beach of La Charca. Salobreña. Granada.
 - Beach of Torreblanca (Carvajal). Fuengirola. Málaga.
 - Beach of Campo de Golf. Málaga.
 - Beach of Venus-Majadilla. Marbella. Málaga.
 - Beach of Palazo. Nerja. Málaga.



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THREATENED COASTAL SPACES



Huelva

1. Canela beach. Isla Canela. Ayamonte: sewage dumping.
2. Huelva. Industrial area: serious pollution problems.
3. Palos de la Frontera. Mazagón. Dumping to the beach.
4. Moguer. Pine forest destruction next to the National Park of Doñana to build hotels, houses and a golf course.

Cádiz

5. Sanlúcar de Barrameda. 6.000 illegal houses uncovered.
6. Chipiona: the town is lacking of sewage treatment. Camarón, Cruz del Mar and Regla beaches endures directly the dumping.
7. El Puerto de Santa María. 3.000 illegal houses uncovered. Disproportionate urban development plans.
8. San Fernando. Building up a circular route, Ronda del Estero, encroaching upon public lands and waters.
9. Chiclana. 8.000 illegal houses uncovered. circular route encroaching upon public lands and waters.

10. Vejer: lack of sewage treatment plant: sewage dumping.
11. Barbate: lack of sewage treatment plant: sewage dumping.
12. Tarifa. Its urban development plan involves the occupation of 100% of land non protected by the law. The town is lacking of sewage treatment plant: sewage dumping.
13. Strait of Gibraltar Natural Park. Archaeological Interpreting Centre of Baelo Claudia. Landscape affront.
14. Algeciras: lacking of sewage treatment plant: sewage dumping.

Málaga

15. Marbella. 20.000 new illegal houses built. Chapas, Pinillo, Las Cañas, Bajadilla, Venus and Fontanilla beaches: polluted from sewage. Venus-Majadilla´s beach: Bad quality of its bathing waters.
16. Mijas: 23.000 new houses built. New marina.
17. Benalmádena. Malapesquera, Santa Ana and Castillo de Bil-bil beaches: polluted from sewage.

18. Huelín beach (Málaga). 13 kiosks built at 50 meters from the shore.
19. Málaga. Campo de Golf beach: bad quality of its bathing waters.
20. Torrox. New marina.

Granada

21. Almuñécar. 29.000 new houses built. El Pozuelo´s beach: bad quality of its bathing waters.
22. Motril. El Cable´s beach: bad quality of its bathing waters.

Almería

23. Aguamarga. Nijar (Natural Park of Cabo de Gata): development of 48 hectares.
24. Carboneras (Natural Park of Cabo de Gata). Algarrobo´s beach: 8 hotels, 1.500 apartments and a golf course.
25. Mojácar. Macenas: urban development in a virgin area. Golf course.
26. Vera: 30.000 new houses built. Quitapellejos´s beach. Project to install a tuna faeading farm.

ASTURIAS

THE SO CALLED GREEN COAST AND SOLD AS "NATURAL PARADISE" SUFFERS THE "NATIONAL PHENOMENON" OF COAST HARASSMENT THAT OTHER REGIONS HAVE ALREADY LIVED, SPECIALLY THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION. THE GOOD PRESERVATION STATE AND THE LOW PRICES OF THE COAST LAND, ACT AS A LURE FOR CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT COMPANIES THAT FAR AWAY FROM BEEN INTERESTED IN PRESERVING ITS NATURAL CHARACTERISTICS DREAM ABOUT KEEPING ON GETTING RICHER AT THE COAST DESTRUCTION EXPENSES.





© Greenpeace/Diaz

The construction companies have transferred their interests to the Cantabrian coast, which puts in danger that stretch of land, especially spots like Llanes or Ribadesella. The current regional government, the Principado de Asturias, is still in time to establish the tourist and development criteria that will allow to keep the coast in a good state of conservation, ensuring that way a source of social, economic and environmental wealth for the future generations.

Urban development and tourism are the greater sources of secure incomes for the coastal towns and cities councils. A redistribution of the public resources allowing the councils to fight in a determined way for an environmental and sustainable development is necessary.

The Asturian Coast Urban Planning (POLA) has the risk of remaining as a document of minimal use, exceeded by the Administration's permissiveness, as it is possible to observe a parallelism between the building works started and the increasing number of new developments in the coast municipalities. Proceedings putted forward in the POLA, as setting up park-beaches, con-

tribute to affect the coast characteristics more than arranging the coast.

Tourism doesn't seem to have recovered from the black oil slick caused by the oil tanker Prestige in front of the Galician coast in November 2002. Three years later the foreigner tourists (most of them English and German) are still reluctant to visit the coast of Asturias. Serious surveys, either at the regional level as about the oil slick affected coast, considered as a whole, showing the real situation are still greatly missed and should be a priority for the Ministry of Environment. The Ministry of Development, from its side, should invest in human and material resources with regard to marine security. Without doubt, both measures would be the best advertising campaign possible for those coasts.

Sand extraction from an underwater deposit of sand in Cabo Vidio taken to artificial accretion of the Salinas and San Juan's beaches will have consequences still to determine on one of the richest fishing grounds of the coast of Asturias. The lack of the Ministry of Environment's foresight on the effects that this will bring is unacceptable and so is the

mediocre defense of the fishing resources done by the Fishing department of the autonomous Government.

The extraction of 22 million cubic meters of sand for the enlargement of the port of El Musel in Gijón will also bring a serious disturbance of the marine natural habitat.

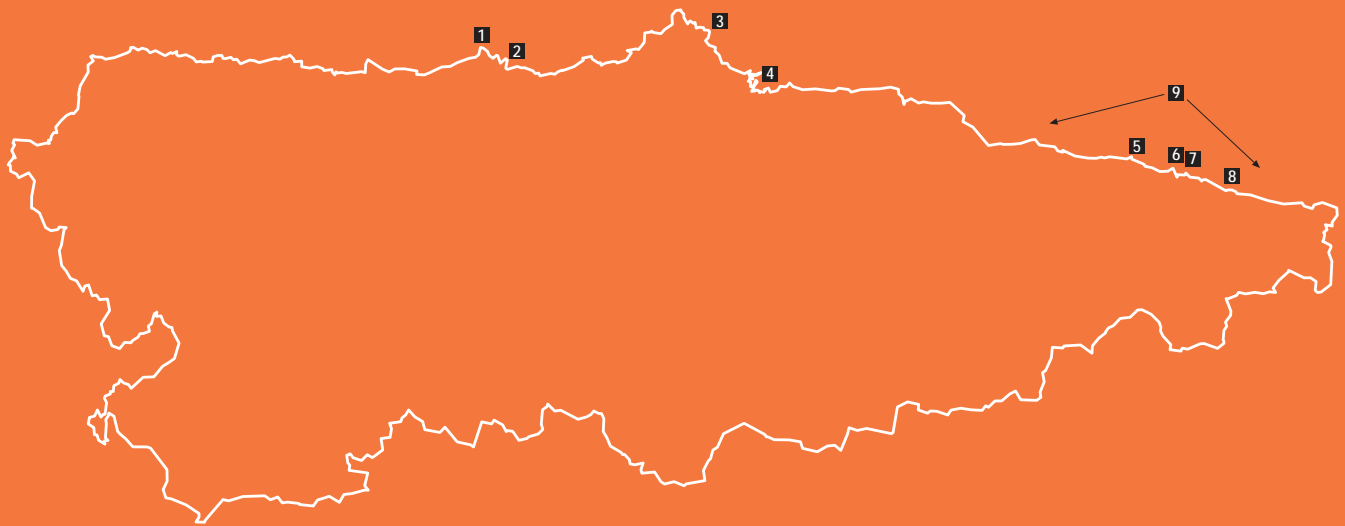
The pollution incidents have to disappear from the coast of Asturias. This coast is still suffering the lack of sewage treatment.

BEACHES WITH BATHING WATERS WHICH QUALITY LEVEL DECREASED ON 2004

(Information drawn from the European Commission's report on the bathing waters quality)

- Beach of San Juan de Nieva. Castrillón.
- Beach of Salinas. Castrillón.
- Beach of Santamaría del Mar. Castrillón.
- Beach of la Isla. Colunga.
- Beach of La Griega. Colunga.
- Beach of Poo. Llanes.

THREATENED COASTAL SPACES



1. Cabo Vidío. Extraction of half a million cubic meters of dry goods for the artificial accretion of the Salinas and San Juan beaches damaging the fishing shoals.
2. Cudillero. Project for building a golf course with hotels and urban development at less than 500 meters away from a cliff.
3. Gozón. Beaches of Bañugues and San Pedro de Antrómero: works that affect archaeological sites.
4. Gijón. Port of El Musel. Extraction of 22 million cubic meters of dry goods for its enlargement.

5. Ribadesella: construction of 9.000 new houses.
6. Beach of La Huelga (Llanes): developing a park-beach aggressive with the natural environment area characteristics.
7. Toronda beach (Niembro): developing a park-beach aggressive with the natural environment area characteristics.
8. Llanes. Urban development without taking in account the requirements for sewage treatment.
9. Natural gas prospecting in front of the Asturian coast.

CANTABRIA

MOREOVER, CANTABRIA HAS NEVER SHOWN ANY SPECIAL CARE ABOUT PROTECTING ITS COAST. THE PRICE OF ITS LAND, LOWER THAN THE MEDITERRANEAN COAST, TRANSFERS CONSTRUCTIONS COMPANIES TO THIS AREA. THE COAST OF CANTABRIA, AS THE COAST OF ASTURIAS, SUFFERS A WIDESPREAD PHENOMENON: "WANTED COAST FOR DEVELOPING".



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Cantabria, unlike its neighbors from Asturias and Basque Country, does not appreciate the wealth that its coast brings, which has led to irrational policies that have allowed outrageous developments on its coast, fostered with the slack attitude of the Ministry of Environmental that has demarcated only 10% of the Coastal public property of its coast.

The approval of the Urban planning for the Coast (POL) of Cantabria in October 2004⁵, which finality is to protect the coast wealth, means although, opening the door to all kinds of proceedings that have no relation with protecting and preserving the coast. The municipalities from the coast carry on with excessive development plans, as the case of San Vicente de la Barquera.

In almost all the coast of Cantabria, from Castro Urdiales until San Vicente de la Barquera, there are houses being built for the residential tourism. The opening of new highways has boosted new constructions.

One of the biggest problems that the coast of Cantabria has to face is the development of new marinas. Cantabria aspires to become a reference for the yacht and nautical tourism, just as the rest of the coast regions, without showing any worry about

the damages that it might cause to its coastal ecosystem. The Ministry of Environment has already informed about the economic and environmental risks of the Cantabrian Marina Plan, which main projects are located in Laredo, Castro Urdiales, Santoña, Colindres, Pedreña, Suances, San Vicente de la Barquera and Comillas.

BEACHES WITH BATHING WATERS WHICH QUALITY LEVEL DECREASED ON 2004

(Information drawn from the European Commission's report on the bathing waters quality)

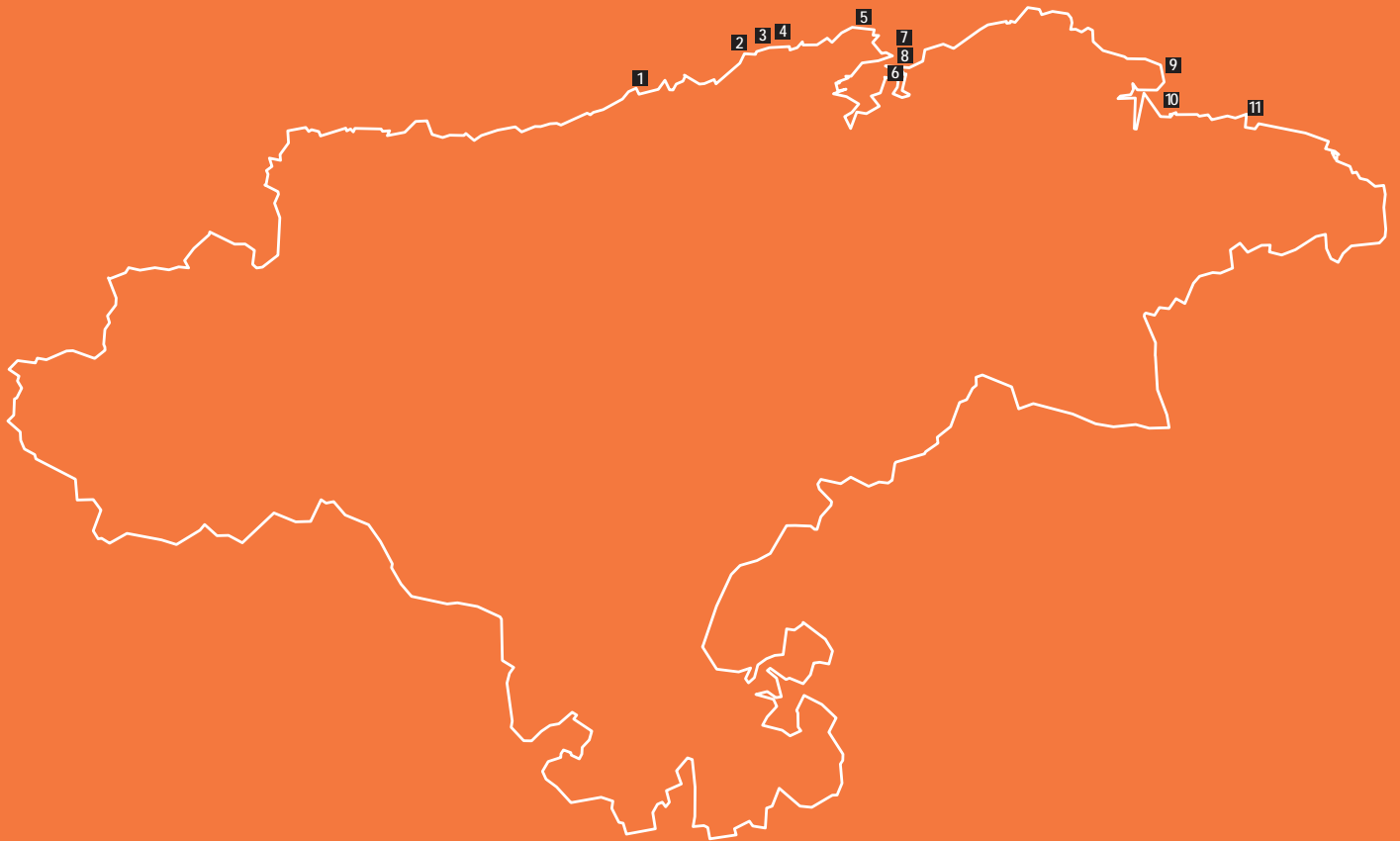
- Beach of la Magdalena. Santander.



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(5) Law 2/2004, from the 27 of September, of the Coastal Urban Development Plan. BOE mum. 259. 27/10/04.

THREATENED COASTAL SPACES



1. San Vicente de la Barquera: urban development speculation. Exterior marina project.
2. Cóbreces. Luaña beach: polluted from sewage.
3. Suances: new Marina with 1.135 moorings. Concha and Cuchía beaches: polluted from sewage.
4. Miengo: urban development that breaks the Shores Act. Usgo beach: polluted from sewage.
5. Santa Cruz de Bezana. Amía beach: polluted from sewage.

6. Somo. Illegal pier.
7. Piélagos. Portío y Cerrías beaches: polluted from sewage.
8. Ribamontán. Loredo beach: polluted from sewage.
9. Santoña. Marina that invades the protected area of the marshes.
10. Laredo: Marina with 1.100 moorings.
11. Castro Urdiales: new Marina. Brazomar beach: polluted from sewage.

CATALONIA

A REPORT THAT THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT, GENERALITAT DE CATALUNYA, IS IN POSSESSION OF, REVEALS THAT THE CATALONIAN COAST BRINGS YEARLY 8.000 MILLIONS EUROS FROM TOURISM TO WHICH IT IS NECESSARY TO ADD SOME OTHER 120 MILLION AS A RESULT FROM THE FISHING CATCHES. THE COAST, MOREOVER, PROVIDES EMPLOYMENT FOR 300.000 PERSONS AND BRINGS 13% OF THE GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT OF CATALONIA. THE REPORT WARNS: "THE ECOSYSTEMS FROM THE COAST AND THE SEA HAVE SUFFERED A GREAT MODIFICATION BECAUSE OF THE HUMAN ACTIVITIES IN THAT STRIP OF LAND, WHICH WILL LEAD TO CONSEQUENCES AT SHORT AND LONG TERM FOR SOCIETY."^{IV}



© Greenpeace/Casasola

The coast of Catalonia is been highly modified by the humans, which brings severe problems of erosion on its coasts and beaches. The regional government from Catalonia seems to be disposed to stop this destructive tendency and it has announced its decision to adopt some measures in order to solve problems, but those are limited.

At the end of May the Urban Development Management Plan for the Coastal System has been passed. The regulation establishes a protection regime for non-developable land located at 500 meters from the sea shore and it affects 23.500 hectares of the coast corresponding to 50 areas of the coast⁶ from a total of 211 plots of land considered initially. This proceeding is without any doubt positive, but very limited, as it focuses on coast spots that don't have an approved urban planning.

Greenpeace considers that a plan for the whole coast of Catalonia should be undertaken in order to recover or maintain the quality of its environment and its landscape, over the development plans of the municipalities that continue their tenden-

cy of allowing development in each meter of its coast.

The tourism oversupply starts affecting the sector. The official statistics show that the current situation is unsustainable: the number of hotels occupation is poor despite the fall of the prices and it is necessary to resort to options like the "all included" one, which produces much less benefits than the quality tourism.

The Delta of the river Ebro (Tarragona) is one of the few Mediterranean areas free from the urban saturation imposed by the tourism model of sun and beach. Although, that natural space, included in the Ministry of Environment list of candidates to become a National Park, had to withstand in the past periods the harassment of development companies that, supported by the city councils of that area, are settling in the area. The current plans talk about 5.000 new houses intended for second residence, which will duplicate or triplicate the current population in many of the towns of the Delta.

The regional administrations of Catalonia have to take care of that situation without

delay, not permitting the coast to be filled with cement, and being destroyed without bringing any benefits to society. Experts claim that we must keep a curb on these coastal urban development expansion policies that have saturated the coast, destroying the environmental wealth and reducing the charm of those towns. Regarding this subject, the regional government should continue with the moratorium declared on the development of new sports installations, that finishes this year.

One of the solutions pointed is the modification of the municipalities financing, as they currently obtain the major part of their incomes thanks to building licenses. An ecotax was pointed by the local government to restructure the tourist sector of Catalonia and to allow the city councils to take care of its coast without abandoning the possibility of obtaining economic benefits despite doing that, it would bring support for a high quality tourism respectful with the natural resources in which it settles.

(6) The complete list is published on the Diari Oficial de la Generalitat de Catalunya num. 4254. 05/11/04.



Erosion in the coast of Catalonia is very worrying. Dozens of beaches loose sand and enlargement each year. This year, only in the coast of Tarragona, the Ministry of Environmental will artificially regenerate 17 beaches and in the city of Barcelona two million cubic meters will be destined to the beaches of the city, in the meantime another dozen of beaches are waiting for the coveted sand to attract tourists, without worrying about giving a solution to the real problems that prevents the sediments from arriving to the coast. In Gerona, the erosion problems has been transferred to its cliffs, several of which suffer from collapse problems.

New golf courses or marinas construction have to be stopped. Consuming resources such valuable and limited as land and water, the pollution that those infrastructures generate and the landscape transformation that it entails, have to be included in the cost of those installations.

The marinas are in a great part responsible for the loss of sand of the Catalanian beaches, as well as the disappearance of the shipping shoals of the Catalanian coast.

Despite the improvement of the quality of the bathing waters reported by the Cat-

alonian Water Agency, some spots of the Catalanian coast still register dumping on its beaches. Only in the coast of Barcelona, 136 pollution incidents were registered during the past period.

BEACHES WITH BATHING WATERS WHICH QUALITY LEVEL DECREASED ON 2004

(Information drawn from the European Commission's report on the bathing waters quality)^v

- Beach of Castelldefels. Barcelona.
- Beach of Pla de l'Os. Premià de Mar. Barcelona.
- Beach of Sant Sebastia. Sitges. Barcelona.

THREATENED COASTAL SPACES

Gerona

1. El Port de la Selva. Excessive urban development Plans.
2. Llança (Empordá). Project for building houses and a hotel in Cap Ras.
3. Roses. Excessive urban development Plans.
4. San Pere Pescador (Empordá). Residential marina with 350 berths and 500 houses.
5. Vilanera (L'Escala). Golf course with 327 houses associated.
6. Castell Beach (Palamós): polluted from sewage.
7. San Pol Beach: polluted from sewage.

Barcelona

8. Pineda de Mar. Continued pollution to the beach because of underwater outlet.
9. Arenys de Mar beach: polluted from sewage.
10. Badalona. Strip of coast polluted by waste chemical materials from the Cros company.
11. Barcelona. Marina Forum 2004. Shipping shoal affected. Authorization of a zoological in the Coastal public property.
12. Beach of Larga beach. Vilanova i la Geltrú. Urban development in floodable area.

Tarragona

13. Torredembarra. Project for building houses in Coastal public property.
14. Salou. Ponent, Vilafortuny, l'Esquerol and Sant Pere beaches: polluted from sewage.
15. Delta of the river Ebro. Huge urban development projects in its towns and cities.



COMUNIDAD VALENCIANA

THE COMUNIDAD VALENCIANA HOLDS ONE OF THE GREATEST LEVELS OF DEVELOPMENT IN ITS STRIP OF COAST, AND IT SEEMS TO BE DISPOSED TO HOLDING IT. OVERALL, IT HAS 33% OF ITS FIRST KILOMETER OF COAST DEVELOPED. ALICANTE WITH 49,3%, IS ABOVE THAT PERCENT WITH ONE OF THE HIGHEST AVERAGE OF FIRST COASTAL KILOMETER DEVELOPED OF THE SPANISH COASTS, FOLLOWED BY VALENCIA WITH 28,7% AND CASTELLON WITH 23,5%.





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The urban development Law from this region didn't pass the European Commission exam that investigates its lack of transparency and arbitrariness. An embarrassing situation that shows the huge interests that take priority in the coast of the Province of Valencia. The European Commission has brought disciplinary sanction because of the lack of transparency and arbitrariness in the application of the laws regulating Urban development activity (LRAU)⁷. Brussels has questioned the way some urban development plans were putted out to tender by the local government of the Generalitat Valenciana and it has recommended to impose a moratorium on urban development until the deficiencies found would be repaired. This moratorium has not been adopted⁸.

Urban development goes on in the coast. In the south of Valencia 10.000 new houses will be built, meanwhile Castellón will draw to the market 180.000 houses in the next fifteen years and Alicante, with 50% of its coast built, is still authorizing new projects.

Likewise, there is an excessive rise of the amount of golf courses, that represent an

unsustainable consumption of land and water resources. Despite all that, the regional government encourages promoters to build new courses and promises to subsidize with funds aimed for natural care purposes, a bet difficult to describe.

Neither are respected the coastal natural spaces. The humid areas of the coast of the Valencia region are constantly harassed by several urban projects for development. Fifteen of those projects, that have the towns and cities councils approval, have been sent to court.

The information about the tourist sector stagnation given by official organs does not seem to make any impression in the administrations, that doesn't show any worry to take care of a damaged strip of coast that attracts less and less tourism. The Comunidad Valenciana registered last month of July a drop of 10% in the hotel occupation, the highest in all Spain according to the State Department for Tourism. The promoters and building firms' assault to the tourist sector is ruining the prospects for the sector's future.

(7) In July 2004 the platform No more Urban Development Outrages (AUN) reported a formal complaint against the laws regulating Urban development activity in Valencia because it breaks the environmental regulation about public contracts, and the articles 43 to 55 of the European Union Treaty and the main principles pointed by the European Tribunal of Justice, particularly the principle of treatment equality among the tender agents that apply for the development of a particular area.



Year by year it is possible to observe how the influx of tourists that leave benefits falls and how a massive influx of the so called by experts "anti-economic tourist" increases: tourists accommodated in their second residencies and that virtually doesn't leave benefits to the hotels and catering sector.

All is permitted in the name of the America's Cup. The enlargement projects or the construction of new marinas are absolutely excessive, but the administrations go forward with those despite the growing opposition of the citizens, that have understood before its ruling classes that if they want to preserve their beaches they can't go on filling the coast with cement.

The erosion of the coast has become evident through the loss of sand from the beaches and it causes an increasing problem of intensity and magnitude in the coast of the Comunidad Valenciana. According to a survey from Polytechnic University of Valencia, since 1947, the beaches of Valencia have lost more than two million cubic meters of sand fundamentally because of the construction of barriers that stop the sediment from arriving. The solution mainly taken from the Ministry of Environment is the artificial

accretion of the beaches, a provisional and very expensive solution.

The pollution problems are still present in several spots of the coast of the Comunidad Valenciana. There are insufficient sewage systems, which causes, from time to time, that the towns sewage end up polluting the beaches.

BEACHES WITH BATHING WATERS WHICH QUALITY LEVEL DECREASED ON 2004

(Information drawn from the European Commission's report on the bathing waters quality)

- Beach of Punta del Raset. Dénia. Alicante.
- Beach of Sud. Peñíscola. Castellón.
- Beach of Rabdells. Oliva. Valencia.
- Beach of Mareny de Baranquetes. Sueca. Valencia.
- Beach of La Llastra. Sueca. Valencia.
- Beach of les Palmeretes. Sueca. Valencia.
- Beach of Cabanyas. Valencia.
- Beach of la Malva-Rosa. Valencia.

THREATENED COASTAL SPACES

Castellón

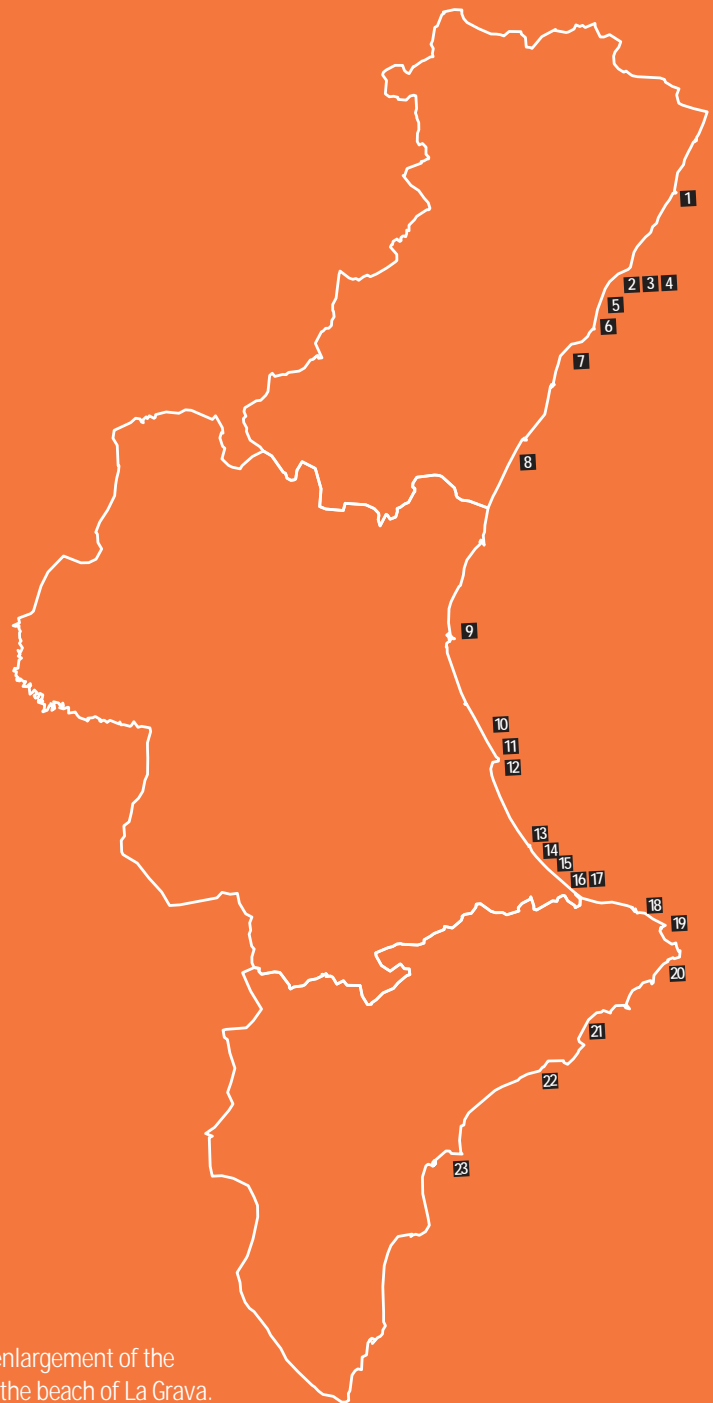
1. Peñíscola. New marina.
2. Cabanes. 20.000 new houses developed.
3. Oropesa-Cabanes. Development of the "Mundo Ilusión Costa Azahar (Hopeful Word Azahar Coast)": Leisure Park, 26.000 houses and 3 new golf courses.
4. Oropesa. Three new golf courses.
5. Benicassim. New marina that will affect the beach of Voramar.
6. Park of the Coast beach of Pinar de Castellón. Infrastructures instead of recovery.
7. Burriana. 100% development of its coast in the last few years.
8. Moncofa. 30.000 new houses developed.

Valencia

9. Cup of America. Enlargement of the Port of Valencia that will affect to the beaches of Arenas and Malva-rosa.
10. Albufera de Valencia Natural Park. Modification of the regulations for building inside. Will be affected by the water transfer of the rivers Júcar-Vinalopó.
11. Sueca. Beach of Motilla. Constant pollution.
12. Cullera. Construction of 33 skyscrapers, 2 hotels of 42 floors and a new marina.
13. Tavernes de la Valldigna. Un-protection of 1 million square meters of the coast for urban development.
14. Xeraco. Declassification of agricultural lands for urban development.
15. Gandía. Enlargement of the marina of this town to triplicate its berths. Beach of l'Ahuir: un-protection for development.
16. Oliva. Development of 26.000 m2 of its north beach.
17. Marjal de Pego-Oliva. Outstanding sentence for urban development.

Alicante

18. Dénia. Enlargement of the town's marina with 1.000 new berths. Artificial accretion of the sand causing environmental damages.
19. Xàbia. The enlargement of the marina affects the beach of La Grava.
20. Benisa. 34 partial plans for development.
21. Altea. Enlargement of the town's marina. enlargement of the marina "Luis Campomanes" breaking all the environmental requirements.
22. La Vila Joiosa. Illegal building of a hotel in the first strip of coast.
23. Alicante. Beach of Albufereta. Continuous pollution since a decade.



GALICIA

THE GALICIAN COAST IS SUFFERING ONE OF THE WORST DEGENERATIVE PROCESS IN ALL THE SPANISH COAST.





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The urban development in the Galician coast is characterized by the anarchy in the building and the slack attitude of the administration that has contributed to a large extent to the landscape degradation. The regional government of Galicia, Xunta de Galicia, has modified the Land Law in order to get the regulatory measures as regards urban development even slacker. Among the most criticized are the General Program of Town Planning of Vigo and the one of Marin, that have collected thousands of amendments because of how they will affect to the cities and because of the disappearance of green spaces it will entail.

The tourism "boom" in the north coast is a fact. Attracted by the low prices, the coasts of Galicia are getting filled with projects taken in charge by the same property developers that have flooded the Mediterranean coast during the last three past decades.

The years of lax attitude in its care, resulting in either land and water pollution incidents have been substituted by a new tendency: filling its coast with cement marina-shaped and allowing the development of a great number of houses built on its coasts

accompanied by golf courses. The role of the Ministry of Environmental seems to contribute to that tendency, as during the last year a huge amount of works have been authorized in that coast and are contributing to affect the natural spaces characteristics of that Atlantic coast strip in an irreversible way.

The transformation that the Costa da Morte is experiencing after the Prestige catastrophe provides tragic evidence of the little value that the administrations give to the preservation and recovery of a coast, unique by its natural characteristics. Each day new building projects come up, new roads are built in virgin areas or new marinas are developed, but none investment is done to finish with the pollution caused by the lack of sewage treatment plants.

The development or enlargement of new ports have direct consequences on the beaches stability and on the rich shellfish fishing banks located around. Despite all that, the number of marinas are still increasing in the coast of Galicia.



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In just one year one thousand berths have been added to the 4.000 existing and the "Plan Estratéxico 2004-2007 de Portos de Galicia" (Regional strategic Plan for Galician Ports 2004-2007) establishes that they will get up to 14.389 in two years. Those facts have brought about the Provincial Federation of Fishermen guilds to ask the Xunta de Galicia for a revision of the plans made for the construction of new ports and the rías filling, because of the damages that those plans are causing to the fishing sector.

The oil slick caused by the Prestige is still producing consequences on the coast of Galicia that are still showing evidence of tar in some spots of Carnota, Malpica, Carballo, Camariñas, Muxía, Cee, Fisterra, Corrubedo or the Illas Atlánticas National Park, in a surface over 60.000 square meters. The reopening of the catastrophe investigation sub-commission in the Galician parliament by a court order has brought to light the environmental consequences of the spilling, that the Galician coast is still suffering almost three years later and that the experts extend 10 to 15 more years.

The major part of the Galician rías are lacking of comprehensive cleaning up networks. Cities as A Coruña and Ferrol does

not have a sewage treatment plant and the one of Vigo doesn't fulfil the European regulations. One of the coast areas that suffer the biggest pollution problems of the Galician coast is the Rías of Vigo, where the industrial dumping without treatment and the towns and cities poor sewage cleaning up are usual in the area.

The future of Galician coast must involve the administrations, companies and citizens care commitment. If the current tendency goes on, we would be assisting to the destruction of one of the most beautiful and wild coasts of the whole Iberian Peninsula.

BEACHES WITH BATHING WATERS WHICH QUALITY LEVEL DECREASED ON 2004

(Information drawn from the European Commission's report on the bathing waters quality)

Pontevedra

- Beach of A Ribeira. Baiona.
- Beach of Salguerón. Cangas.
- Beach of Raxo. Poio.
- Beach of Cesantes. Redondela.
- Beach of Samil. Vigo.
- Beach of Mende. Vigo.
- Beach of Fontaiña. Vigo.
- Beach of A Sobreira. Vigo.

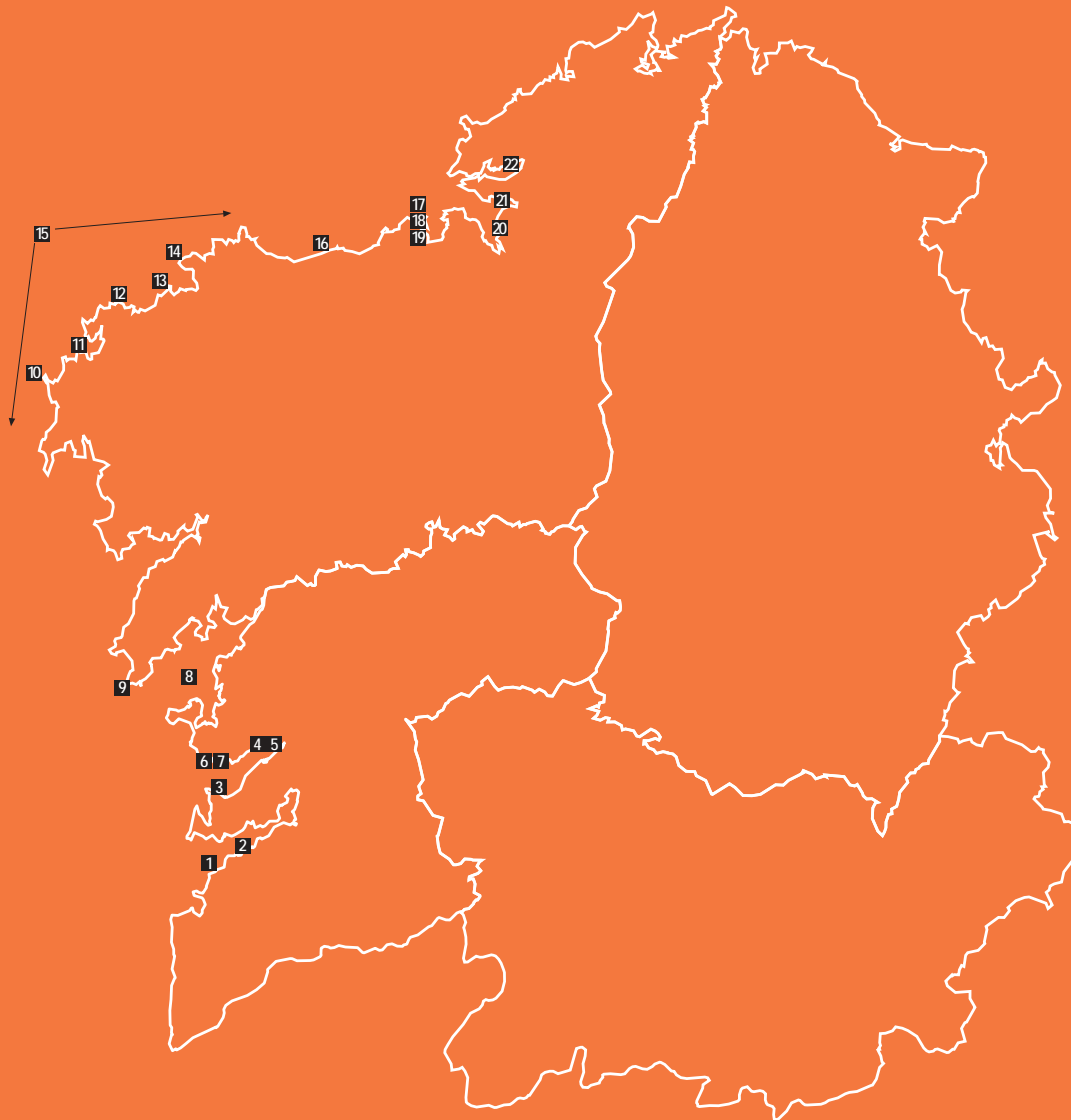
Lugo

- Beach of A Rapadoira. Foz.

A Coruña

- Beach of O Reiro. Arteixo.
- Beach of Valcobo. Arteixo.
- Beach of Barrañán. Arteixo.
- Beach of A Salsa. Arteixo.
- Beach of Gandario. Bergondo.
- Beach of O Pedrido. Bergondo.
- Beach of Cabanas. Chamoso.
- Beach of Area Longa. Camariñas.
- Beach of Arou. Camariñas.
- Beach of Ría de Baldaio. Carballo.
- Beach of Almieras. Fene.
- Beach of Boa Pequena. Noia.
- Beach of Taramancos. Noia.
- Beach of Rons. O Grove.
- Beach of Centroña. Pontedeume.

THREATENED COASTAL SPACES



Pontevedra

1. Canido. Project for the construction of a marina that will seriously affect the beaches of the town.
2. A Lagoa Marina (Vigo). Enlargement and construction in the public lands and waters.
3. Bueu. New marina.
4. Ria of Pontevedra. Despite the expiry date of the concession to occupy the public lands and waters the cellulose company Ence-Elnosa doesn't want to leave.
5. Port of Marín. The enlargement has affected the fishing shoals from the area.
6. Sanxenxo. Urban development Saturation. Destruction of a coastal pine forest to build a promenade.
7. Portonovo. Location of funfairs on regenerated dunes.

8. O Xufre (Illa de Arousa). Enlargement of the marina.

A Coruña

9. Castiñeiras. Attempts of development in the public lands and waters.
10. Cabo Touriñán. Food Technological Park (agricultural farm) located in a Site of Community Importance.
11. Muxía. New marina.
12. Road Traba-Camelle in a virgin area.
13. Laxe. Lake of Traba. Un-protection for urban development.
14. Port of Corme. The enlargement planned would affect the shoals of the area.
15. Costa da Morte. Pollution caused by a lack of sewage treatment plants.
16. Lake of Baldaio. Illegal development, destruction of dunes.

17. Bens (Coruña). Repsol company dumping.

18. A Coruña. Lacks of a sewage treatment plant.
19. Exterior Port of A Coruña. Destruction of a strip of virgin coast in Punta Langosteira.
20. Miño. Urban development , marina and golf course.
21. Estuary inlet of Ares. Development project of "Super-port Ártabros".
22. Ferrol. Lacks of a sewage treatment plant.

BALEARIC ISLANDS

THE BACKING DOWN OF THE PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION OF THE BALEARIC ISLANDS SINCE THE ARRIVAL OF JAUME MATAS TO THE REGIONAL GOVERNMENT HAS DISRUPTED ANY ATTEMPT OF RATIONALITY IN ITS COASTS. THE DISAPPEARANCE OF THE MORATORIUM ON URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF MARINAS REVIVES AGAIN THE "BALEARICSATION", A TERM COINED BY SPECIALISTS TO DEFINE THE COASTAL DEGRADATION.



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The Balearic Islands are still experiencing an urban development growth. Drawing up the Territorial Development Plans doesn't limit that expansion, on the contrary, those plans increase even more the surface destined for building in the islands. The Territorial Plan of Mallorca increments the land for development, planning to build 5.000 hectares in 10 years.⁽⁸⁾ In Ibiza, the Insular Territorial Plan increases in a big extent the surfaces aimed for building, a lot of which goes up into valleys and mounts at a virgin state, where there aren't until now infrastructures or constructions.

In the Balearic Islands, paradoxically, the natural spaces protection has decreased since the arrival to head of the regional government, the former Minister for Environment, Jaume Matas. Under Matas's leadership, the natural protected spaces "shrink"⁽⁸⁾ or become coveted pieces where to carry out urban development proceedings.

All the measures set up in the last year and a half try to comply the promise made by Jaume Matas to revitalize tourism in the archipelago. And its bet, the bet of the outdated traditional sun and beach idea

that imply saturation, doesn't seem to be giving a good result to a tourist sector more and more desperate by its critical situation. Maybe the Balearic executive is still in time to reflect and abandon that model before it is too late.

Quality tourism can not be used as an excuse to go on filling up the Islands with housing developments, golf courses and marinas. The profits and losses of that kind of installations have to be evaluated in a serious and exhaustive way. The golf courses represent a very high consumption of water, land and energy and they suppose a serious source of pollution by the salinization generated on the ground due to the massive use of fertilizers and pesticides. By its part, the over 40 marinas existing in the islands are responsible for the loss of beaches' sand, of the pollution and of damages in Posidonia submarine meadows.

BEACHES WITH A BAD BATHING WATERS' QUALITY

(Information drawn from the European Commission's report on the bathing waters quality)

- Beach of Son Moll. Capdepera. Mallorca.
- Beach of Pollença. Pollença. Mallorca.
- Beach of Cala Padera. Es Castell. Menorca.

BEACHES WITH BATHING WATERS WHICH QUALITY LEVEL DECREASED ON 2004

- Beach of Barcarets. Alcudia. Mallorca.
- Beach of Son Moll. Capdepera. Mallorca.
- Beach of Pollença. Mallorca.

(8) Some examples of natural protected areas which extension has considerably decreased since the arrival of Mr. Matas: Natural Park of Llevant and the natural reserve of Cap Ferrutx and Cap des Freu in Mallorca and the Natural Park of Cala d'Hort in Ibiza.

THREATENED COASTAL SPACES



Ibiza

1. Sant Antoni. New marina.

Formentera

2. Construction of two new piers in Pujols and sa Canals.

Mallorca

- 3. Calvià. New urban development and golf course
- 4. Es Trenc-Salobrar de Campos. Urban development Project.
- 5. Felanitx. Dredging in Portocolom that causes damages to archaeological sites.
- 6. Beach of Son Moll. Has bad quality of this bathing waters.
- 7. Natural Park of s'Albufera. Golf course.
- 8. Pollença. Urban development in the humid area of l'Ullal. The beach of this town has bad quality bathing waters.

Menorca

- 9. Port of Ciutadella. Its enlargement will bring severe environmental damages to the coast environment.
- 10. Port of Maó. enlargement of the sports facilities and nautical installations.
- 11. Beach of Cala Padera. Es Castell. Its bathing waters have bad quality.

CANARY ISLANDS

THE 1.540 KILOMETERS OF COAST OF THE CANARY ARCHIPELAGO HAS AN EXTRAORDINARY VARIETY AND SINGULARITY OF SPECIES AND ECOSYSTEMS. ALTHOUGH, THE CONSEQUENCES OF A TOURISM CARELESS WITH THE ENVIRONMENT WHERE IT DEVELOPS ITS ACTIVITY ARE SUPPOSING AN EXCESSIVE COAST OCCUPATION WITH SEVERE PROBLEMS OF COASTAL POLLUTION, ONE OF THE TROUBLES MOST FORGOTTEN BY THE CANARY ISLANDS REGIONAL ADMINISTRATION.

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The urban development plans for islands as La Palma or La Gomera bring them the same model suffered by islands that are already saturated. The development plans for the north coast of Fuerteventura show also that tendency. In Gran Canaria there are projects to build 19 new golf courses through the Special Territorial Plan for Tourism.

The case of the north coast of Fuerteventura is specially serious. It is a stretch of land almost virgin where 23 urban development plans have been accumulated. The European Commission considers that the north coast of this island has a great ecological and environmental value and deserves to be taken in account in an adequate way by the competent authorities before approving those plans and so before authorizing the subsequent projects.

The Canary model obtains the worst qualification corresponding to the tourist sector, harassed by the over supply of tourist rooms and a great number of rooms "with no law on that respect" on the archipelago, but its leaders doesn't seem disposed to put an end to the outrages found in the Canary Islands, and in a leap in the dark, they continue to authorize new developments, golf courses and marinas, without

adapting the consumption of basic resources as the land, water and energy, moving the Canary away from the possibility of having a sustainable development.

The survey Tourism from the receivers view and employment, Third trimester 2004 of the Institute of Tourism reveals that the tourism information's data never were so bad before: "during the third trimester of 2004 the international tourist arrivals with destination to the Canary Islands came to a total of 2,4 million, the lowest level in the past five years, dropping year-on-year 5%". The passengers transportation sector and the travel agencies establishes that the tourists are replacing the Canary with destinations as Egypt, because it is cheaper.

The island of Tenerife shelters one of the main affronts against the Canarian coasts: the building project of the Industrial Port of Granadilla in the south west of the island, a stretch of coast with environmental values recognized at a regional, national and European level. The works to develop the Port of Granadilla will suppose serious environmental affections denounced by ecologist groups, scientists and a wide amount of citizens.



After the complaints brought to the European Commission, its Directorate-General for the Environment considered in August 2004 that the project presented environmental incompatibility with the protected spaces of that area.⁹

The works done in the coast disregard the values and the unique wealth that the Canarian coast has. The NATO military manoeuvres, the oil prospecting of REP-SOL in front of the coasts of Lanzarote and Fuerteventura or the development of the Industrial Port of Granadilla in the south of Tenerife are examples of that way of behaving.

Regarding the pollution produced by the untreated sewage, the Canary archipelago is still not taking that problem seriously. Despite of being the first Autonomous region to apply for having its waters declared as Special Area (which means free of oil discharges) by the International Maritime Organization, the Canary still polluting its waters from the shore, causing from time to time pollution incidents that even leave its beaches useless for bathing. The Canarian coast is drilled by underwater outlets where sewage is dump to the sea without any treatment. A report from the Technological Institute of the Canary

Islands on the quality of the waters of its coast revealed that in a few years, some of the beaches that today fulfills the quality requirements imposed by the European Commission, will not pass the new exams (microbiological analysis).

BEACHES WITH A BAD BATHING WATERS' QUALITY

(Information drawn from the European Commission's report on the bathing waters quality)

- Beach of Las Nieves. Agaete. Gran Canaria.
- Beach of Bocabarranco. Galdar. Gran Canaria.
- Beach of Caleta Arriba. Galdar. Gran Canaria.
- Beach of Muelleviejo. La Oliva. Fuerteventura.
- Beach of Castillo de San G. Arrecife. Lanzarote.

BEACHES WITH BATHING WATERS WHICH QUALITY LEVEL DECREASED ON 2004

- Beach of Las Nieves. Agaete. Gran Canaria.
- Beach of Muelle Pescadores. Arrecife. Lanzarote.
- Beach of Pila Barrilla. Tías. Lanzarote.

⁽⁹⁾ The area lodges two Sites of Community Importance –Sebadales at the South of Tenerife and Montaña Roja– as several seriously threatened species –the Loggerhead Turtle (*Caretta caretta*) and the *Atractylis preauxiana*– which are priority objective for protection for the European Union and therefore should be so for the Canarian and Spanish Government.

THREATENED COASTAL SPACES



La Palma

1. La Palma. 25.000 new hotel rooms building and two new marinas.

La Gomera

2. La Gomera. Plans to duplicate its tourist rooms.

Tenerife

- 3. Adeje. Sewage dumping to Paraíso beach.
- 4. Industrial Port of Granadilla. Destruction of protected coastal habitats and natural beaches.
- Puerto de Santa Cruz de Tenerife. Construction of a private marina that restricts the entry to the port.
- 5. Arico. Sea dumping next to the coast through underwater damaged outlets.
- 6. Santa Cruz Port: private Marina inside.

Gran Canaria

- 7. Agaete. Las Nieves beach. Bad quality of its bathing waters.
- 8. Mogán. Sewage pollution.
- 9. Port of Arinaga. enlargement with severe environmental damages.
- 10. Las Palmas. Development project of the isthmus of Santa Catalina. Illegal tender.
- 11. Bay of Canteras. Sewage pollution.
- 12. Galdar. Bocabarranco and Caleta Arriba beaches: bad quality of its bathing waters.

Fuerteventura

- 13. La Oliva. El Cotillo. 23 urban development plans in the north coast of the island; Majanicho. 750 houses, 1.500 hotel rooms, a golf course and camping; El Tamboril. 3.000 tourism rooms and a water park; El Faro Beach. 6.000 new rooms for tourists and a golf course.
- 14. Muelleviejo beach. Bad quality of its bathing waters.
- 15. Pájara. 24.000 new rooms for tourist.
- 16. Oil prospecting of Repsol company in front of the coasts of Fuerteventura and Lanzarote. Serious environmental damages.

Lanzarote

- 17. Arrecife. Castillo de San Gabriel and Muelle de Pescadores beaches: bad quality of its bathing waters.

BASQUE COUNTRY

URBAN DEVELOPMENT IN THE BASQUE COUNTRY COAST IS VERY INTENSE IN SOME SPOTS. THE NEW DEVELOPMENTS THAT ARE BEING BUILT IN THE COAST ARE FUNDAMENTALLY DEVOTED TO ATTEND THE DEMAND CAUSED BY THE HIGH PRICES OF THE CITIES.



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The Urban Development Plans show that this tendency will continue in the future. Municipalities from Vizcaya as Bakio, Getxo, Górliz, Plentzia or Sopelana start being saturated by urban development on its coasts .

The measures undertaken by the Basque Government to protect the humid areas or stop the pollution will benefit the coast without any doubt. Although, the works on its ports blur these proceedings.

The enlargement of the port of Bilbao, along with the underwater sand extraction or the change of legal status of lands in order to allow its urban development lands re-qualification, illustrates one of the major problems of the coast: its passage into the port authorities hands, only worried about the profitability of the ports. The project of development of a new exterior port in Pasajes embraces the Spanish ports suicidal tendency, fierce rivals among themselves, motivated by the lack of management from the Ministry of Development.

The Basque Government seems disposed to end up with the dumping to its coasts, and with that purpose it has set up an ambitious cleaning up that will touch all

the municipalities of over 10.000 habitants, in the coast and in areas with a great environmental value.

The oil slick of the Prestige is still leaving its wake behind in the Basque country, where some fuel oil samples are still arriving after each storm to beaches as **Zarautz and Getaria**. The Basque Government estimates that there are still between 500 and 1.000 tons of fuel oil to clear up from its coast. Besides the fuel oil remains, the Basque coast was divided in 43 areas in order to analyze the effects of the catastrophe, seven of them are still "hardly shocked".

BEACHES WITH A BAD BATHING WATERS' QUALITY

(Information drawn from the European Commission's report on the bathing waters quality)

- Beach of Oribarzar. Ondarroa. Guipúzcoa.
- Beach of Toña. Sukarrieta. Guipúzcoa.
- Beach of Zarautz. Guipúzcoa.
- Beach of Santiago. Zumaia. Guipúzcoa.

BEACHES WITH BATHING WATERS WHICH QUALITY LEVEL DECREASED ON 2004

- Beach of Oribarzar. Ondarroa. Guipúzcoa.
- Beach of Zarautz. Guipúzcoa.
- Beach of Santiago. Zumaia. Guipúzcoa.
- Beach of Górliz. Vizcaya.
- Beach of Plentzia. Vizcaya.

THREATENED COASTAL SPACES



Vizcaya

1. Port of Bilbao. Extraction of sands in front of the coast. Change of the legal status of lands in order to allow its urban development
2. Getxo. Urban development in the coast.
3. Sopelana. Urban development in the coast.
4. Górliz. Urban development in the coast.
5. Plentzia. Urban development in the coast. New marina.
6. Bakio. Urban development in the coast.
7. Bermeo. New marina.
8. Sukarrieta. Toña beach: bad quality of its bathing waters.

9. Ondarroa. Beach of Oribarzar. Bad quality of its bathing waters.

10. Mutriku. Mutriku. Marina-Fishing port with environmental affections.

Guipúzcoa

11. Beach of Santiago. Bad quality of its bathing waters.
12. Beach of Zarautz. Bad quality of its bathing waters.
13. Orío. New marina.
14. Pasajes. Project to develop an exterior port.
15. Hondarribia. New marina.

REGION OF MURCIA

THE TERRITORY OF THE REGION OF MURCIA, AND SPECIALLY ITS COAST, IS SUFFERING A DEEP TRANSFORMATION IN THE LAST YEARS. THE SAME MODEL OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT SATURATION IS BEING FOLLOWED. THE MODEL THAT REPEATS IN OTHER AREAS OF THE MEDITERRANEAN COAST AND THAT HAVE ENRICHED SO MANY PROMOTERS, ALTHOUGH WITH METHODS NOT SEEN UNTIL NOW AT THE SCALE IN WHICH IT HAPPENS IN THIS REGION: MODIFICATION OF THE CURRENT REGULATIONS TO REDUCE OR MAKE DISAPPEAR THE PROTECTION OF THE NATURAL SPACES.





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The regional Government makes a change of legal status for 15.000 hectares of protected lands, which more than two thousand are coastal, in order to allow its urban development, or allow the location of golf courses inside of natural Parks.

In the period 1999-2000, the population in this region increased 14,9%, whereas its urban development increased until 52,6%. Today, 35 from the 45 municipalities of Murcia are checking its urban development plans. The development epicenter extends from all the coast and around the Mar Menor. Municipalities as Baños y Mendigo, Sucina, Corvera, Jerónimo and Avileses will increase its number of developments in 30.000 new houses and eleven golf courses.

Development Projects as "Novo Carthago" would suppose building up a new city with 10.000 to 12.000 houses in a space of more than five million square meters in the south seaside of the Mar Menor. Between Águilas and Lorca the complex "Marina de Cope"¹⁰ will be built thanks to a change of legal status of more than two thousand hectares lands by the Govern-

ment of Murcia with the New Land Law of the region in order to allow its urban development. 11.000 houses, 23.000 hotel rooms, five golf courses and an interior marina with 1.500 berths are the data that surrounds the project, declared "proceeding of a regional interest"¹¹ by the Regional Government of Murcia.

The regional government doesn't respect the natural protected spaces. The Environmental Department is trying to modify the Nature and Landscape Conservation Law of the Region of Murcia in order to unite several environmental laws in one with a regional view according to which 11 from the 19 protected spaces existing in the Region of Murcia will disappear (in the coast they propose the disappearance of six of the nine coastal protected spaces) and moreover, it would abolish the three regional environmental Laws existing currently¹². The preliminary plan leaves also the door open to the modification or disappearance of the eight protected spaces that are left now, and it proposes the drastic decrease of the degree of protection for those.

(10) The proceeding of a Regional interest and the Guidelines and the Coastal Development Plan that protects it have been appealed before the Higher Court of Justice of Murcia, and have been admitted to the procedure.

(11) The declaration of Proceeding of a Regional Interest gives, among other, the legal authority to expropriate directly and urgently the lands affected to put them at the development company's disposal.

(12) Law 4/92 of Development and Protection of the Territory Law 1/95 of Environmental protection and Law 7/95 of the Wild Fauna.



The true lack of protection for the biggest Spanish salt-water lagoon, the Mar Menor, is not due to a lack of arguments to justify it, that are certainly very much, neither to a lack of legal means, that are also many. Neither the awareness seems to be missing among the society, nor public declarations from the institutions involved about the need, opportunity and urgency of safeguarding the Mar Menor, what seems to be lacking is a clear commitment of acting in the Planning of the uses and activities, and of investing the necessary resources to carry out that planning organization.

Recently a motion has been brought to the Regional Parliament in order to modify the Law of Ports to increase the number of berths of the coast of Murcia.

Regarding the pollution problems, the current sources are combined with a lack of foresight in order to create new sewage treatment plants as they are associated to the big urban development planned in the coast of Murcia. The location of desalting plants in the coast is another possible source of pollution and occupation of the limited and valued coast land. The brines from the desalting have to be correctly treated, as they can cause substantial

alterations in the maritime medium (by incensement of the salinity and its content of chemical products). A special care has to be taken in those coastal areas where the presence of submarine *Posidonia oceanica* meadows have been established.

THREATENED COASTAL SPACES



1. San Pedro del Pinatar: construction of the Marina of las Salinas.
 2. La Manga del Mar Menor. Construction of two artificial illegal beaches. Construction of the Marina Puerto Mayor.
 3. San Javier. Project "Roda Golf". Development of 1.814 houses and a golf course.
 4. Open spaces and Islands of the Mar Menor. Natural space to which the regional government wants to remove the protection.
 5. Los Nietos. Beach of la Lengua de la Vaca. Sewage dumping.
 6. Islands and islets of the Mediterranean. Natural space to which the regional government wants to remove the protection.

7. Cartagena. Project of "Novo Carthago". 10.000 new houses built.
 8. La Muela-Cabo Tiñoso. Natural space to which the regional government wants to remove the protection.
 9. Mazarrón. Development of 4.500 houses, 1.000 hotel rooms and a golf course in el Mojón beach. New marina. Dumping of untreated sewage to the sea.
 10. Regional Park of the coast of Cabo Cope and Puntas de Calnegre. Natural space to which the regional government wants to remove the protection.
 11. Águilas-Lorca. Project "Marina de Cope". Development of 11.000 houses, 23.000 hotel rooms, 5 golf courses and a marina in a natural space that has been unprotected by the regional government.

12. Águilas. Development of 3.000 houses and Hotels.
 13. Casica Verde. Águilas. New Marina.
 14. Cuatro Calas. Natural space to which the regional government wants to remove the protection.
 15. Sierra de las Moreras. Natural space to which the regional government wants to remove the protection.

ⁱ "One third of the coast of Málaga is lacking of a sewage treatment". La Opinión de Málaga. 5/08/04.

ⁱⁱ Black Flags in *Andalusia 2005 Report*. Ecologistas en Acción. June 2005.

ⁱⁱⁱ Bathing water quality. Annual report, 2004 bathing season. European Commission.

http://www.europa.eu.int/water/water-bathing/report/bathing_report_2004_es.pdf

^{iv} *Els ecosistemes marins de Catalunya: present i futur. Proposta per a la Generalitat de Catalunya*. Enric Ballesteros, Enrique Macpherson, Joandoménech Ros, Enric Sala y Mikel Zabala. 2004.

^v Bathing water quality. Annual report, 2004 bathing season. European Commission.

http://www.europa.eu.int/water/water-bathing/report/bathing_report_2004_es.pdf

^{vi} Report of the Petitions of the European Parliament .

^{vii} "Amb el PTM cada día se podrien urbanitzar i edificar l'equivalent a 3 camps de futbol". Statement issued to the press GOB. 9/12/04.