



Teruel Balance+Positivo - Recovery of the natural periurban area "Las Arcillas": Sustainable "Environmental Balance"

LIFE11 ENV/ES/000515



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Project description:

Background

The town of Teruel has a population of 35 241 and lies in one of the least populated regions of Spain. It is an area noted for its harsh climate - very cold in winter - and remote, mountainous location. This contributed to significant population lost from migration during the 20th century, but also environmental concerns including erosion and geological instability. Teruel is celebrated as the "town of the Mudéjar" because of its many buildings in this medieval style – a merging of Western and Islamic influences - often decorated with elaborate ornamentation made from cheaper materials such as brick and tilework. They were built mainly between the 12th and 16th centuries and are now all included within the Mudéjar Architecture of Aragon, a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1986.

Objectives

The project aims to tackle some of the environmental threats facing the important historico-cultural town of Teruel, particularly in the face of climate change. It hopes to achieve environmental, cultural and socio-economic benefits for the locality and provide a positive example for other historic towns in Europe. Particular focus will be on the recovery of former argyle mines that were used to build Mudéjar churches and towers and now form an unusual and important cultural landscape. The project will conduct an assessment of quarry

cultural landscapes. It will also introduce cycle lanes to connect mines with the urban centre to increase the use of sustainable transport in Teruel and help mitigate climate change.

Other foreseen actions include:

- Planting of juniper and oak trees, and gypsophilia to solve problems of erosion caused by heavy rain and landslip that currently affect two districts - San Julián and Arrabal; and
- Measures to integrate peri-urban areas - areas of interaction between urban and rural - as new green leisure areas, to reduce the need for people to travel further afield and consequently their carbon footprint.

The project seeks to deliver benefits to local biodiversity, as well as creating synergies between cultural and natural heritage and promoting sustainable tourism in the town. Throughout the project, empowerment and participation of the local population will be a key objective.

Expected results:

- Environmental recovery of former argyle mines in Teruel generating value out of the town's natural and cultural heritage;
- Establishment of a database on quarry cultural landscapes;
- Increased use of cycle lanes and pathways in mine area with a reduction in the use of private cars and an associated reduction in greenhouse gas emissions;
- Planting of 12 000 juniper and oak trees, as well as gypsophilia plants and the promotion of truffles from the project area;
- An increase in the fixed quantity of CO₂ (by some 120 tonnes/ yr);
- Reduction of soil erosion and damage to urban areas from heavy rain and land slip; and
- Creation of 6 ha of new public green zones.

Results

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Environmental issues addressed:

Themes

Services and Trade - Tourism - Accommodation

Keywords

ecotourism, cultural heritage, periurban space, soil erosion, mine, abandoned industrial site

Natura 2000 sites

Not applicable

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Beneficiaries:

Coordinator	AYUNTAMIENTO DE TERUEL
Type of organisation	Local authority
Description	The beneficiary is the local authority of Teruel, capital of the synonymous province in eastern Spain, one of the three provinces of Aragón.
Partners	None

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Administrative data:

Project reference	LIFE11 ENV/ES/000515
Duration	01-JUN-2012 to 31-DEC -2015
Total budget	3,964,070.00 €
EU contribution	1,353,292.00 €
Project location	Aragón

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