

Fundación Cepsa celebrates World Wetlands Day with Huelva primary school pupils

- **Over 500 pupils from different educational centers in the province will attend environmental workshops in the Laguna Primera de Palos lagoon**
- **This year's theme, "Wetlands and Climate Change", revolves around the importance of these natural spaces to fight climate change**
- **Since 2002, over 8,000 pupils from schools in the province have participated in celebrating this event**

Fundación Cepsa will celebrate World Wetlands Day throughout February with an extensive program of school visits to the Laguna Primera de Palos lagoon. Information and training activities will be run to raise awareness of the environmental value of these natural spaces, which are so extensive in the province of Huelva.

World Wetlands Day has been held every February 2 since 1997, in commemoration of the signing of the Convention on Wetlands signed in Ramsar (Iran): This is the world's first treaty relating to the conservation and rational use of wetlands, which includes 2,341 sites in 170 countries.

The importance of wetlands lies in the fact that they are ecosystems with great biological diversity, being water-cycle and climate regulators, and contributing to the supply of water and providing refuge for wildlife.

Cepsa has played a part in this event for eighteen years, running an environmental education program for children from schools across Huelva. Since then, over 8,000 primary school pupils from the province have participated in this initiative. The pupils who come to the Laguna Primera de Palos lagoon take part in educational workshops and playful activities aimed at learning about and valuing the importance of these types of natural spaces. The students are also invited to take part in a drawing and photography competition, with this environment taking center stage. This year, over 500 children in years five and six from 11 primary schools will discover and learn more about this natural space next to Cepsa's facilities and which, since 2005, has been included in the Ramsar List.

"World Wetlands Day" is celebrated every year under a different theme, which, in 2019 is "Wetlands and Climate Change". The mayor of Palos de la Frontera Hermanos Pinzón was in charge of opening the first day of visits this morning; under the proposed theme. The pupils took part in educational workshops aimed at learning about and assessing how wetlands help us to prepare ourselves for the effects of climate change, to face them and counteract them.

Palos de la Frontera's Mayor, Carmelo Romero, wanted to join in the celebrations, welcoming the school children and emphasizing the importance of this type of activity, "which is an example of how industry and environmental conservation can go hand in hand". Fundación Cepsa's area manager for Huelva, Teresa Millán, highlighted the value of Laguna Primera de Palos and the marshland ecosystem it forms a part of, given its contribution to the richness of flora and fauna across the region and, referring to the theme of this day of celebration, said that "we are not defenseless against climate change, thanks to the wetlands that we, at Fundación, want to protect".

Laguna Primera de Palos

Laguna Primera de Palos (a natural freshwater lagoon) forms part of the Andalusia regional government's Network of Protected Areas and is designated as a nature reserve. Since 2005, it has been classified as a RAMSAR site (under the international convention for the conservation of these areas). The lagoon is practically on top of the site owned by Cepsa, which partnered with the Andalusia regional government in 2000 to restore the marshland designated by law as a Protected Area. It is just one product of Cepsa's pledge undertaken in connection with one of its key values: sustainability, and is an excellent example of how biodiversity can be protected and endangered species helped to recover. Since it was restored, Cepsa has invested around €2 million in research and work to maintain and improve public access to the site.

It was the first time a Spanish industrial company had taken part in a project such as this, and what is most striking is that it was also the first time a private oil refinery operator had committed to making such a valuable resource available for public use. Cepsa put all its energy into recovering and restoring the site, championing respect for the environment, commitment to nature, environmental education, and business sustainability.

Fundación Cepsa

Fundación Cepsa is a general interest, nonprofit entity whose aim is to carry out initiatives that serve the needs and priorities of the local communities where its founder, COMPAÑÍA ESPAÑOLA DE PETRÓLEOS S.A.U. (Cepsa), conducts its activities. The areas of action for Fundación Cepsa are social, cultural, environmental, scientific-educational, and support for amateur sports.

Huelva, February 4, 2019

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