

## **Fundación Cepsa chooses the capital city of Tenerife to host its Second Biodiversity Day**

- **The meeting focused on the most important environmental projects supported by the Fundación Cepsa in the Canary Islands and Andalusia**

The capital of Tenerife hosted today Fundación Cepsa's Second Biodiversity Conference, which was attended by the Fundación Cepsa vice-president, Teresa Mañueco, who was accompanied at the opening ceremony by the mayor of Santa Cruz de Tenerife, José Manuel Bermúdez; the general director of Natural Spaces and Biodiversity of the Government of the Canary Islands, Miguel Ángel Morcuende; the councilman of Environmental Sustainability and Public Services of Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Carlos Tarife; and the director of Waste of the Government of Tenerife, Alejandro Molowny.

Teresa Mañueco highlighted that "these conferences seek to be a space for reflection and shared knowledge to promote collective awareness. They are part of the Fundación Cepsa's three main lines of action to achieve and promote a just ecological transition. The environmental focus, which is centered on conserving and rehabilitating the natural heritage and the commitment to biodiversity; the social focus, to help people; and the scientific-educational focus, which aims to generate knowledge and innovation so that this process of change can take place normally without leaving anyone behind," she explained, while stressing "the importance of generating partnerships, dialogue and understanding between the public and private sectors."

The conference focused on some of the most important projects that Fundación Cepsa is involved in, either as a promoter or as a major collaborator, in the Canary Islands and Andalusia, where the Fundación has a significant presence. These initiatives involve restoring natural areas, maintaining them, educating and raising environmental awareness, while also undertaking specific research projects. And always with dialogue and partnerships.

The first lecture was given by Manuel Caballero, agronomist and promoter of the Palmetum project in its beginnings, and Carlo Morici, technical and botanical director of the Palmetum. Under the title 'The Palmetum of Santa Cruz, from a landfill to a botanical garden in continuous evolution,' they described the development of this space from its origins to the present, emphasizing the value of a much admired model that has converted a mountain of garbage into a beautiful garden, open to the public and focused on science and education. They also announced the new projects that will soon come to light, including the rehabilitation of one of the inner lakes including the construction of a bird watching hide, and the new nurseries of the Palmetum, which will improve the cultivation of seeds to nourish this botanical garden.

In the second presentation, Estrella Blanco and Narciso Rojas, heads of Fundación Cepsa in Cádiz and Huelva, respectively, highlighted the Fundación's commitment to natural areas such as Marismas del Odiel and Laguna Primera de Palos in Huelva and the Madre Vieja and Arroyo Negro Environmental Station in Cádiz. In this regard, they emphasized the importance of wetlands as essential ecosystems for increasing biodiversity.

They also emphasized the importance of raising awareness through educational and informative programs associated with each project, in addition to implementing corporate volunteer programs. They also spoke about wildlife recovery programs, such as the one for the barn owl in southern Spain.

The third presentation was given by Patricio Peñalver, biologist and project coordinator of the Asociación Hombre y Territorio, who gave a detailed explanation of the 'SOS CARETTA: Fishermen for biodiversity' initiative. With the support of Fundación Cepsa, it also aims to promote the involvement of the fishing sector in sea turtle rescue, providing technical support and training. Environmental awareness and education activities are also carried out to disseminate the importance of conserving these protected species.

The last presentation was given by Victoria Eugenia Martín, a PhD in Biological Sciences, professor at the ULL and current director of the Wolfredo Wildpret Botanical Garden Chair, who presented the conclusions of her research on the Las Mesas periurban park in Santa Cruz. They included the need to prioritize planting native Canary Island flora species, which are part of the potential vegetation of this environment to establish a natural green corridor between the natural ecosystem of the Anaga Massif, declared a Biosphere Reserve, and the urban area of Santa Cruz de Tenerife. She also explained the future Nature Classroom and Environmental Interpretation Center, which will soon be opened in Las Mesas thanks to the collaboration of the Fundación Cepsa with the Sustainable Santa Cruz Foundation.

The day ended with a guided visit of the Palmetum of Santa Cruz. This is the second meeting on biodiversity held by Fundación Cepsa, after the first one held last year in La Línea de la Concepción, Cádiz. During the morning it was announced that the venue for the event's third edition will be La Rábida, Huelva.

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