

Salvamento Marítimo awards Asociación Hombre y Territorio's project "S.O.S Caretta: fishers for biodiversity", promoted by Fundación Cepsa in Andalusia

- **The project, which also has the support of the Regional Government of Andalusia, among other entities, was recognized as "the greatest contribution to SDG 14 regarding the conservation of our seas", in a ceremony presided by the Minister of Transport, Mobility, and Urban Agenda, Raquel Sánchez**
- **The award recognizes the fishing sector's commitment to advancing towards sustainable fisheries that can coexist with sea turtle conservation in western Andalusia**
- **In just one year, the fishing sector that collaborates with S.O.S Caretta has rescued 35 turtles, who were cared for at the Regional Government of Andalusia's Recovery Center (CEGMA Algeciras).**
- **The award supports the work Fundación Cepsa does to protect and conserve endangered loggerhead sea turtle populations**

Asociación Hombre y Territorio (HyT) was awarded for its project "S.O.S Caretta: fishers for biodiversity" at the 6th edition of the Salvamento Marítimo SDG 14 awards for Clean Seas. The collaborative project S.O.S Caretta, coordinated by HyT together with Fundación Cepsa, won first prize in the category "greatest contribution to SDG 14 regarding the conservation of our seas".

The Minister of Transport, Mobility, and Urban Agenda, Raquel Sánchez, presented these awards, which recognize the work different entities carry out to conserve the oceans, seas, and marine resources, as well as working with sustainability as an essential factor in caring for the maritime environment.

In the case of S.O.S. Caretta, the awareness-raising and training work achieved through the Andalusian fishing sector's involvement was recognized, work which was done to rescue and learn more about the endangered populations of loggerhead turtles, or *Caretta caretta*, the species that this project was named after, who live in the areas of the Gulf of Cadiz, the Strait of Gibraltar, and the coast of Huelva.

"We accept the award on behalf of all people of the sea who every day work to move towards sustainability in fishing activities. We will continue to make progress so that all the entities and people who support it feel part of it," said Patricio Peñalver, coordinator of S.O.S Caretta and project manager at HyT.

The project involves the guilds and associations operating in Sanlúcar de Barrameda, Punta Umbría, Isla Cristina, and Tarifa, as well as local authorities and entities. Thanks to their collaboration in this initiative promoted by Fundación Cepsa and supported by the Regional Government of Andalusia, among other entities, 35 *Caretta caretta* turtles have been rescued since the project launched in May 2021. In addition, in just one year more turtles have been admitted to the Regional Government of Andalusia's Recovery Center (CEGMA Algeciras) than in the last 10 years.

In Íñigo Díaz de Espada's opinion, vice-president of Fundación Cepsa, "these figures demonstrate not only the success of the project, but also the importance of public-private collaboration and the coordination of all stakeholders to protect the biosphere. Faced with the challenges that lie ahead in terms of ecological transition and environmental conservation, we must join forces and generate high-impact local alliances, such as those that the Fundación has developed in Andalusia."

Andalusia is a key entry and exit point to the Mediterranean and its coasts make it one of the most biodiverse maritime regions in Europe. Turtles use the beaches as feeding and sheltering areas and sometimes, in the Mediterranean part, as a nesting area as well.

The project's efforts include training and resources for fishers to carry out safe rescues. They leave the rescued turtles in each port collaborating with the project, thanks to an agreement with the Public Ports Agency of Andalusia, and the turtles then receive specialized veterinary care from the Ministry of Sustainability, Environment, and the Blue Economy of the Andalusian Regional Government, the body in charge of their care. After they recover, the turtles are released into the sea with the support of school groups and social and specialized entities such as "Seashore Environment and Fauna".

Other activities within the project include obtaining data on their interaction with marine waste and locating the turtles. Thus, three of the turtles are being monitored through tracking devices that analyze their migratory routes via satellite.

At the national level, S.O.S Caretta is supported by the Ministry for the Ecological Transition and the Demographic Challenge, the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Food and the Ministry of Transport, Mobility, and Urban Agenda.

More information in the video '[SOS Caretta, protecting turtles](#)'.

About HyT

HyT is an association with extensive experience in the conservation of marine species and environments. A collaborating entity of the Department of Sustainability, Environment, and the Blue Economy of the Regional Government of Andalusia, it has international experience in the field of sea turtles and their relationship with the fishing sector.

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. (Cepsa), conducts its activities. The areas of action for Fundación Cepsa are social, environmental, and scientific-educational.



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