

## **The rewilding of Monte de Las Mesas begins with the planting of 400 native species**

- **Renatura Monte de las Mesas is a joint initiative of the Fundación Moeve, the Cabildo de Tenerife, and the capital city council**
- **It brings together ecological restoration, volunteering, public participation, and environmental education to restore the native biodiversity of this natural space**

**Santa Cruz de Tenerife, December 17, 2025.** – Today marked the start of the first phase of planting as part of the 'Renatura Monte de Las Mesas' project, a joint environmental restoration initiative for this natural space promoted by the Fundación Moeve, the Santa Cruz de Tenerife City Council, through the Fundación Santa Cruz Sostenible, and the Cabildo de Tenerife, with scientific support from the University of La Laguna (ULL).

The activity is mainly focused on planting 400 specimens of species native to the thermophilic forest in the northern part of Monte de Las Mesas, with the goal of restoring the potential vegetation of this natural area, which is part of the Anaga Massif Biosphere Reserve. These species were selected based on scientific and ecological criteria, as part of the collaboration agreement signed between the parties.

Around 200 students from various educational and social institutions will participate in the planting and environmental management work today and tomorrow, including the Gardening and Floristry and Environmental Education and Control Training Courses at IES San Matías, the Higher Level Forest and Natural Environment Management Course at IES Sobradillo, and the Work-Study Programs PFAE-GJ La Matanza+Ambiental and PFAE Fundación Canaria El Buen Samaritano. Students from CEIP María Rosa Alonso and IES Alcalde Bernabé Rodríguez schools are also collaborating, as well as staff from the Anaga Massif Biosphere Reserve.

The Renatura Monte de Las Mesas project is complemented by numerous volunteer and environmental awareness activities, with the ongoing involvement of volunteers from Montañeros de Nivaria and the Tenerife Island Mountaineering Federation, who are also participating in the planting activities taking place over the next few days.

The mayor of Santa Cruz, José Manuel Bermúdez, states that "with this initiative, we are strengthening our commitment to the protection of natural heritage and environmental education, involving citizens, especially young people, in the conservation of unique areas like Monte de Las Mesas."

At today's event, the head of the Fundación Moeve in the Canary Islands, Belén Machado, said that "we at Fundación Moeve are proud to have contributed to promoting this collaborative project with the island's Cabildo and the city council for the conservation of the biodiversity of the thermophilic forest in this area."

For this joint initiative, he noted, "today marks the first planting after a long and careful process, which began two years ago with a geobotanical study to determine the potential vegetation for this area, followed by multiple seed collections at different times of the year, cleaning and preparation, germination, and plant growth, before being incorporated into this natural space. It has even led to the creation of a new greenhouse at the ULL dedicated to this purpose. This is only the first planting, and we hope there will be many more. Our goal is to continue and recover this thermophilic forest, which is rich in biodiversity."

For his part, the deputy mayor, vice president of the Fundación Santa Cruz Sostenible, and councilor for Environmental Sustainability, Carlos Tarife, noted that "restoring native vegetation is essential to preserving the biodiversity of this area and ensuring its future." This project demonstrates that collaboration between administrations, a private foundation, scientific institutions, and the educational community is essential to move toward a more sustainable city model and also provide career opportunities for so many young people who are training in this field with such a promising future on our island.

The director of the Natural Environment Department of the Tenerife Island Council, Pedro Millán, highlighted "the positive effects of the recent rains, which have made it possible to begin a large-scale reforestation program on the island, not only in Monte de las Mesas but also in the area affected by the fires of 2023, where more than 90,000 plants have been planted, an unprecedented operation in Tenerife."

Millán explained that "this project aims to rewild an environment that has been degraded and deforested in the past, and is an example of public-private collaboration between the Cabildo, the Santa Cruz City Council, and the Fundación MOEVE." He also emphasized "the importance of social participation, with local mountaineers involved in the protection of natural heritage."

Also present on this first day was Victoria Eugenia Martín, professor in the Department of Botany, Ecology, and Plant Physiology, who is in charge of the project on behalf of the University of La Laguna, and director of the Wolfredo Wilpret Botanical Garden Chair, who explained in detail the entire process that has been carried out to begin rewilding this space, noting that 1,200 specimens have already been produced to be planted in this space in the coming months. Gladis de León, councilor for the Anaga district, was also present.

During these workshops, the educational centers will also carry out a circular interpretive route, guided by specialized environmental educators, in which the main natural and environmental values of Monte de Las Mesas will be presented, as well as the most relevant landmarks in the area.

With these actions, the City Council reaffirms its commitment to the recovery of native vegetation, environmental education, and social awareness of the importance of protecting the biodiversity of this natural site in Santa Cruz de Tenerife.

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