

2010 BRINGS SOME PRESENTS FOR OUR COASTS

At an **international scale**, the UN has declared 2010 to be the International Year of Biodiversity, though this is a general vision and not only based on the coast.

As the [copepod](#) said: *“I don´t trust much in this type of things like declaring the year of the gallifante”*, but after the failure in COP15, it is a good point to remember an environmental well-known cause: the accelerated, alarming loss of species that the Earth is suffering.

At a national scale, the Spanish Ministry of Environment announced the incorporation of the [Marine Strategy Framework Directive \(2008/56/CE\)](#) into our national laws.

In Spain it was really necessary a legislative framework for the management of marine areas. The Coastal Law (1988) is focused on the regulation of the so-called Marine and Terrestrial Public Domain, but despite of the fact that this domain is marine too, only the terrestrial zone was managed.

The main goal of the European Directive is to achieve or maintain good environmental status in the marine environment, through planning tools like Marine Strategies.



Each strategy is the sum of a series of environmental targets and associated indicators for their marine waters whose purpose is to guide progress towards achieving good environmental status in the marine environment. In this way, many scientific research groups are working on the design of these indicators.

My main concern regarding the development of this Directive, is the waters to be regulated. There are no defined frontiers between Spain, Morocco and Gibraltar. How is the law going to ensure a good environmental status in the “waters without owner”? Who is the legitimate state in one zone and another?

On the other hand, and it is one of the best decisions, Spain will be obligated to create a formal net of Marine Protected Areas. Paying attention to the recommendations from Brussels, we were able to declare some zones with high ecological values as protected areas, but we were always focused in terrestrial zones. Our unresolved problem is the marine and coastal areas. I understand this aim from the new European Directive as a major boost in the protection of marine zones with high ecological and social values.

Finally, at a regional scale, the Government of Andalusia expresses its intention of expanding the marine protection at Doñana Natural Park. Actually, this Park has one mile of marine protection to the sea, from Sanlúcar de Barrameda to Matalascañas. The intention is to extend this zone up to Mazagón and one mile more to the sea. Ecological NGO's understand this goal as a historical request and the project will be presented to reach a consensus between all the stakeholders through 2010 with the advising of "Estación Biológica de Doñana" (Biologic Station of Doñana).

This time I hope that the project will be done with the participation of local populations, which were not listened to in 1969, when the Park was declared. However, a conservationist vision was the predominant ecological theory on those times.

In 1998, the Park suffered the effects of pollution by heavy metals, because of an accident in the mine of Aznalcóllar. Moreover, last summer a leak of fuel oil from Cepsa in Huelva arrived to the coast. That is why this decision of expanding the protected zone is a positive measure.

Nevertheless, I would like to point out the only coastal Natural Park without marine protection in Andalusia: "Bahía de Cádiz" (Cadiz Bay). Proposing new value enhancement actions for the marine waters of Cadiz Bay is a good measure.

At a local scale, due to the presidency of Spain in the EU, Energy Conferences of the European Union were celebrated in Seville. The intention was to analyze the results after COP15. The items were "Investment in Low-Carbon Technologies" and "Governance and Technology Cooperation" (including a visit to the solar platform of [Abengoa](#))

Given that they talked about Governance, it would have been good that there was an open day for the citizens. The meetings gather all the Ministers of Europe and the security is very important during events like that, but it is interesting to make an exercise of bringing environmental policies to the citizenship, letting them participate in political discussion and decisions.

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