

Local Agenda 21 initiatives to advance sustainability in a heavily developed tourist centre, Calvià - ES

1. Policy Objective & Theme

- ADAPTATION TO RISK: Preventing and managing natural hazards and technological (human-made) hazards
- SUSTAINABLE USE OF RESOURCES: Preserving coastal environment (its functioning and integrity) to share space
- SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH: Balancing economic, social, cultural development whilst enhancing environment
- SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH: Improving competitiveness

2. Key Approaches

- Integration
- Participation
- Ecosystems based approach

3. Experiences that can be exchanged

Calvià is showing the possibility, entirely through local initiatives, of the way a small municipality with a dominating tourist industry (a so-called mass tourism destination), can become sustainable.

4. Overview of the case

Calvià has suffered from over-exploitation of its coastline by tourism pressure. However, present policies, including an ICZM plan, are strongly focussed on a more sustainable development of the territory and reducing the impact of activities on the environment. Nature conservation is seen as a socio-economic development opportunity for the local community.

5. Context and Objectives

a) Context

Calvià is a municipality on the western side of the island of Majorca with a coastline of 54 km of which two thirds has been built upon. It has a population of ca. 53,000 but receives nearly two million tourist visits per year. In peak season, the population more than trebles with 170,000 visitors, attracted chiefly by the sun and the beaches. There are a further sixteen coastal settlements each with more than 1000 inhabitants. Nevertheless, Calvià also has rich and scenic natural protected areas covering 69% of the municipality including Natura 2000 sites. These are coastal, protecting marine nesting birds e.g. shearwaters and petrels, and mountainous, protecting large birds of prey. The endemic spur-thighed tortoise (*Testudo graeca*) also inhabits this tourist region. Ca. 20% of land use is agricultural and, of this, one tenth is irrigated. There are two marine reserves of 225 ha., islands off the Calvià coastline.

At the local level, Calvià must conduct its strategic activities through the Local Urban Development Plan. This Plan establishes the future necessity of sustainable local development to take into account urban, economic and natural protection development. The instrument falls within the remit of a regional level Territorial Urban Development Regulation (1999), Conservation of Relevant Natural Areas (2005) and the Natural Areas Regulation (1989).

b) Objectives

The local authority is working towards sustainability of the municipality. Their five aims are to slow down the tendencies, uses and procedures that have a negative bearing on the coastline; conduct programmes for the restoration of the coastline; promote awareness; harmonise key public and private activities; and serve as a conceptual and practical example of integrated management.

6. Implementation of the ICZM Approach (i.e. management, tools, resources)

a) Management

The local authority, Calvià Municipality, is responsible for determining and implementing the Local Urban Development Plan. It has a Climate Change Office responsible for the coordination of all the council's sustainable policies.

b) ICZM tools

Calvià is working with an integrated management plan of the Calvià coastline (ICZM or PILC). It covers five different, natural, coastal habitats including 7,000 ha. of the marine to a depth of 50m. The activities of the PILC, as well as all local natural conservation policies and management plans, have been realised through Local Agenda 21 (LA21) activities which had set the coastal zone as one of the main areas for activity. In 1995, an initial LA21 study showed that four of the five coastal area bio-types presented "a worrying state of degradation" with pessimistic short-term, evaluation forecasts. This report gave birth to the PILC and, as a result, various LA21 working groups and a Forum for Citizens were set up to achieve the natural preservation of the beaches, recover the quality of the marine and restore the main environmental and landscape impacts. The working groups meet regularly and the Forum every two years, often to participate in needed activities. Calvià has been using Local Agenda 21 in this way for more than ten years. Specific examples that have been conducted as a result of the development plan is that the system of sand retention has been changed. Now, in winter-time, seaweed is no longer collected from the beaches which presence acts to protect the beaches from erosion during storms. 12.75 ha. of wetland are being restored and integrated into surrounding areas to help protect endemic *Limonium* spp. With this type of experience, Calvià has produced two sustainable diagnosis documents, two sustainable development action plans and three observatories. The results, many available to the public on internet, are used to define action plans within a policy area e.g. climate change.

Within the development plan, agricultural land use will increase but irrigation will use re-cycled water from a tertiary waste water treatment plant. Calvià re-cycles 60% of its wastewater to gardens, agriculture and golf-courses. There is a full monitoring programme for the 34 beaches; the eleven urban beaches are checked weekly, the rest once every two weeks. The results are displayed in public areas. An innovative activity is a jelly-fish project designed to warn tourists of the public nuisance threat of these marine animals. Beaches are monitored and a warning system is applied with an alarm and flag system as well as a dedicated public web page. Calvià also has an Urban Clearance Plan through which, since 1993, more than twenty buildings have been demolished to recover green areas along the coastline.

Calvià has worked together with Thomas Cook, the travel agency, since 2008 to implement a public-private initiative for the implementation of an environmental manager system and an eco-label for hotels and apartments to raise their standards. The award scheme is based on the efforts being made by hoteliers towards implementation of sustainable policies by reducing environmental impacts and actively participating in the community. Another initiative involves giving financial help for equipment to businesses which take part in the twice annual beach clean-up in which 500kg of tourist waste is regularly collected before, and after, the tourist season.

Since 2007, Calvià has a Climate Change Office responsible for the development of a local strategy against the impacts of climate change. The strategy is due for completion by the end of 2009 and will integrate many policy areas such as transportation, energy consumption, urban planning and nature conservation. Calvià is already promoting several initiatives to face climate change by reducing CO2 emissions e.g. solar energy is used for street lighting reducing emissions from this source by 15%. The ambition is to raise this to 60%. There are plans to produce 300,000 Kw/h electricity a year through public installation of solar energy. There is also an initiative in which four schools involving 400 children and 30 staff are participating in an environmental action plan improvement scheme for their schools.

7. Cost and resources

Part of the implementation of the PILC was done through the LIFE project MED-COASTS S-T. Local Agenda 21 and Calvià Climate Change Office is fully financed by the Town Hall.

8. Effectiveness (i.e. were the foreseen goals/objectives of the work reached?)

Calvià has turned around its mass tourism image from one of environmental degradation to one of environmental sustainability in under fifteen years. A large part of the inland territory is now protected and some wetlands are planned to be restored. In 1997, Calvià LA21 won the European Prize for Sustainable Cities awarded by the EC and was designated "best practice" in localising agenda 21 in 1998. It also won the Green Globe Award from the World Travel and Tourist Council and the World Summit Business Award for Sustainable Development Partnership from the UN for the reduction and re-cycling of waste. Eight of its beaches have received a 'Blue Flag'. It won the QualityCoast Award in 2007 and 2009.

9. Success and Fail factors

Calvià has more than ten years experience working with Local Agenda 21. The Town Hall is leading from the front with a centre for the protection, and release, of threatened wild tortoises (*Testudo graeca*) in the gardens of the public Galatzó estate. This municipality estate, of 1400 ha. which represents 9% of Calvià's territory, was bought by the local Town Hall in 2006 and protected as a natural area. It is linked to a school, education programme.

In order to become more sustainable, an integrated water, wastes and transport policies is needed for a better and more local sustainability.

10. Unforeseen outcomes

The Local Agenda 21 activities of Calvià have been featured on a longer report made by National Geographic (February 2009) entitled "Climate Change in Spain: everybody's challenge".

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13. Sources

- Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan of Calvià (2002) Ajuntament de Calvià (available in hard copy only).
- www.calvia.com