Environmental Problems

in the Costa del Sol

Pollution Debate GREEN ALLIANCE

The effects of human activity on the environment are due to:

1. Overexploitation of subterranean waters and supplies
2. Lack of green areas.
3. Destruction of Coastal environment.
4. Overexploitation of subterranean waters and supplies

The impact of man on the shoreline of Costa del Sol is marked by extensive and serious environmental problem. As in many other areas of the world where the tourism has outweighed any consideration of the natural costal environment, no strategy for conservation has emerged. Many of the more desirable locations for coastal tourism, are unfortunately coincident with those most sensitive to CHANGES in climate. On the Costa del Sol, there is a clear progression of events, starting from water.

The amount of water consumed in Malaga city also increases greatly in the summer, by about 27 per cent, once again partly due to the fair in August.

Among the most threatened areas of the Mediterranean coast due to the rise in the sea level. The areas whose infrastructures are most at risk from the Increase in flood and overflow levels are located on the stretch between Malaga and Algeciras.

On the eastern Costa del Sol, an increase in the average sea level of more than half a meter in 100 years is "probable", with the consequent risk of flooding. The Environment forecasts give a severe touch of attention to the urban and territorial plans of the Junta de Andalucía on the western Costa del Sol that estimate that in the strip between Fuengirola and Manilva the population will triple up to 1.7 million inhabitants in a decade. One of the threats detected is "growth above real needs" and "understanding the coastal strip not as a tourist enclave but a big urbanization"

1. Lack of green areas.

As a result of the overexploitation along the coast in Torremolinos, the lack of green areas is present. Most municipalities on the Costa del Sol and in Malaga province are below the 15 square metres per inhabitant recommended by the EU.

Besides environmental awareness and the concept of preserving the world from global warming, which many political leaders and people still don't want to recognise, there is a basic principle, which is the amount of green spaces per head of local population. Areas with trees are vitally important because they act like sponges and absorb the CO2 gas which causes the greenhouse effect, and this has a real effect on people's lives: the more green spaces there are, the better the quality of life.

The economic crisis has reduced the plans to increase the green zones in many Spanish cities and towns, partly due to a lack of funds and also because it is not enough simply to create these garden areas. Trees and plants are living beings and have to be maintained afterwards. In Mediterranean climates, there is little rain and the cost of watering is too high.

1. Destruction of Coastal environment. The growth of Tourism

Official statistics suggest that the Costa del Sol receives over 6 million tourists per year. On the shoreline, many of the littoral dunes have been removed to make way for shorefront development. It has resulted in its destruction over the last 40 years, at most localities and replaced by seawalls. The MOPU (Ministry of public Works) refers to illegal building too close to the shore and in many places actually on the beach, has got worse erosion problems. Artificial recreational beaches have been built enlarging the length and width of beaches. After the winter storms, they become smaller causing maintenance and sand nutrient actions in order to retain the current beach widths. A final consequence is dirty beaches and contaminated sea water.