



LAMPROPELTIS - Control of the invasive species *Lampropeltis getula californiae* on the island of Gran Canaria (BIODIV)

LIFE10 NAT/ES/000565



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Project description:

Background

Invasive alien species (IAS) are organisms that are non-native to an ecosystem, but which have either been introduced or have spread outside their natural habitats. They pose particular risks for biodiversity, often causing decline or elimination of native species and the disruption of local ecosystems and ecosystem functions. According to the Convention on Biological Diversity (2006), since the 17th century, they have contributed to nearly 40% of all animal extinctions for which the cause is known. They also often cause additional economic or environmental harm or adversely affect human health. The Californian kingsnake (*Lampropeltis getula californiae*) is an invasive alien snake that is quickly spreading on the Spanish island of Gran Canaria. The Canary Islands have no native snake species whatsoever. It is a powerful predator with a wide range of targets. Among its main prey on the island, we count some reptile species endemic to the Canary Islands. It also poses a serious threat to other endangered species, such as the Gran Canaria blue chaffinch (*Fringilla teydea*). The first indications of the snake's presence on the island date back to 1998, although the naturalisation of the populations was not observed until 2004. It is currently present in two main large nuclei. Given the species's capacity for adaptation and acclimatisation, it is likely to spread to the rest of the island.

Objectives

The main aim of the LIFE+ Biodiversity LAMPROPELTIS project is to reduce the density and abundance of Californian kingsnakes on Gran Canaria so as to minimise its impact on native biodiversity. The project hopes to contribute to the eventual eradication of this species from the island. To achieve this, the project will work towards the following sub-objectives:

- Improved knowledge of the species, including its biology, ecology and behaviour as an IAS on islands;
- Developing and implementing reliable techniques for the detection and capture of exotic invasive snakes; and
- Developing legislation to prevent and deal with further invasions by invasive alien species;

The project will provide public authorities with appropriate and adequate tools for preventing and managing invasions of alien vertebrates and for motivating concerned sections of society to join the fight against IAS.

Expected results:

- A significant reduction in the California kingsnake population on Gran Canaria;
- Tools for detecting, capturing and controlling the entry of exotic species;
- A good practices handbook for dealing with exotic species; and
- The boosting of international networks involved in the fight against IAS.

Results

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Environmental issues addressed:

Themes

Biodiversity issues - Invasive species

Keywords

biodiversity

Natura 2000 sites

SCI ES7010011

Amagro

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Beneficiaries:

Coordinator	Gestión y Planeamiento Territorial y Medioambiental, S.A.U.
Type of organisation	Public enterprise
Description	Gestión y Planeamiento Territorial y Medioambiental S.A.U. (GESPLAN) is the instrumental body of the Autonomous Government of the Canary Islands for the implementation of territorial policies.
Partners	None

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Administrative data:

Project reference	LIFE10 NAT/ES/000565
Duration	01-SEP-2011 to 01-SEP -2015
Total budget	1,025,863.00 €
EU contribution	512,931.00 €
Project location	Canarias(España)

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Read more:

Project web site	Project's website
Project web site - 2	Project's Facebook page
Video link	Project's video
Video link	"Culebra real de California en Gran Canaria - La invasión silenciosa" (Project's video on Youtube)(23'36")
Video link	Project's video

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