



Las Rozas por el clima - Local Action Plan for Fighting Climate Change in Las Rozas de Madrid: Application and Evaluation of Municipal Management Methods

LIFE08 ENV/E/000101

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Project description:

Background

Cities occupy 2% of the earth's surface but use 75% of the world's natural resources. In Spain, municipalities have become increasingly committed to actions in support of sustainability. They can play an important role in promoting sustainability at a local level, provided the necessary political will and resources are made available. Spain is considered 'especially vulnerable' to climate change pressures. Therefore cutting CO₂ emissions should be a priority for the regulating authorities. Municipalities are ideally placed to adopt specific actions plans on climate change, as they are the closest administrations to citizens. The municipality of Las Rozas has put in place a specific monitoring system for climate trends through a network of meteorological stations and has already launched several initiatives for sustainable development, including a plan for sustainable mobility, Agenda 21 and a future plan on water saving. Moreover, in September 2008 it joined the Spanish Network of Cities for the Climate. This network was targeting a reduction of 15% of greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) by 2012.

Objectives

The Las Rozas por el clima project aimed to apply and evaluate methods of municipal management of climate change, assessing their cost effectiveness in meeting the goals for reducing GHG. This would include both adaptation and mitigation measures. An Action Plan to combat climate change would be adopted and new regulations for protecting the atmosphere, municipal planning of green spaces, parks and public gardens would be endorsed. The plan was intended to

be closely monitored by a municipal 'technical commission on climate change' with regular advice from an expert panel. A set of incentives and methods to encourage the involvement of businesses and commercial sectors in combating climate change would also be developed. The project aimed to calculate initial emissions at the beginning of the project in order to help assess the results achieved at the end. In this way the project hoped to provide a model for other municipalities of similar size and/or socio-economic characteristics. In parallel, a strong awareness-raising campaign about climate change would target the general public, schools and main business sectors. The project planned also to promote its results at relevant forums.

Results

The Las Rozas por el clima project achieved its aim in assessing and adopting measures that could be used to fight against climate change in the municipality of Las Rozas. A new approach to municipal management based on efficiency and integrating climate change transversely was adopted through the establishment of a technical committee on municipal climate change. This committee brings together representatives from different departments to learn about the achievements of the project. Such sharing of information and cooperation has helped 'green' the town council. For example, measures to save paper and electricity consumption have been carried out and green procurement has been adopted as a regular practice.

Specifically, the project has implemented several pilot actions to mitigate and adapt to climate change:

- Energy efficiency: improvements and adjustments to street lighting and municipal buildings allowed for savings of more than half a million euros per year and corresponding savings in GHG emissions;
- Renewable energy: installation of 180 solar panels that produce 15% of the energy consumed in the municipal building of 'El Cantizal'. The initial outlay was expected to be recovered in less than eight years from the end of the project. From the eighth year, there will be a net income of around €18 000 per year. Emissions of around 18.74 tonnes of CO₂ equivalent per year are prevented with this measure;
- Sustainable urban mobility: many activities were promoted in this field, including the promotion of the use of car sharing (specific software has been used by 1686 people), improvement of public transport, annual awareness campaigns in the European Week of Sustainable Urban Mobility and participation in fairs. Specific studies were undertaken on connectivity between green areas in the municipality and a cycling lane network was created – around 27 km of bicycle lanes were established near schools to promote the used of bicycles by scholars;
- Efficient driving: specific training courses were held for the users of municipal cars to improve their driving efficiency. The result helped reduce total fuel consumption by the municipality 11%. Given that there are 37 municipal vehicles, this gives rise to annual savings of €5 698 and prevented emissions of 10.62 tons CO₂ eq.
- Carbon capture: CO₂ sinks were created through reforestation of 32 hectares with native species. This allows for the capture of 80.5 t of CO₂ equivalent per year, while at the same time creating ecological corridors

between protected natural areas of the municipality;

- Water savings: domestic irrigation was installed at over a third of the parks and gardens in Las Rozas. This has allowed for a 20% saving in water consumption. Investment can be recovered in around a couple of years at great parks and in just over six years at small urban parks. From the payback periods, this action represents savings of €1 650 on the water bill and for large parks € 18 298 per year. Also, a well was constructed to use underground water in a sustainable way (with capacity of 21 000 m³ extraction). With a payback period of 2.25 years, savings can amount to €32 340 annually on the water bill;
- Capacity building: training and awareness of 102 municipal employees was carried out in various themes (energy conservation and efficiency, water efficiency, sustainable gardening, sustainable procurement, climate change, etc.). These courses have led to a major change of habits and the implementation of measures such as the adoption of energy efficiency measures, sustainable procurement and the implementation of a new system of efficient water management. Also, with this training, technicians from the council have clearly understood what was being implemented by the project;
- Awareness raising and public participation: many actions were implemented in order to reach and involve people in Las Rozas. To that end, two people were hired to run an 'Office on Climate Change' where anyone interested could request or share information. Many project activities were developed by this office, including: Roundtables and campaigns for energy saving and energy efficiency for the business sectors, schools, municipal employees of the technical committee and citizens; The Green Homes Programme (39 families participating); Campaigns to promote efficient water use and Sustainable Urban Mobility and the Eco-Schools Network (23 participating schools), which now involves all primary and secondary schools in Las Rozas;
- Promotion of corporate social responsibility: the associated beneficiary ICM, created the trademark 'Crea Medio Ambiente' to certify the implementation of innovative activities in the fight against climate change by private companies based in Las Rozas. A total of 35 companies underwent the certification process and receive this brand. The sum of measures implemented has prevented the emission of around 1 800 tonnes of CO₂ equivalent. Thus Las Rozas is acting as a model for nearby municipalities where commissions have shown tremendous interest in similar projects to facilitate public-private partnerships and reward local companies for their environmental commitment.
- Monitoring of emissions: Las Rozas adapted national monitoring schemes to measure GHG emissions and carried out two different assessments during the project period. These reports give feedback on the project measures, identifying which sectors were most responsible for GHG emissions (transport) and where it is possible to make improvements. Results show that emissions were reduced from 5.22 tonnes of CO₂ equivalent per capita in 2009 to 4.94 in 2012;
- Scientific monitoring: a panel of experts was established with the project, helping to get scientific feedback on the different actions implemented. Results were also analysed by these experts who helped in the final validation of the 'Local Climate Change Strategy Las Rozas de Madrid for the period 2014-2020'.

Finally, the 'Local Climate Change Strategy Las Rozas de Madrid for the period 2014-2020' was endorsed by the town council before the end of the project; it will ensure the continuity of the actions that have proven most suitable and effective. The strategy defines the actions to be executed in the coming years.

In short, the project has made a suitable assessment of the cost effectiveness of the measures defined and proposed a feasible strategy to follow after the projects duration. As a result of their involvement in the project, the local population now has a very positive attitude to improving their environmental impact. The town council has also seen first hand how environmental improvements can have economic benefits. Neighbouring municipalities have taken note of this initiative and are now willing to replicate some of the actions themselves.

Further information on the project can be found in the project's layman report(see "Read more" section).

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Environmental issues addressed:

Themes

Climate change Mitigation - GHG reduction in non EU ETS sectors
Climate change Adaptation - Resilient communities

Keywords

climate protection, greenhouse gas, green space, climate adaptation strategy, climate mitigation strategy, urban area, emission reduction

Target EU Legislation

- Urban Environment
- COM(98)605 -"Communication on Sustainable Urban Development in the European Union: A Framework fo ...

Natura 2000 sites

Not applicable

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Beneficiaries:

Coordinator	Ayuntamiento de Las Rozas de Madrid
Type of organisation	Local authority
Description	Las Rozas is a growing suburb of Madrid. The beneficiary is the department of the city council of Las Rozas responsible for public highways and the urban environment, amongst other things.
Partners	Fundación Global Nature, Spain Instituto Crea Medioambiente S.L., Spain

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Administrative data:

Project reference	LIFE08 ENV/E/000101
Duration	01-JAN-2010 to 31-DEC -2013
Total budget	2,440,738.00 €
EU contribution	1,048,809.00 €
Project location	Madrid(España)

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Read more:

Project web site	Project's website
Project web site - 2	Project's blog
Publication: After-LIFE Communication Plan	Title: Comunicación Post-LIFE Year: 2013 No of pages: 6
Publication: Article-Paper	Title: "ESTRATEGIA LOCAL DE CAMBIO CLIMÁTICO DE LAS ROZAS DE MADRID 2014-2019" Year: 2013 Editor: Ayuntamiento de Las Rozas No of pages: 86
Publication: Guidelines-Manual	Title: "Guía para un uso eficiente del agua" Year: 2013 Editor: Ayuntamiento de Las Rozas No of pages: 40
Publication: Guidelines-Manual	Title: "Guía de Jardinería Sostenible - Manual para la gestión eficiente de nuestros jardines" Year: 2013 Editor: Ayuntamiento de Las Rozas No of pages: 23
Publication: Guidelines-Manual	Title: "Guía de uso y gestión eficiente de las piscinas" Year: 2013 Editor: Ayuntamiento de Las Rozas No of pages: 40

Publication: Layman report

Title: Layman report Year: 2014

Editor: Fundación Global Nature No of
pages: 29

Publication: Technical report

Title: Project's Final technical report Year: 2014
No of pages: 120

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