

CICONIA Project: Revitalisation of Living Spaces in the Extremadura Region Closing Report October 2009 – Summary

Project Partners

- Fundación Global Nature, represented by the LA DEHESA environmental education centre
- Ciconia – Transnational Stork Project for Europe-Africa

Project Status

1. Purchase of individual parcels of land bordering the El Baldío estate and creation of a biological reserve network on a contractual basis with additional land owners

It was only possible to purchase two of the six land parcels that were originally planned. The other land owners withdrew from their sales agreements or attempted to speculate for higher prices. This means it is possible for the El Baldío to be extended by 0.4 hectares. Thanks to the water which is permanently available and the variety of fruit trees, the area has a relatively high ecological value.

The improvement measures on a contractual basis with the land owners have proven to be very successful. It has been possible to improve the sensitivity of numerous land owners and authorities for environmental protection. So far, contracts have been concluded with 20 different landowners in six different districts whose farms cover a total area of 62 km². The Fundación Global Nature is offering mainly technical support, for instance, with a hotline, through providing an inventory for fauna and flora, with consulting services for the environmental protection measures, assistance with the applications for the financing of agricultural environmental programmes and with public relations work. It has so far been possible to implement some of the most important measures in four of the estates bordering the El Baldío estate.

2. The creation of new wetlands as feeding areas

A total of four expanses of water with a total size of 1.5 hectares have been realised on the El Baldío estate. On the adjoining estates, it was possible to create two expanses of water, to extend one expanse, and to enhance four pools and three tanks.

3. Re-creation and protection of the river bank vegetation along the ponds on the El Baldío estate

Within the scope of a pilot project, in cooperation with San Pablo-CEU University, Madrid, the river bank vegetation was replanted or re-sown over 2000m². At the same time, at a selection of ponds, the river bank vegetation was also protected against trampling damage by extending the fencing.

4. Installation of aerie platforms for the white and black stork

A total of 32 aerie platforms were constructed, primarily in the proximity of expanses of water. Fifteen of these are located on the El Baldío estate.

5. Improving the biodiversity

With a total of 49 hectares of new sowings and 27 artificial rabbit warrens, it was possible for the original goal to be far exceeded and for a sound nutritional basis to be created, e.g. for the Iberian lynx or for different birds of prey. As a result of the ecological network, 17 of the warrens and 18 hectares of the new sowings are located on the estates adjacent to the El Baldío.

6. Media / environmental education

A variety of learning material and a brochure on the white stork have been developed. In addition to this, at a variety of locations, posters and panels make visitors aware of the project. Within the scope of the environmental education, numerous school students have also learned about the protection of species and the environment. A total of 350 school students took part in a quiz.

7. Purchase of a small excavator and a pick-up truck

In an agreement with representatives of the MAVA foundation that was reached during a meeting in March 2009, part of the financial resources that were not used to purchase the parcels was used for the necessary purchase of a small excavator and a pick-up truck. Additional costs that are not covered by the project resources of the MAVA foundation are financed with other funds.