



# Sustainable Tourism Observatory of Malaga

Environmental education



International Network  
of Sustainable Tourism  
Observatories



UNIVERSIDAD  
DE MÁLAGA



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Plan de  
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GOBIERNO  
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“Malaga City Council has two public environmental awareness programmes: Green passport and Málaga, cómo te quiero!?”

## Context

The need for environmental education is fundamental, emerging as an essential tool to drive the change towards a sustainable local destination and lower overall environmental impact.

According to the guidelines for Sustainable Development from the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), greater sensitivity to the local and global environment begins with environmental education, which is a basic pillar of sustainable management and the challenges that tourist destinations face in future scenarios.

Consequently, a commitment to a destination actively involved in environmental education is vital. The aim is to raise awareness among the local community and tourists about the need to strike the right balance to ensure long-term sustainability. In addition, the UNWTO establishes that promoting sustainable tourism involves an optimal use of resources, including limiting the consumption of certain finite natural resources which are a fundamental element of tourism development. It stresses the importance of maintaining essential ecological processes and helping to conserve natural resources and biodiversity.

In this regard, the municipality of Malaga has established policies in favour of environmental education, through initiatives by public and private entities. This report addresses the actions in relation to environmental education, highlighting its role in the training and awareness of citizens as agents of change. As the destination faces challenges related to the climate crisis, biodiversity loss and pollution, environmental education can be seen as a catalyst towards adopting sustainable practices, conserving resources and promoting sustainable development.



## 02.

# Targets

- Creation of a programme of training actions for the application of the circular economy in the tourism sector.
- Launch of a web space/newsletter on the current status of the circular economy in the tourism sector and the availability of grants and subsidies for businesses and local entities.
- Campaigns to raise awareness and inform visitors and locals about tourism and circularity.
- Organisation of events related to the circular economy and with environmental criteria.



# Results

## Public Environmental Awareness Programmes

Malaga City Council currently has two public environmental awareness programmes, namely: Green passport and Málaga, cómo te quiero!?, the latter being a programme that also advises SMEs on their environmental management.

The Green Passport<sup>1</sup> programme was launched in 2014, with the aim of raising awareness among school students of all educational stages about the need to respect the environment. It delivers environmental itineraries that facilitate and promote the new habits. The activities are aligned to the following environmental programmes:

- **EcoResiduos... Reduce y Separa:** Programme that works to raise awareness of the commitment of citizens to the “3R” rules (Reduce, Reuse and Recycle) regarding products at the end of their life cycle.
- **CamBio mi modelo de consumo:** This activity invites reflection and awareness on consumption habits, with the intention of promoting consumption compatible with the conservation of the environment, through educational presentations and the realisation of an environmental roadmap.
- **Cuidando mi barrio:** This activity consists of teaching about the operation of municipal services for the maintenance and cleaning of public spaces and promoting socio-environmental co-responsibility, improving the quality of life in the nearest environment.

© For more information on the Green Passport campaign, see:  
<https://medioambiente.malaga.eu/bioeduca/concienciacion-ambiental/pasaporte-verde/>



- **Esto me suena:** Activity carried out focusing on noise and noise pollution, which are environmental problems that afflict urban environments.
- **El Hábitat y la vida del camaleón:** Programme developed for the conservation, protection and increase of chameleon populations. In addition, it is intended to publicise the habitats associated with this animal in the municipality.
- **Investigando para proteger la biodiversidad marina:** Programme that is based on the dissemination of knowledge of marine biodiversity, its dependence and fragility in the face of human intervention, taking threatened marine species as a benchmark for the environmental impacts suffered by their ecosystems. Environmental best practices from citizens are also disseminated, which result in their recovery and the conservation of their habitats and associated species.
- **Huerto escolar. Siembra y aprende:** Programme that encourages schools to create and maintain a school garden involving the educational community.
- **Generación-Restauración:** Project that consists of the conservation of biodiversity, through the generation of spaces with green cover and restoration of those that need intervention, through methods that respect the environment and copying models of nature itself.
- **Actuando por el clima:** An initiative that aims to familiarise students with concepts related to the climate crisis, the consequences and adaptation and/or mitigation measures to raise awareness.
- **Plan ALICIA:** Part of the Malaga Urban Agenda initiative and the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy, ALICIA, the 2050 Climate Plan, approved in July 2020. Strategic line 35 of the Plan includes the awareness and sensitisation of the population and in this framework of action, the work with Malaga’s student community.

The Malaga Sustainable City Report<sup>2</sup> issued in 2022, specifies participation in 10 educational programmes, with 80,000 annual participants, and has delivered activities in 160 educational centres.

<sup>2</sup> Further information on the “Malaga, Sustainable City” report can be found at:  
<https://www.malaga.eu/recursos/ayto/prensa/Malaga-Ciudad-Sostenible-2022-PDF-Baja-Calidad.pdf>

Figure 1. Environmental programmes within the framework of the general “Green Passport” programme



Source: Department of Environmental Sustainability of Malaga City Council

Figure 2. Logo of the campaign “Málaga, cómo te quiero!?”



Source: Department of Environmental Sustainability

*“In 2022, Malaga participated in 10 educational programmes, with 80,000 annual participants, delivered in 160 educational centres.”*

The second initiative of the City Council is Málaga, cómo te quiero!?, focusing on neighbourhood responsibility regarding the cleanliness and image of the city’s public spaces. This programme is aimed at the important role citizens play as active agents whose knowledge and behaviours determine the environmental conditions of our city.

This plan also addresses awareness towards minimising the use of plastics, providing paper, fabric or reusable bags and, in addition, a kit for the separation of waste at home.

From an environmental perspective, the “Sustainable Event” label is an environmental quality initiative for events designed, organised and developed, covering sports, cultural, parties, festivals, etc. Malaga City Council’s consultancy on sustainable events initiatives consists of:

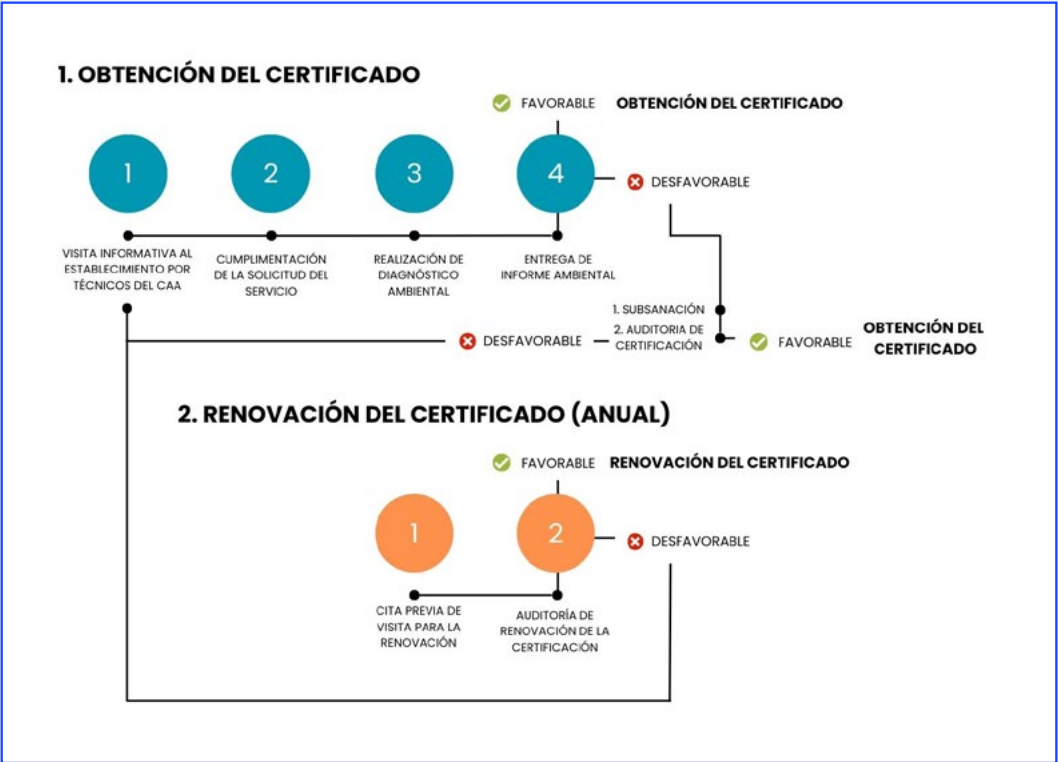
- Reducing, reusing, separating and recycling waste.
- Responsible water and energy consumption.
- Promoting sustainable mobility.
- Avoiding air, noise and light pollution.
- Working with local suppliers that are responsible and have a low carbon footprint
- Protecting the habitat of local fauna and flora.
- Raising awareness among attendees and society in general about respect for the environment.
- Leaving a beneficial legacy in the city after the event.

Figure 3. Sustainable Event Stamp



Source: Department of Environmental Sustainability

Figure 4. Procedures for obtaining the Environmental Quality Certificate.



Source: Department of Environmental Sustainability

## Support and incentives for control and reduction of energy by companies

*“Currently, there are 1069 establishments that have an Environmental Quality certification.”*

businesses by 2017. That year, the city council assumed these functions, extending their scope to the whole city.

With regard to energy policies in the public and private sectors, these have been established through 10 business sectors, considering the generation of impacts and similarities of environmental aspects that they generate and manage. Currently, there are 1069 establishments that have an Environmental Quality certification (Figure 1).

In the case of hotels and accommodation, the sustainability programme is facilitated via the granting of an Environmental Quality certificate (Figure 2). Here the importance of waste management, recycling, water and energy management is emphasised. Likewise, the use of local and/or environmentally friendly products is viewed positively, as is proper waste management of electronic waste, especially luminaires. Similarly, energy saving is encouraged through steps such as contracting only the amount of power needed, identifying the lighting requirements of each space, using switch-off timers for outdoor spaces and in air conditioning, and reducing energy consumption by 60%.

In the catering and food manufacturing sector, the generation of waste as a result of its activity is highlighted, prioritising the management of organic waste and oils, as well as the selective separation of packaging, glass, paper and cardboard. In addition, it covers other environmental aspects such as energy consumption, raw materials, water, emissions to the atmosphere, noise pollution and landfill, making it possible to apply most environmental practices.

In 2011, the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), implemented measures in the municipality of Malaga's private sector aimed at modernising, reshaping and changing the structure of its

Therefore, the energy saving plan consists of the following actions: choosing the optimal temperature (in summer 25° and in winter 20°, since with every additional degree, consumption increases by 8%), using thermostatic valves and programmable controllers to save 8-13% of energy, and choosing energy-saving light bulbs<sup>3</sup>.

Minimising energy consumption for economic and environmental emission purposes is one of the priorities in both sectors previously described. One of the proposed changes involves luminaires, where private sector investment is geared towards a transition to renewable energies, i.e. the installation of solar panels.

## Environmental Advisory Centre

The Department of Environmental Sustainability provides a free service supporting companies to incorporate environmental management plans associated with their activity.

This initiative aims to promote all economic activity that is developed according to sustainability criteria, and to encourage the transition towards business and consumption models consistent with a sustainable development model.

The two lines of action stipulated are:

- Advice and involvement to the business community in environmental matters, granting recognition through the Municipal Environmental Quality Certificate.
- Offering the public information on new habits. In addition, the promotion of consumption options under environmental criteria, through the Sustainable Establishments Network.

<sup>3</sup> For more information on Malaga City Council's Department of Environmental Sustainability, see: <https://medioambiente.malaga.eu/bioeduca/centro-asesor-ambiental/#sector-e-restauracion-y-Alimentación>



## Environmental itineraries

Some environmental itineraries have been established within the environmental awareness actions, and distributed within the geographical framework of the city of Malaga:

- > **Centro Ambiental de Málaga (C.A.M.) Los Ruices:** The mountain on which the environmental itinerary takes place has an area of 1.2 hectares and a maximum altitude of 218 metres. It is situated in the north-east of Malaga's municipal boundaries, between Puerto de la Torre and Campanillas.
- > **Monte San Antón:** The itinerary is based on the route to two of the three peaks: the eastern peak which reaches 507 metres, and the western that reaches a height of 491 metres. The space has a surface area of 99,437 m<sup>2</sup>.
- > **Coastal Trail:** This takes place on the eastern part of Malaga's coastline, starting from the "El Candado" marina and going to the border with the municipality of Rincón de la Victoria, covering 4 beaches: "El Candado", "El Peñón del Cuervo", "La Fábrica de Cemento" and "La Araña". The route is about 2.5 km long.
- > **Los Almendrales:** With a diameter of 7.6 km and an extension of 150 hectares, this is formed by a forest replanted with *Pinus halepensis* in the south and *Pinus canariensis* in the north.
- > **Desembocadura del Guadalhorce:** This natural site is composed of a complex of 5 lagoons of brackish or fresh water, with a high ornithological value, being a stopover and resting point for coastal migratory birds.





# Conclusions

The city of Malaga has demonstrated an integral commitment to environmental education for years, emphasising awareness towards the community, the public and even the business sector, seen as an important ally in the dissemination of sustainable best practices.

Such commitment on the part of local public entities is reflected in the diversity of programmes addressing different environmental aspects, from waste management to raising awareness about the climate crisis and biodiversity conservation.

Likewise, the commitment to a sustainable business model has led to the establishment of an Environmental Quality certification, by the Department of Environmental Sustainability of Malaga City Council, with the aim of promoting sustainable practices, one of which is the transition to renewable energy sources, with a view to a more sustainable energy future.

As for sustainability initiatives, the “Sustainable Event” stamp has been established, through which responsible practices are promoted at events showing an environmental commitment in cultural, sports and entertainment activities.

Another factor to mention within the environmental commitment, is the promotion of environmental itineraries that connect the public with nature, showing the investment in the commitment to protecting and highlighting the importance of the conservation of the city of Malaga’s natural spaces.

Overall, Malaga has established a solid framework for its responsibility for environmental education and sustainable practices, integrating the community in the management of environmental challenges and promoting a responsible balance between urban development and environmental preservation.





<https://sto.malaga.eu/indicadores/educacion-y-formacion-en-sostenibilidad/>