

## **Fundación Cepsa celebrates 2018 World Wetlands Day in Huelva**

- **The Laguna Primera de Palos lagoon will play host to several environmental workshops in February to teach school children about the value of this natural space**
- **More than 400 pupils from a number of elementary schools around the province will take part in this activity**

Fundación Cepsa will celebrate World Wetlands Day throughout February with an extensive program of school visits to the Laguna Primera de Palos lagoon. Workshops will be run to raise awareness of the environmental value of these natural spaces.

World Wetlands Day has been held on February 2 since 1977 in commemoration of the signing of the Convention on Wetlands signed in Ramsar (Iran): the first treaty for the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands. Cepsa has played a part in this event for 16 years, running an environmental education program for children from schools across Huelva.

Pupils visiting Laguna Primera de Palo participate in fun, educational workshops to learn about the importance of this type of natural space first hand. The children are also invited to take part in a competition by submitting their drawings and photos of the nature reserve. This year, over 400 children in years five and six from nine elementary schools will discover and learn more about this natural space next to Cepsa's facilities.

Palos de la Frontera San Jorge Mártir Elementary School was selected to kick off the first day of visits this morning. Under the slogan "Wetlands for a sustainable urban future," the school pupils have taken part in educational workshops on wetlands, their importance, and the role they play in sustainable urban development.

Palos de la Frontera Mayor, Carmelo Romero, wanted to join in the celebrations, welcoming the school children and emphasizing the importance of this type of activity, "which is an example of how industry and environmental conservation can go hand in hand."

Fundación Cepsa's area manager for Huelva, Teresa Millán, highlighted the value of Laguna Primera de Palos and the marshland ecosystem it forms a part of, given its contribution to the richness of flora and fauna across the region. Millán described the site as "an example of how the company has become a

leader in protecting the natural balance needed for life to thrive in the surrounding area.”

### **Laguna Primera de Palos**

Laguna Primera de Palos (a natural freshwater lagoon) forms part of the Andalusia regional government’s Network of Protected Areas and is designated as a nature reserve. Since 2005, it has been classified as a RAMSAR site (under the international convention for the conservation of these areas).

The lagoon is practically on top of the site owned by Cepsa, which partnered with the Andalusia regional government in 2000 to restore the marshland designated by law as a Protected Area. It is just one product of Cepsa’s pledge undertaken in connection with one of its key values: sustainability, and is an excellent example of how biodiversity can be protected and endangered species helped to recover. Since it was restored, Cepsa has invested around €2 million in research and work to maintain and improve public access to the site.

It was the first time a Spanish industrial company had taken part in a project such as this, and what is most striking is that it was also the first time a private oil refinery operator had committed to making such a valuable resource available for public use. Cepsa put all its energy into recovering and restoring the site, championing respect for the environment, commitment to nature, environmental education, and business sustainability.

**Fundación Cepsa** is a general interest, non-profit entity with the goal of undertaking initiatives to serve the needs and priorities of the local communities where its founder, COMPAÑÍA ESPAÑOLA DE PETRÓLEOS S.A.U. (Cepsa), conducts its activities. The areas of action for Fundación Cepsa are social, cultural, environmental, scientific-educational, and support for amateur sports.

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