

## **Fundación Cepsa and Ornitour launch a project at the Madre Vieja Environmental Station to recover the European pond turtle in Campo de Gibraltar**

- **Fundación Cepsa continues to spearhead initiatives aimed at enriching and preserving the region's biodiversity**
- **The European pond turtle is classified as a 'near threatened' species according to the IUCN**

Today at the Madre Vieja Environmental Station, Fundación Cepsa and Ornitour presented the biodiversity project for the recovery and conservation of the European pond turtle (*Emys orbicularis*) in Campo de Gibraltar (Cádiz), an initiative they've been working on for over a year.

The project, which involved preparing a specific area within the space and equipping it with new facilities, currently houses three breeding pairs. By the end of 2023, 16 offspring had been born. This species is listed as 'Near Threatened' by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

To mark the presentation of this new project aimed at enhancing and protecting the region's biodiversity, Fundación Cepsa invited Deputy Mayors Mónica Córdoba and Juan Serván, responsible for the Bay of San Roque area and the Environment, respectively, along with fifth-grade students from Santa Rita (Campamento) and Sagrado Corazón (Puente Mayorga) schools.

The European pond turtle (*Emys orbicularis*) is a species of turtle in the family *Emyidae*. It lives in the central and southern regions of Europe, western Asia, and the Mediterranean region of Africa, near or in slow-moving waterways, and hibernates at the bottom of the water during the cold months. At present, its populations are in sharp decline, and in the province of Cadiz in particular, the species has practically disappeared. It's a medium-sized turtle, with a length that varies between 12 and 38 centimeters, depending on the region. Its shell is brown with greenish areas and some yellowish spots.

Estrella Blanco, head of Fundación Cepsa in Campo de Gibraltar, highlighted "the commitment of Fundación Cepsa and Ornitour, not only to recover and enhance the wetlands in the Madre Vieja Environmental Station, but to implement projects to increase the recovery of biodiversity with endangered species, which are bearing very good fruit, demonstrating that the coexistence between nature and industry is possible."

The Madre Vieja Environmental Station is a research center and nature reserve managed by Fundación Cepsa, which has worked to restore the wetland since 2009. Since its opening to the public in 2014, and as it celebrates its tenth anniversary this

year, Ornitour and Fundación Cepsa have been working not only for its conservation but also for the recovery of species and the passage of birds in this enclave of Campo de Gibraltar. This area is open to the public to explore and enjoy, showcasing Cepsa and its Foundation's commitment to the environment and sustainability. It also underscores the importance of collaborative efforts in protecting natural spaces and biodiversity.

**Fundación Cepsa** is a general interest, nonprofit entity whose aim is to carry out initiatives that serve the needs and priorities of the local communities where its founder, Compañía Española de Petróleos S.A. (Cepsa), conducts its activities. The areas of action for Fundación Cepsa are social, environmental, and scientific-educational.

San Roque, April 24, 2024

**Fundación Cepsa**

sanroque@fundacioncepsa.com

Tel.: (+34) 956 023 600/659578080

[www.fundacioncepsa.com](http://www.fundacioncepsa.com)