40 YEARS OF ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISM IN THE PROVINCE OF GIRONA, CATALONIA

From case advocacy to regional planning; a story of success

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#SavingScapes
The province of Girona is uniquely privileged

- Nice weather + sea & snow
- Strategic location: BCN-EU
- Fertile land and great gastronomy
- High income (OCDE)
- Low crime rates
- High life expectancy
The province of Girona is an ecological and biodiversity hotspot

- In 5,900 Km² ⇒ 77x77 Km
- Altitudes go from 2,900 m to -5k (in the sea)
- +30% in Natura 2000 with:
  - 200K of coastline; coastal wetlands; fossil dunes; cork forests; alluvial plains of 5 rivers; karstic lakes; volcanic formations; Eurosiberian forests; or Alpine grasslands
The province of Girona is a territory of short distances and small scales

- In 5,900 Km² → 77x77 Km
- 730,000 inhab. (9% CAT)
- 221 municipalities
- Average municipal surface: 25 Km²
- >60% municipalities with <1,000 inhab.
- Density of residential settlements: 1:10 Km²
Let me show you
socioeconomically, the province of Girona is a land of opportunities

- 5,6 M tourists yr
- 132,500 2nd residences
- 159 industrial polygons
- 11,000 international freight trucks per day
- 900,000 pigs
- >20% migrant population
But, in consequence, also a land of high socioecological tension

Global capital is targeting the best coastal spots

- 5,6 M tourists yr
- 132,500 2nd residences
- 159 industrial polygons
- 11,000 international freight trucks per day
- 900,000 pigs
- >20% migrant population

>53,000 vacant homes

343 m² built-up x inhab.

Infrastructures are isolating east vs west

Groundwater polluted

Increase of xenophobia
Fortunately, environmental movements are #SavingScapes since the 1970s

1976-2018

- 60 cases:
  - 57% SAVED
  - 29% Partially saved / future reactivation expected.
  - 12% reactivated in 2018 / unexecuted sentences / law suspended
#SavingScapes against all types of unsustainable plans and programs
Savedscapes in the province of Girona
But the fight continues:
from case advocacy to regional planning
• Born 4/8/2018 and nowadays integrated by 29 volunteer based environmental organizations

• Reached +1,000 people in public events and has been present in media +50% of days since its foundation

• Against 19 urban development cases, for 4,000 housing units, 1 golf course, 7 hotels, and +60,000 € in legal services

• With a proactive position, by requesting a Regional Plan for cancelling more than 30,000 potential housing units in 2,000 ha. of land, mostly in forests with more than 20% slope, disconnected from urban centers, and high visual impact.
IMPACTE PAISATGÍSTIC

Manca d’estudis d’impacte i d’integració paisatgística

Inexistència d’un estudi generals, complet d’anàlisi de les condicions del penya-segat

Infracció de les Directives de mesura del Pla Territorial Maritim de les comarques gironines.
There’s a fight between 2 ideas of the World

Utilitarian
- Mass consumption
- Profits, No future

Caring
- Regeneration
- Resilience

Reaction and Resistance

#Salvan-Saharan
Conclusions

1. Landscape is essential to quality of life, and defending it is protecting a right and heritage for the future generations.

2. Environmentalists groups may be wrong in many things, but the mistakes of the current system have much worse consequences for all.

3. The transition to a sustainable society requires empowered and committed citizens, ready to put their make uncomfortable efforts in the era of mass consumerism.
A final question

Do you know her?
A final question

Can you spot the difference?