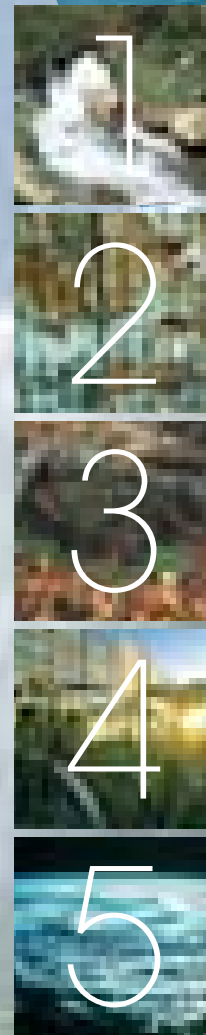


# The road towards sustainability

The basque environmental strategy  
for sustainable development  
2002-2020



**ingurumena**  
*It's up to you*



**EUSKO JAURLARITZA**  
**GOBIERNO VASCO**

# The road towards sustainability

The basque environmental strategy  
for sustainable development  
2002-2020

## goals

to ensure clean  
healthy air, water  
and soil



responsible  
management of  
natural resources  
and waste



protection of  
nature and  
biodiversity



territorial balance  
and mobility;  
a common  
perspective



limiting effects on  
climate  
change



goals



## What is sustainable development?

Sustainable development pursues a greater quality of life for all the planet's inhabitants, both now and in the future. This means:

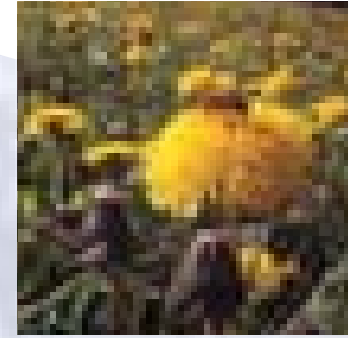
- We should all dispose of the economic resources sufficient to cover our needs.
- We should all have the same rights and opportunities.
- We should all enjoy a cleaner, healthier environment.

*Sustainability is a message of solidarity both with other peoples and with the future generations.*

### We have a strategy to continue our progress...

To progress towards sustainability we must know where we want to go and the environmental situation at our point of departure. The Basque environmental strategy for sustainable development (2002-2020), approved on 4 June 2002, sets five long term goals which establish the environmental quality desired for our territory. For each goal, objectives and commitments have been established, and deadlines fixed for their completion. In total, 223 commitments have been established.

See the whole strategy  
at **[www.ingurumena.net](http://www.ingurumena.net)**  
the Basque Government website  
on sustainable development!



### The environment: a common interest

*Every person has the right to use and enjoy a healthy environment, and the duty to conserve it.*

*(General law regarding the protection of the environment in the Basque country).*

The environment gives us the air we breathe, water, food, medicines, places to spend our leisure time... Protecting it signifies our own survival.

The process leading to sustainability does not end with the passing of the strategy. This is just a starting point which lays down guidelines and the direction to be taken by all public and private measures that may affect the environment •

*We all have the duty and the capacity to collaborate in improving the quality of our environment.*


The environment is where life appears and thrives. If that place is damaged or polluted, then both our own lives and the lives of all the other living creatures will also be damaged. Water, air and land are essential components of our milieu. Keeping them in good condition is a job for everyone, a responsibility to be assumed if we want to live in healthy surroundings now and in the future.

Objectives:


- Reduce the emission and dispersal of dangerous, contaminating substances..
- Treat or purify water, reclaim contaminated land, and guarantee food safety.

### Are we getting there?


#### • Are we improving the quality of our rivers and seas?

 Only 15% of the water in the Basque Country is untreated.

#### • Is the quality of the air we breathe improving?

 Throughout the year 2000, poor quality air was not recorded on one single day, although in recent years the emission of contaminating substances has increased due to transport.

#### • How are we progressing with the reclamation of contaminated land?

 In the period 1990-2001 192 hectares were reclaimed.

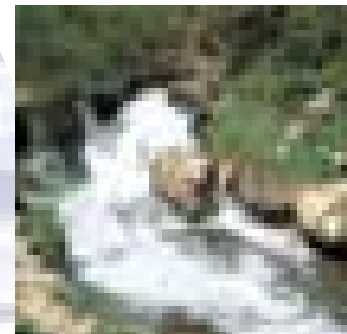
## to ensure clean, healthy air, water and soil

### What is the basque administration committed to doing?

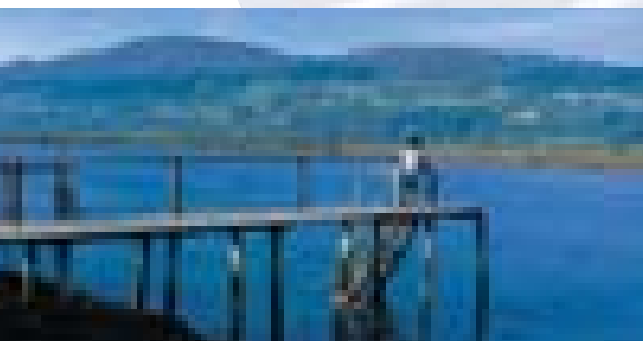
- Reduce the total contaminating loads discharged into public waterways or coastal areas by 50% by 2006.
- Meet the air quality objectives established by the european union.
- Reclaim 20% of contaminated public land by 2006.
- Implement the labelling of foodstuffs for human consumption, to indicate the production process used, by 2006.

### Actions in progress

- Improvement and extension of water, air and land monitoring networks.
- Drafting of intra-community river basin hydrological plans
- Promotion and financing of wastewater and purifying infrastructures.
- Preparation of a noise prevention guide for industry.
- Agreements with industrial sectors involved in the use, production and elimination of priority contaminating substances.
- 2003-2007 Observation and control plan for the prevention and monitoring of environmental infringements.
- Management of integrated environmental authorization in the framework of the integrated contamination prevention and control law and setting up of the basque register of contaminating emissions and sources (eper-euskadi) •



goals








## responsible management of natural resources and waste

Nature is a generous supplier of natural resources. She gives us water, energy, food, and the raw materials necessary for the consumer products which contribute towards our well-being. But when we use the water, or produce the energy, or transform the raw materials, we create leftovers, waste which returns to nature and may turn out to be highly contaminating.

### Are we getting there?


#### • Are we cutting down our consumption of resources?

-  Water consumption grew by 18% between 1996 and 1999.
-  Total energy consumption increased by 23% between 1990 and 2000. However, between 1990 and 2000 efficiency in the use of energy improved by 10%.
-  Turning to land consumption, residential land surface area grew by 20% between 1996 and 1999, while that corresponding to economic activities grew by 25%.

#### • Are we reducing the amount of waste that we generate?

-  In the period 1990-2001 municipal waste generation increased by 66%. In the period 1994-2000 the generation of dangerous industrial waste increased by 12%.

#### • Has our waste management improved?

-  Between 1990 and 2001 selective collection of municipal waste multiplied by 16. Since 1998, 100% of dangerous industrial waste is managed.

### What is the basque administration committed to doing?

- Change the rising trend in water consumption per person and reduce water loss by 20% in the total supply, by 2012.
- Increase the use of renewable energies by 2010, in accordance with european union objectives.
- Reduce the amount of municipal waste which reaches rubbish dumps to 75% of the total amount generated by 2006.
- Stabilize the generation of dangerous waste by 2006 in line with the figure corresponding to 2000.

### Actions in progress

- Awareness raising campaigns to reduce the consumption of resources and deal correctly with waste.
- Preparation of the basque energy strategy.
- Management plans for dangerous, non-dangerous, municipal, agropecuary and sanitary waste.
- Promotion of pilot schemes to optimise management of certain dangerous waste substances (domestic appliances, electric and electronic equipment, unused vehicles, etc.) •




goals





Life is the great treasure of our planet. The multiple forms it takes – biodiversity – are the best expression of its enormous richness. The conservation of life is essential to preserve the ecosystems in which an infinity of living creatures find their habitat, depending on each other for their survival: including human beings.

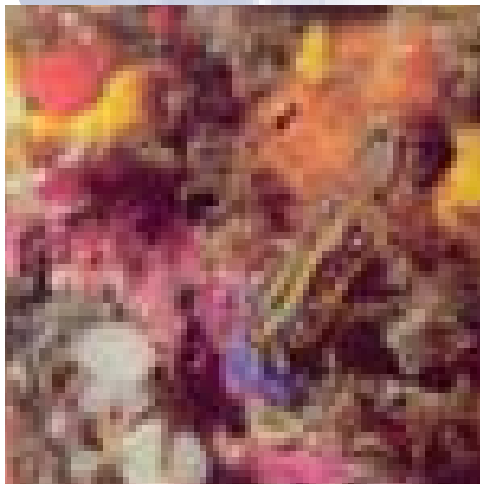
To achieve this goal, the objectives are centred on conserving, protecting, and when necessary restoring, ecosystems, animal and plant species and landscape.

### Are we getting there?

 At present 15% of the basque country is protected (urdaibai, txingudi, 7 Natural parks, 5 protected biotopes) and it is planned to extend this to 25-30% with the creation of ecological corridors.

 The basque list of endangered species contains the species (146 taxa for fauna And 136 for flora) which need specific protective measures. Management plans have been approved for 4 species of vertebrates with the aim of eliminating the threat which hangs over them.

 Six wetland areas within the Basque Country are included in the Ramsar list of internationally relevant wetlands.



## protection of nature and biodiversity

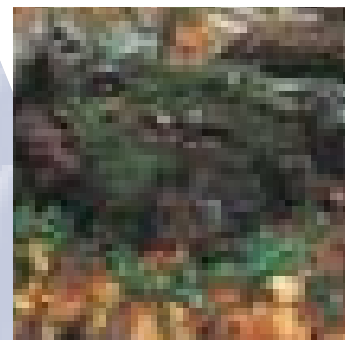
# 3

### What is the basque administration committed to doing?

- Increase the area included in the red natura 2000 programme of the Basque Country to cover 20% of the total Basque Country area by 2006, and prepare the corresponding protection, management and restoration plans.
- Establish ecological corridors in the Basque Country by 2006.
- Implement management plans for 100% of the species listed as being in danger of extinction by 2006.
- Reclaim a minimum of 15 km. Of river shoreline by 2012.

### Actions in progress

- Management plan for environmental interpretation, research and education in urdaibai.
- Construction of the urdaibai environmental interpretation centre in torre madariaga (busturia).
- Declaration of new natural parks (aizkorri-aratz, armañon, entzia).
- Preparation of territorial sector plans for wetlands and for shoreline protection and legislation.
- Management plans for endangered flora and fauna.
- Environmental restoration of river channels, marismas (marshes) at vega de jaizubia. (Hondarribia), vega del deba and laguna de axpe in urdaibai.
- Preparation of biodiversity and landscape indices.
- Listings of environmentally sensitive areas and endangered species.
- Research projects on biodiversity and its resources •



goals



# 4

## territorial balance and mobility: a common perspective

A society's development is related to the access of all its members to the services which are offered to provide a good quality of life and to achieve greater social and economic cohesion. The legislation of these services within the territory is a decisive element in creating greater or lesser demand for transport.

A demand for mobility higher than that necessary to meet the needs of access to services causes congestion and traffic accidents, and deteriorates both the environment and human health.

The objective is to reduce mobility requirements by not encouraging urban programmes or practices which represent an increase in the use of the car.

Cities should be attractive, comfortable, healthy areas in which to live. The natural and cultural heritage, variety, wealth and attraction of rural and coastal areas should also be actively supported.

### Are we getting there?

#### • Is the territory suitably legislated?

- Different legislative instruments have been approved for use in the territory:
  - Territorial legislative guidelines.
  - Six territorial sector plans.



#### • How are our local councils progressing with local sustainability?

56 Municipalities are involved in processes corresponding to the agenda local 21 programme.

#### • Are mobility needs being met in an environmentally sustainable fashion?



Between 1990 and 2000 the number of vehicles and the length of the motorway and dual carriageway network increased by 30%. Car journeys to and from the place of work have risen from 38% in 1989 to 47% in 1999.

### What is the basque administration committed to doing?

- All municipal areas in the Basque Country with over 5,000 inhabitants will have their agenda local 21 programme designed by 2006, either individually or as part of a district.
- Achieve a 10% increase in collective transport participation in total commuter transport in the main urban areas of the Basque Country by 2006.
- Decrease the use of road transport, transferring the demand to rail, maritime and public transport, by 2012.

### Actions in progress

- Preparation of 8 territorial sector plans And 15 partial territorial plans.
- Economic aid programme for the demolition of industrial ruins.
- Aid programme for the establishment of agro-environmental measures and commitments.
- Constitution of the basque municipios Hacia la sostenibilidad (local councils towards sustainability) network: udalsarea 21.
- Transport and environmental indices.
- Sustainable transport plan.
- Plans to encourage the use of the bicycle.
- Public transport campaign in urdaibai •



goals




The greenhouse effect of the earth's atmosphere is a natural phenomenon in which water vapour and carbon dioxide (co2) concentrations in the atmosphere retain infrared radiation. Without this effect, the earth's temperature would be much lower, and life as we know it would disappear.

However, since the beginnings of industrialization, and as a consequence of human activity, the atmosphere's content has grown to include many more gases which contribute to the greenhouse effect. As a result, climate change has now become a potential threat to the global environment.




The burning of fossil fuels in vehicles, power stations, heating, etc., is the main culprit for the growth in greenhouse effect gas emissions.

### Are we getting there?

#### How much do we contribute to climate change?

 Between 1990 and 2000, direct emissions of the principal greenhouse effect gases generated in the basque country grew by 25%.

#### What sectors contribute most to climate change?

-  · The energy sector: 30% of total emissions. Growth of 77% between 1990 and 2000.
-  · Industrial sector: 24% of total emissions. Decrease of 25% between 1990 and 2000.
-  · Transport sector: 25% of total emissions. Growth of 70% between 1990 and 2000.



## limiting effects on climate change

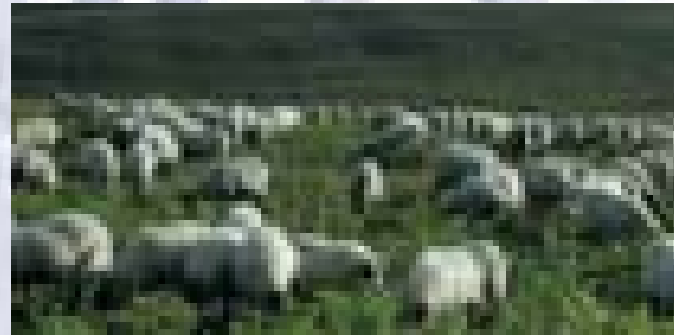
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### What is the basque administration committed to doing?

- Contribute to achieving the objectives for greenhouse effect gas emission reductions agreed in kyoto, by 2012.
- Increase the use of renewable energies by 2010, in accordance with european union objectives.
- As from 2004, all new publicly promoted buildings/residences will have energetic efficiency certification.

goals



### Actions in progress

- Preparation of the inventory of greenhouse effect gas emissions 1990-2000.
- Informative publication about climate change.
- Energetic and environmental indices.
- Promotion of council financed homes equipped to use solar energy.
- Fitting of photovoltaic solar energy collectors in basque education centres •