

## ADAPTATION OF FORESTS TO CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE ROLE OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES

St. Celoni – 16/05/2018

### Initiatives on forests and health in the framework of municipal land stewardship

Carles Castell (Diputació de Barcelona)

The Barcelona provincial council has been pursuing an active policy of protection and management of natural spaces for more than 40 years in a territory - the province of Barcelona - where more than five and a half million people currently live benefiting from these spaces. Numerous programs and activities aimed at visitors, from environmental education and communication, related to biodiversity and natural heritage and the tangible and intangible elements of cultural heritage, to name just a few examples, have contributed decisively to bringing natural parks closer to society, as evidenced by the high number of users of spaces and facilities, and the good assessment they make of them.

During the last years, from the Management of Natural Spaces of the Diputació de Barcelona numerous actions have been developed with the aim of facilitating the universal access to the Network of Natural Parks, improving the accessibility to the spaces, developing inclusive itineraries and making environmental communication and education materials for people with special needs, among others. At present, this offer - innovative and pioneer in the whole of Europe, and developed to a large extent thanks to the Agreement with Obra Social la Caixa - is centralized on the accessible website of the Network of Parks, and constitutes a reference for people and groups who want to carry out activities in the natural environment, regardless of their needs.

Also, a few years ago a study was commissioned to the Department of Tourism of the Autonomous University of Barcelona, on the perception and demands of visitors to natural parks as health spaces. Through a complete battery of surveys, it was possible to get a good picture of what people are looking for in terms of health and their assessment of the offer they receive. The results show that more than 90% of visitors travel to the parks for reasons related to physical and / or mental health, and this same figure shows that, after the visit, they perceive an improvement in these aspects. The surveys also include the point of view of visitors, who point out shortcomings and propose improvements in this regard. For this reason, the Provincial Council is making progress on a comprehensive proposal that covers the following points:

- Guarantee the conservation of the natural and cultural heritage, as a basis for the benefits that nature offers to society.
- Incorporate in an integral and transversal way in the planning and management of natural spaces all the aspects related to people's health, especially in the proposals for public use.

**Coordinador**

**Socis**



Promoting resilience.cia.

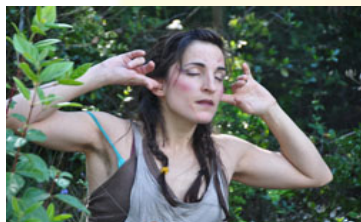
Opportunities and challenges of the local economy and society to adapt to climate change.

## ADAPTATION OF FORESTS TO CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE ROLE OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES

St. Celoni – 16/05/2018

- To work together with health professionals to position natural parks as key elements of public health policies.
- Incorporate as a priority the concepts and proposals related to human health in the planning and management processes of the whole green infrastructure.
- To favor the socio-economic benefits for the local population that can generate this greater contact of the society with the parks.
- To communicate to society as a whole, and especially to the most sensitive groups, the vision of natural spaces as spaces of health.

In this new stage, the role of the municipalities, as well as other agents involved, such as the owners and the forestry sector as a whole, is crucial. To this end, municipal land stewardship can be a tool of great flexibility and efficiency in order to establish the framework agreement that allows to combine the many aspects to be taken into account - ownership, forest conservation, management model, financing - in order to make public benefits compatible with private ones.



**Coordinador**

**Socis**

