



# Palou rural site,

from a degraded corner to an emblematic space

Granollers, Spain

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## Background

Population: 61,983  
Municipal area: 1490 ha  
Rural land (undeveloped, excluding road system): 479 ha (32%)

60s-90s: decrease of agricultural and natural land due to urban growth, new industrial estates and infrastructures.

- Challenge 1: Reverse the degradation of the area (polluted river, uncontrolled landfills, irregular uses).
- contaminated river, uncontrolled landfills, irregular uses).
- Challenge 2: recovery of the values of the territory, connection of citizens with the area.
- Challenge 3: socio-environmental revitalization of the area.



## Approach



### What is being done?

- Recovering, protecting and revitalizing the agro-environmental site of Palou
- The preservation of a rural area in the metropolitan context in which the city of Granollers is located is essential to obtain ecosystem services.
- SBN: recovery of fluvial and forest spaces, reused water network, revitalization of local agriculture.

### What was your starting point?

- 2007 Approval of urban planning that preserves the site as rural land **despite pressure for its urbanization.**



## Methodology



### What mechanisms have been used?

- River restoration projects, promotion of the social use of the river park, natural heritage protection ordinance, urban renaturalization program, Palou strategic plan, weekly local producers' market, healthy food accessibility project, subsidies for farmers, seed bank, seed bank, etc.
- Palou strategic plan, weekly market of local producers, healthy food accessibility project, subsidies to the peasantry, seed bank.
- Led by the City Council of Granollers with the participation of different administrations and local entities involved. Own, regional, national and European funding

### Next steps

- Consolidate and expand the achievements made
- Encourage new initiatives in the urban fabric to transfer these achievements.
- Better explain the interventions implemented and their impact in order to achieve greater citizen involvement.



## Outcomes



### What has been achieved?

- Significant increase in public use of space
- Improved food sovereignty due to the installation of new agro-ecological projects.
- Improved environmental health of natural habitats and the urban ecosystem, increased water quality and ecological status with the recovery of species of high ecological value.

## Lessons learned

- Political determination and a long-term outlook have been key to the success of the project.
- Environmental restoration has led to an increase in social use and greater opportunities for the economy and local development.
- One aspect to improve is to achieve greater complicity from Palou's landowners and greater citizen involvement.
- This practice can be replicated in any city with a stressed rural area.