

Xàbia wants to rid itself of polluting Plastic bags

The Environment Group of Agenda 21 has created an awareness campaign which aims to reduce the consumption of plastic bags through the introduction of attractive jute bags which will be provided to local businesses.

Xàbia want to put itself on the map as a sustainable town, one of the first in Spain to try and stop the use of plastic bags.



The growing number of plastic bags is a major source of pollution which contributes directly to the deaths of millions of animals. Environment group of the Agenda21 in Xàbia decided to promote an awareness campaign through the introduction of attractive jute bags.

It is estimated that around the world more than 1 trillion plastic bags are consumed a year. Most of them end their short life in a landfill. But since the plastic takes hundreds of years to degrade, this material ends up as a huge floating island in the middle of the Pacific, killing millions of animals which confuse them with food.

According to the Ministry of Environment, 10,500 million plastic bags are distributed in Spain each year. We are also the main producer of these single-use bags and the third consumer in Europe, but on the other hand, only 10% of them are recycled. Throughout the world countries are increasingly aware of the damage caused by plastic bags and take action to prohibit distribution or at least force consumers to pay for them.

But Spain is different, and the Government has had to retract its goal of banning plastic bags from 2010. Finally the National Integrated Waste Plan 2008-2015 only reflects that we must reduce the use of these bags by 50% from 2010.

The Environment Group of Xàbia's Agenda 21 has initiated an awareness campaign through which it is intended that the town serves as a reference, in the region and in the country, for the replacement of plastic bags for others of sustainable material.

To buy a minimum quantity of bags is virtually impossible for most businesses during this time of crisis. Thus, the Environment group concluded that if they enabled people to buy small batches, eg 10 or 20 units, the stores could acquire them and make them available to their customers.

After much searching, they finally found a company, JuteExpo, which has attractive, resistant jute bags with very comfortable handles of the same material. Moreover, this British company gets its bags in turn through fair trade with India.

In order to import and distribute the bags, the Environment Group has formed an association, "For a Sustainable Xàbia (Para una Xàbia Sostenible, PUXS), through which they may also carry out other

projects and campaigns directed to improve the sustainability of the municipality.

With the logo "Xàbia ecològica" altruistically designed by the guys of "La Banyera", these attractive bags, made of strong and resilient jute, are available through collaborating businesses in three different sizes, in exchange for a donation of 2 € for the small bag, or 3 €.

Thanks to the collaboration of associations of traders Xàbia and the support of the Town Hall, and through this initiative of PUXS it is intended that the town will become a landmark in the fight against environmental pollution by plastic bags.

This environmental awareness is another attraction that local trade will have for the rest of the region and a source of pride for javienses.

Moreover, jute bags are also an attractive souvenir for tourists.

Objectives which the "Xàbia ecològica" bags fulfill

- § They avoid the use of polluting plastic bags
- § The resistant bags are practical and attractive at the same time
- § Support Fair Trade
- § Support local business
- § Promote Xàbia as a sustainable municipality with environmental awareness
- § Nice souvenir for tourists to Xàbia

Contact: www.xabia21grupos.org info@xabia21grupos.org