

ANDALUSIA IS THE DRIEST REGION IN EUROPE



Heat and drought are causing problems all over Europe. But especially in southern Spain. Andalusia's tourist region is on drought alert. Drought and water scarcity in Andalusia impact an expected tourism boom.

In recent days, dozens of municipalities in Malaga and Huelva have announced water restrictions. The measures include:

- Shutting off private water supplies at night.
- Limiting showers.
- Banning watering gardens and washing cars and facades.

The major tourist destinations like Marbella will not be subjected to stringent measures. However, some coastal towns like Torremolinos will shut down their beach shower and foot-washing facilities. Benalmádena, on the other hand, has replaced all its showerheads to prevent water wastage.

There is a widespread ban on filling swimming pools due to the rapid evaporation of water at temperatures that often reach over 40 degrees Celsius. This could potentially result in private pools running dry.

Andalusian Tourism Has a Problem

It is anticipated that Andalusia will experience a surge in tourism this year, with approximately 11.5 million visitors expected. However, authorities are cautious about implementing measures that could negatively impact tourism in the region. This sector is crucial to Andalusia's economy, and officials are keen to avoid scaring away tourists.

Nevertheless, the current situation is unsustainable. The region's reservoirs are only 29.3 percent full on average, and the scorching heat results in millions of gallons of water evaporating daily. Some reservoirs have less than 10 percent of their capacity remaining. If the water that remains is prioritized for hotels and tourists, it could harm the local population and agriculture.

Urgent action is required to address this issue. For example, there is a plan for a desalination plant in Estepona. In recent years, some water has been purchased from neighboring Gibraltar. Andalusia has also approved several special supplementary budgets to tackle the drought.

The measures for this are expensive. This may be why Juanma Moreno, the Environment Minister of Andalusia, plans to visit Brussels. She wants recognition for Andalusia as the driest autonomous community in Europe.

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