



Exolum joins forces with SEO Birdlife and Life Coop Cortaderia to foster the preservation of the environment in the facilities at the Port of Bilbao

- **The collaboration has managed to halt the expansion of the invasive species known as ‘Pampas grass’ and eradicate it from Exolum’s installation in Santurtzi, thereby boosting the area’s naturalisation**

Exolum has added its voice to that of SEO BirdLife, the flagship environmental NGO in Spain, and to the project financed through European funds, Life Coop Cortaderia, to control the spread of the invasive plant ‘Pampas Grass’ (*Cortaderia selloana*) in Exolum’s installation in Santurtzi, Bilbao. This endeavour forms part of Exolum’s commitment following the backing it has given to the Transnational Strategy in the fight against *Cortaderia selloana* throughout Atlantic Europe.

This collaboration’s purpose has been to eradicate the grass and thus environmentally restore its lands within the installations located in Santurtzi. The grass, a species originally from South America, is found in numerous European countries as an invasive species, colonising natural spaces of major interest and displacing a wide variety of autochthonous species. The acknowledgement of this quandary has entailed the approval of strategies and plans, both from the public as well as the private sector, to fight against the proliferation of this species.

This environmental preservation project’s scope of action has involved almost 4 hectares in which two embankments invaded by the grass have been cleared through the application of phytosanitary treatments following the guidelines given in the Good Practices Manual for Pampas Grass Management, drafted within the framework of the project entitled Life Stop Cortaderia. This action has enabled us to remove a significant outbreak of this invasive species threatening the area surrounding the Port of Bilbao.

Likewise, with a view to increasing biodiversity’s carrying capacity, the parties will embark upon the naturalisation of the gardened areas, through the creation of flowery meadows, ponds and diverse shrubbery.

Through this engagement, Exolum brings to the fore its backing for the preservation of the environment, along with the natural habitats in those areas in which it is active, as part of its sustainability strategy outlined in its ESG Master Plan.

In the words of **Javier Alonso**, Global HSSE & Technology Lead at Exolum, “*at Exolum, the preservation of natural habitats is one of our priorities. For this reason, from our installation in*



Santurtzi, we have worked in liaison with SEO Birdlife and Life Coop Cortaderia on a project to protect biodiversity in the region and combat invasive species that threaten our ecosystems.”

Felipe González, head of SEO Birdlife on the LIFE COOP Cortaderia Project also stressed that *“companies have a lot to gain if they better understand the interdependencies between corporate activities, natural capital and biodiversity. Exolum’s endeavours in its plant located at the Port of Bilbao is a standout example of how companies can contribute to preserving biodiversity.”*

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