

MEMORIES 2013



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We wish to express our special thanks to all the people and associations that have made our work possible: members, volunteers, companies, associations and people who help us by giving economic support and so enabling our activities. To all, our most sincere thanks.



GOB (Grup Balear d'Ornitologia i Defensa de la Naturalesa) is a non profit making ecological association, which has been working in the Balearic Islands since 1973. The branch which works in Menorca was created in 1977 and now has more than 1,200 members.

Its primary object is to contribute to the achievement of a sustainable economy, which by implication necessitates making human activities compatible with environmental values.

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EDITORIAL

WORKING FOR THE FUTURE



JAUME OBRADOR
President of GOB Menorca

You have in your hands *Memories* which concerns the activities of GOB Menorca in 2013.

Memories are synonymous with reminiscences. To reminisce is to go over past events with nostalgia or to remember the past from which it is possible to continue while recognising what obstacles might be ahead.

Because of that, *Memories* does not start from scratch. It arises from real experiences, of moments lived nor is it of experiences which happen without reason.

So *Memories* is to remind, to provide a historical context and it also intends to reflect on the relevant vital experiences of all and each one of us. It wants to show respect for work done and the will to keep going. *Memories* is not, in my opinion, a simple resumé of the year's events nor is it a compilation of a list, the longer the better, as though for a competition to be won by the greatest number of activities on it. No, *Memories* implies deep reflection on specific activities and the reviewing of any flaws so as to be able to continue working in order to achieve our objectives.

It is important to stop ourselves for a while and analyse knowledge gained from the past and then, where necessary, continue with increased effort. And, all that, for what? What is the motive for dedicating so much time and energy to work without any material gain?

Certainly there are some particular goals, specifically the treatment of contaminated mud or the fight to rationalize what some call the "improvement to the main road" or the care of wounded and abandoned animals because of

human negligence or because of accidents. But beyond these aims there exists something more which is to leave a legacy for a future world by transforming this world, an activity which is not only possible but essential.

And it is possible if we behave responsibly with nature, without wasting natural resources and energy, and if we rectify the absurd uncontrolled consumerism which increases the destruction of our planet as well as accelerating the distance between the first and third world. It is precisely for these reasons that it is more than possible: it is necessary to act.

It is true that we want a balanced Menorca exemplary in the management of its biodiversity, a Menorca humane in its relations with other cultures. We also want a better world, better managed. We do not have to conform with everything in this age of changes, but, rather we prefer an age in which people and the environment are at the centre of the political and social debate.

"To change the world depends on a committed attitude to create some clear objectives based on good information and to have the ability to organize and the will to work to change this world." (Arcadi Oliveras, *Un altre món*) It is necessary, above all, to see the sources of offences in areas of which we are hardly conscious: the daily paper we read, the bank where we deposit our money, and the plastic we waste, etc. Because it is the little details of our lives which are easy to overlook yet help us to analyse and profoundly question the way we live.



THE PRINCIPLES

OUR PRINCIPLES ARE LIKE A ROAD MAP TO WHICH WE ALWAYS TURN TO START A NEW WAY OR TO REPLY TO SOME QUESTION PLANTED AT THE HEART OF THE GROUP. THEY CAN TELL US AS MUCH AS IS NEEDED FOR QUESTIONS TO BE ANALYSED FROM MANY POINTS OF VIEW, AND ALWAYS GUARANTEEING THAT WE DO NOT DEVIATE FROM THOSE OBJECTIVES FOR WHICH GOB WAS BORN. HERE WE HAVE PUT TOGETHER FIVE PARAGRAPHS IN ORDER TO CONVEY OUR IDEOLOGY.



1. COMMITMENT. What motivates so many people to dedicate a large amount of time in their life for a cause such as ecological conservation? There is only one answer: a commitment to the Earth with its limited resources and for social justice. This commitment is born out of sentiment for belonging to a world of which we are a piece, a key piece, yes, but only one of the many pieces of which it is made up. Our little world, Menorca, is a land where we can still wonder at some unspoilt countryside, at some clean waters into which we can dive and at a sky in which we can see the stars. The greed of some people making us fear that our descendents will not have these privileges is the spur which leads us to non-conformity and social criticism in our efforts to stamp it out.

2. COHERENCE. Throughout the life of GOB we have developed a line of work which coheres with the ethical principles which we defend and which we apply as much to the public as to the day to day activities of the association. We maintain faithful to those ideals, though without any illusions – in effective work, in the economic frugality which governs all its activities, and, of course, in everything which has allowed GOB to survive since before the arrival of democracy in our country.

3. RIGOUR. The independence of whatever group of power, be it political or economic, is something basic in order that issues may be tackled with rigour. All our opinions, complaints or proposals have a scientific or legal base and actions, therefore, though they may be criticised, are argued soundly. Whoever has the responsibility of representing the Group fulfills its work based on the environmental regulations of the islands, of autonomous, national and international regions. In their turn, the professionals who advise us are not only disinterested but multidisciplinary and tackle issues from very different points of view.

4. SOCIAL CHANGE. The final objective of our actions is to achieve a change in society which harmonises human activity with conservation principles and makes a reasonable and fair use of the natural resources within our area. To make critical citizens who can actively participate in public life is a basic achievement on which we put great importance through non-formal education as much for children as for adults.

5. DIALOGUE. Despite a work which is not always seen in its totality, GOB tries to discuss it with all groups and people who have something to say with respect to socio-environmental issues. To achieve positive results, we have, for many years, worked with organizations, parties or groups who contribute their efforts. To come to a consensus is not easy and we always bear in mind the principle of give and take. The work with institutions and administrations is continuous, and we persevere in trying to achieve the existence of a vision of conservation in everything which affects the lives of the public.

GOB MENORCA IN FIGURES

1,269 members, **346** volunteers, **26** members of the Council, **10** working groups, **419,000** euros of budget, **10** employees, **42** days of voluntary work, **2,066** hectares of Menorca land stewardship scheme covering **25** agreements, **801** animals cared for at the Recuperation Centre, **48%** animals liberated, **148** sponsors for the Animal Recuperation Centre, **112** written allegations and official complaints, **33,237** signatures recorded for campaigns for the protection of the country, **2,655** students in activities on environmental education, **710** people taking part on courses conferences and seminars, **372** participants on public excursions **24,000** plants produced for reforestation, **6,000** plants for ecological gardening and horticulture, **184** press releases, **3,410** visitors to GOB facilities, **89,556** web page hits, **3,522** "I like it" on Facebook, **2,004** followers on Twitter, **11** associations and networks of which GOB is a part, **9** consultative organizations and advisors participating with GOB.

IMPORTANT EVENTS

RESUMÉ OF A BUSY YEAR

2013 WAS THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DECLARATION OF MENORCA AS A RESERVE OF THE BIOSPHERE. FOR US, INSTEAD OF A YEAR OF CELEBRATIONS THIS HAS BEEN A VERY DEMANDING ONE, MARKED BY THE THREATS TO THE COUNTRYSIDE INSTIGATED BY THE GOVERNMENT. THE OUTSIZE ROUNDABOUTS OF THE MAIN ROAD, THE PTI, THE HYDROLOGY PLAN AND THE DREDGING OF THE PORT OF MAHÓN ARE THE CONTROVERSIAL TOPICS TO WHICH WE HAVE DEDICATED SO MUCH TIME AND ENERGY AND WHICH LEAVE US AT THE END OF 2014 WITH MANY ONGOING CONCERNS.



27 JANUARY

Protest march for the main road demanding a modification to the roundabout project.

26 JANUARY

The start of the sixth edition of the Agriculture and Environmental seminars.

7 FEBRUARY

Debate at the Mahón Ateneo on the subject of the roundabouts with the participation of GOB.

14 FEBRUARY

We present objections to the initial approval and statement of public utility for the Me-1 project between Ferreries and Ciutadella.

25 FEBRUARY

We present objections to the evaluation and environmental impact of the roundabouts for the main road.

18 MARCH

We transmit a video on the project for dredging contaminated matter from the Port of Mahón resulting in thousands of visual representations in a very short time.

20 MARCH

Spontaneous concentration of the public in front of the Port Authority to protest against the initial and imminent dredging of the Port of Mahón.

24 MARCH

A presentation of Menorcan lamb sausages, a new product maximising the use of sheep to give a good profit, an initiative of the GOB Agricultural Stewardship Project.

26 MARCH

The Facebook release of the Recuperation Centre for Wild Animals.

26 MARCH

The Balearic Public Prosecutor orders the suspension of the dredging of the Port of Mahón as a consequence of our formal complaint.

11 AND 12 APRIL

The walk around the island highlighting the main road "improvements" ended with the reading and the subsequent sending of a manifesto to the Island Council calling for a discussion on the roundabouts projected for the main road.

17 APRIL

Presentation of objections to the proposed Project for a Plant to deal with building waste on rustic land at Biniaiet Vell.

29 APRIL

The start of collecting signatures to be sent to the Council Tourism Office calling for a discussion on the roundabouts projected for the main road.

20 MAY

Presentation of objections to the Port Authority regarding a new road in Cos Nou.

26 MAY

Celebration of the annual Fiesta of GOB Menorca in Biniparratx.

28 MAY

Presentation of an objection to the Report on Environmental Sustainability of the Hydrology Plan for the Balearic Islands.

7 AND 8 JUNE

We take part in the Environment Fair in Mahón.

19 JUNE

We launch a new protest T-shirt in the series of "The Menorca we Love".

1 JULY

The first open day for the public of the Recuperation Centre situated in the Lithica Quarries.

6 AND 7 JULY

We take part in the ninth Fair for ecological agricultural products of Menorca.

16 AUGUST

We meet volunteers from the wildlife Recuperation Centre at Monte Toro and release fourteen owls into the wild which had been cared for by them.

3 SEPTEMBER

Alternative opening speech of the Fiestas de Gràcia, organised by a number of organizations including GOB.

3 OCTOBER

The start of the course of UIMIR, (Universidad Internacional de Menorca, Illa del Rei) given by GOB on the best methods of water management for land stewardship.

8 OCTOBER

We make complaints about threats to the countryside during the 20th anniversary celebrations of Menorca as a Reserve of the Biosphere at the Teatro Principal.

11 OCTOBER

The Public Prosecutor files away the dossier on the dredging of the Port of Mahón but demands guarantees of environmental care in the execution of the work.

15 OCTOBER

GOB makes an official complaint on the admission to the Recuperation Centre of a booted eagle, hurt as a result of shooting.

19 OCTOBER

Celebration of the Day of Women Farmers as part of the Land Stewardship Project.

24 OCTOBER

The start of the collection of signatures on Change.org against the outside roundabouts for the main road. 4,600 were collected.

29 OCTOBER

We transmit a videoclip explaining the Roundabouts Project which gets 2,500 hits.

31 OCTOBER

We obtain, having asked since March, access to the dossier on the Roundabouts Project, and are represented by a lawyer and a notary at the Island Council.

18 NOVEMBER

The president of GOB intervenes at a plenary session of the Island Council demanding transparency and that it consider alternatives to the Roundabouts Project.

23 NOVEMBER

Guillem Orfila receives the Pere Prats Prize for the Environment given each year by GOB.

25 NOVEMBER

A campaign for sponsorship to finance the administration of the dispute against the Roundabouts Project collects in one day the amount asked for: 4,500 euros.

28 NOVEMBER

We lodge an appeal on the dispute with the government against the Roundabouts Project.

19 DECEMBER

Jaume Obrador Tudurí is elected President of GOB Menorca by the assembly of the members.

WARDENS OF THE LAND

PROTECTION OF THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT BY THE PUBLIC



When the many fights and initiatives are considered, the list is long because without the active public which Menorca has, a large part of the countryside so symbolic of the island, would have become inappropriately urbanized. And, without the permanent presence of ecologists who have been able to add their individual efforts, we would not have this captivating countryside nor would Menorca be declared a Reserve of the Biosphere.

In the various discussions within the association to analyse and activate events the organization has taken decisions which have a profound effect. The professionalisation of a part of this work allows, on the one hand, avoiding pressure on the volunteers whose dedication to GOB can become exhausted, and, on the other hand, the professionals can go more deeply into key subjects.

In GOB we consult records, we draw up official complaints, we send out communications on which society can reflect, we implement innovative projects, we make visits to the countryside, we cover areas which neither the public government, nor the private company takes on, we get groups to join together, we discuss proposals....

Probably, our best known work is that of vigilance, because it tends to be so much in the media (more

newspapers are sold about controversial matters than agreements). Despite the fact that a large number of difficult cases are resolved before becoming public, there are others which turn into long lasting disputes.

“WITHOUT THE ACTIVE PUBLIC WHICH MENORCA HAS A LARGE PART OF THE COUNTRYSIDE, SO SYMBOLIC OF THE ISLAND, WOULD HAVE BECOME INAPPROPRIATELY URBANIZED”

In 2013 we have had to dedicate a great deal of our efforts into aspects such as the modification of the the country planning permissions (the PTI), via the provisional Land Regulations, (Norma Territorial Transitoria), made without public discussion. Also, the work has been intensive on the question of the dredging of the Port of Mahón which, after three years of confrontations, and with the help of the public protests and the intervention of the Public Prosecutor for the Environment, has finished by being tackled within the most demanding international environmental parameters.

The Project of the main road and its huge double level roundabouts has been publicly condemned, in the streets, in communiqués, and by the Judges with the

WHEN ANYONE ASKS IF MENORCA WOULD BE THE SAME WITHOUT GOB, WITH SO MANY ADVERSITIES BECOMING HABITUALLY RECOGNISED, THE ANSWER IS IF GOB DID NOT EXIST IT WOULD HAVE TO BE INVENTED. FROM ITS BEGINNINGS, THE PEOPLE WHO FOUNDED GOB IN THE SEVENTIES, HAD THE VISION TO BUILD AN ASSOCIATION FOR WORKING FOR THE ENVIRONMENT WITHIN THE SCOPE OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC. THAT IS TO SAY, AN ASSOCIATION WHICH WOULD ENDEAVOUR TO HAVE INFLUENCE ON THE PROBLEMS OF THE ENVIRONMENT BUT WOULD BE INDEPENDENT FROM ANY POLITICAL PARTY.



support of large sectors of Menorcan society but it is expected to be a long term subject which merits dedication during the coming years.

But, basically, we continue our work of vigilance because of the many efforts orientated in gaining rapid profits by speculators who buy low and sell high. And with such dynamics the countryside becomes highly desirable by many so must be watched over to keep it for rational and sustainable use.

LAND STEWARDSHIP AGREEMENTS

With these objectives of conservation must be understood that the keeping of a balance between human activities and environmental values is achieved in various ways. One of our long term projects is to search for points of agreement with significantly different and important sectors of the farming community in the correct or incorrect management of large areas of land.

For some years we have applied the idea of land stewardship to agriculture. In other words, pursuing the involvement of owners and managers in agricultural exploitation because it is they, in fact, who take the decisions that affect the largest areas of the countryside. These are not initiatives with rapid results but they show progress and the added strength of working together.

Today, 25 farms of Menorca have signed up to the Land Stewardship Agreement with GOB (two of them have joined this year). We have applied the scheme also to the alliance of Alt Ampordà (with 13 agreements in force) and our model of active conservation is used nationally spreading out to nearly all the Autonomous Communities. Essentially, it consists in agreeing on a series of measures which consider the economic viability of the farm with the principles of conservation.

The Land Stewardship Agreements are of mutual benefit, based, above all, on confidence. Correct management with quality produce is helped by volunteer work days, promotion of products, the forming of networks to share resources, direct or indirect investments, etc. In short, it tries to make it possible to work together looking for appropriate ways for obtaining suitable economic activity while guaranteeing the maintenance of natural values, landscapes and cultures.

Menorca will continue being what it is if the people who love it organize themselves in a disciplined way to maintain the special character of its countryside.

DEALING WITH BIODIVERSITY

NATURE IS THE SOURCE OF OUR WELL BEING. IT PROVIDES US WITH FOOD AS WELL AS ENERGY AND OTHER NATURAL RESOURCES. HOWEVER, SOME HUMAN ACTIVITIES CAUSE ENORMOUS NEGATIVE IMPACTS ON OUR ENVIRONMENT. EVEN SMALL ACTIONS SUCH AS THE USE OF INDIGENOUS PLANTS IN OUR GARDENS AND RESPECTING WILD ANIMALS HELP US TO KEEP AN EQUILIBRIUM IN BIODIVERSITY.

Nature is the source of our well being. It provides us with food as well as energy and other natural resources. However, some human activities cause enormous negative impacts on our environment. Even small actions such as the use of indigenous plants in our gardens and respecting wild animals help us to keep an equilibrium in biodiversity.

We live together on the planet, and, on our island, with many different species of plants and animals, resulting from thousands of years of evolution. Between them they shape the countryside and ecosystems in which they live and are the basis of our economy.

The over use of the countryside for building and infrastructures, the introduction of invasive species, the over exploitation of the aquifers, the contaminated wastes, in short, many human activities provoke the degradation of natural habitats and endanger indigenous species.

Our work is to influence the preservation of the countryside and its ecosystems, as well as the conservation of different species. The Campaigns for the Protection of the Countryside or the Land Stewardship Agreements are examples. But, also, projects are carried out dealing more directly with preservation of animals and plant species such as at the Recuperation Centre for wild animals and at the Es Viver garden centre for indigenous plants.

INJURED WILD ANIMALS

With reference to fauna, we have been working for the recuperation of injured wild animals since 1997 thanks to volunteers and the help of the veterinary clinic of Jaume Pons. During these years, we have dealt with more than 15,000 animals. In 2013 alone there were 801 animals in need of assistance of which 264 were indigenous, 510 mediterranean tortoises coming from captivity and 27 exotic animals with the potential to be invasive. 48% of these animals needing help have recovered. You can find a detailed *Memory* on our website gobmenorca.com.

The majority of animals that enter the Centre are as a consequence of human activity: road collisions, housing development, destruction of nests, attacks on domestic animals, etc., and which we try to relieve in the best possible way. In addition, many of the animals taken in belong to protected species and are especially vulnerable and are very relevant for the ecosystems so need to have particular protection.





The *Recuperation Centre* was opened to the public for the first time during the summer of 2013, and visitors were able to appreciate from close up some of the wild species of Menorca and to know the problems which affect them. The opening of the Centre has been possible thanks to the inestimable work of volunteers for adapting the facilities.

INDIGENOUS PLANTS

In turn, from *Es Viver* the garden centre, we work principally in the sphere of sustainable gardening, encouraging the use of indigenous plants. In addition, we do landscaping of public and private spaces, with the aim of making the areas more sustainable, with little maintenance cost and little water consumption. In this way we also aim to stop the introduction of invasive species and new plagues and to contribute to the maintenance of biodiversity.

A new initiative this year, in *Es Viver* garden centre, is a line of work for the production and sale of kitchen garden plants of local varieties. These are part of the preservation of a cultural and genetic inheritance having a considerable economic potential and we offer them to the public in order that they do not die out.



Those interested can find at the garden centre, seeds, plants and other materials to create an ecological garden adapted to Menorcan characteristics as well as maintenance contract services. We offer to businesses and public institutions bespoke services for the creation of gardens or changing areas into gardens, as well as producing plants for various purposes. For example, this year we have produced with *Abres d'Algendar* in the Life Project *Reneix*, some 24,000 plants for the regeneration of an area at Binimel.là.

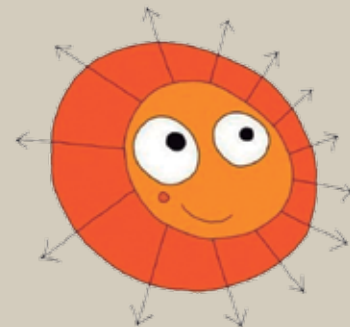
The so called green filters are another of the innovative products of *Es Viver* garden centre. They are a system of aquatic plants for the purification of waste water. These filters are used to try to reduce the problem of waste water contaminating the aquifers in urbanizations on the island not connected to the main drains.



This year we have increased the opening hours to the public: every Friday and Saturday you can come for more information on wild plants for traditional use for cultivated or kitchen gardens according to your requirements.

ACTION

ALTERNATIVES TO THE CONTEMPORARY MODE OF CONSUMPTION



IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO COME TO A FAIR AND SUSTAINABLE SOCIETY, BOTH ECONOMICALLY AND ENVIRONMENTALLY, IF WE DO NOT CHANGE THE CONTEMPORARY MODE OF CONSUMPTION. THIS CHANGE IS NOT ONLY POSSIBLE BUT ESSENTIAL DESPITE THE SELF-INTERESTED AND CONTINUOUS MESSAGES OF POWERFUL ECONOMIC GROUPS WHICH OFTEN INFILTRATE GOVERNMENTS EVEN THOUGH THEY DENY IT. WE HAVE TO CHANGE THE WAY WE EXPLOIT THE EARTH AND ITS NATURAL RESOURCES. IN GOB WE WORK TOGETHER WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS IN THE FORUM D'ENTITATS DEL TERCER SECTOR DE MENORCA (THE THIRD SECTOR FORUM OF ASSOCIATIONS OF MENORCA) TO DRIVE THIS CHANGE.

In GOB we impart ideas and try to promote experiences which show that it is possible to behave in a different way. We comment here on some situations with reference to energy, water, agriculture and tourism.

SOLAR PANELS. MAKE USE OF THE SUN

In GOB we have organized a campaign to promote the installation of solar panels for heating water, which could represent a 30% reduction on energy consumed in the home. We have instigated agreements between a manufacturer, local installers and a bank which facilitates the financing.

GREEN FILTERS. PURIFY YOUR WASTE WATER

Green filters are a simple, effective and economical solution for the purification of waste water from isolated houses which would otherwise contribute to the contamination of Menorca's aquifers. GOB has established contacts with a company experienced in systems of natural purification with aquatic plants in order to increase the number of installations on the island. GOB's garden centre, *Es Viver*, grows the necessary plants and installs green filters in gardens.

LAND STEWARDSHIP. COUNTRYSIDE WHICH PROVIDES FOOD

Agricultural exploitation in harmony with the land is the source of global riches. Good agricultural practices contribute to improved soil fertility, to the maintenance of biodiversity, to natural resources and to the making of good quality rural countryside. In GOB, we work jointly with the farms that have Land Stewardship agreements to gain not only the best economic profit and improved environment but also a good quality of life for the farmers. As a result it is supporting agriculture as an economic sector which generates products of high quality contributing to the local economy, the health of the public, to tourism and many other economic, cultural and environmental activities.

COURSES FOR TOURIST GUIDES FOR THE CAMI DE CAVALLS

Tourism in contact with nature and which looks for authentic experiences and emotions is growing. In Menorca this has increased since the Cami de Cavalls has opened up to tourism, but it is an activity with two sides: on the one hand it is very good to have visitors to Menorca for its natural environment but, on the other hand, some bad practices can rapidly degrade the attraction which is being offered.

GOB organises courses so that tourist guides are aware of the problems which affect the natural environment of Menorca and can explain our principles and good practices for conserving nature.

From our organization, we look for viable solutions to environmental problems. The public has the final responsibility for putting them into practice and for contributing to a social change for a way of life more sustainable and respectful towards our natural environment.

A SINGLE WORLD

BEYOND MENORCA

ALTHOUGH OUR AMBIT IS THE BALEARICS, WE SHOULD NOT FORGET THAT WE FORM PART OF THE WORLD, IN WHICH EVERYTHING IS RELATED, WHICH WE NAVIGATE TOGETHER. MORE THAN EVER, THE MAXIM, "THINK GLOBALLY, ACT LOCALLY" HAS THE MEANING IN A GLOBALIZED WORLD WHERE THE FLOW OF INFORMATION IS LIKE A TIDAL WAVE CONNECTING ALL THE PARTS.



In very distant places with different realities from our own there are, however, people working in the same direction as us: it is possible to have another form of relationship with the environment, it is possible to manage resources more fairly so as to avoid finally exhausting its reserves. It is possible to avoid the injustice of resources being put into the hands of the few who are motivated only by the ambition of self-enrichment.

To learn other initiatives and also to explain our own, we have been involved this year as active members of different forums. Here ideas are exchanged and global strategies created so that each of us can adapt and apply them to our own areas of activity.

In the sphere of land stewardship, for example, we are active members of the Xarxa de Custòdia del Territori I de l'ICTIB. We take part in the National Forum of Land Stewardship which joins together associations of Spain and acts as a social mouthpiece to lobby the government. We take part in special training days and pass on what we have learnt to Menorcan farmers at our numerous meetings.

With regard to maritime subjects, we co-ordinate with Oceana and Greenpeace on conservation activities along the coast and on energy matters. Recently, we established a united front to work on the very worrying subject of prospecting for future petrol extraction in the Mediterranean. In addition, we share many of the European initiatives arising from environmental forums for analysing the huge global problems which affect us: drinking water, the future of agriculture, climate change, overfishing, renewable energy supplies, etc. with the one objective of finding sustainability for the future.

With the associations of the other Balearic Islands, we are members of the same family of GOB, but like in all families, each one of us focuses on our own most effective tactics. There is an annual meeting of the Inter-Island Board made up of the Presidents from Formentera, Eivissa, Menorca and Mallorca, with the coordinators and members of the inter-island board to agree, approve and decide on all matters related to conservation and the environment.



COMMUNICATION

THE ENVIRONMENTAL CONSCIENCE

OUR PATH AS A CONSERVATION SOCIETY HAS EARNED US AN IMPORTANT POSITION OF INFLUENCE IN THE MENORCAN COMMUNITY AND WE ARE NOW AN INFORMATION POINT FOR ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS. AS SUCH WE ARE THE SPOKESPEOPLE AND NEGOTIATORS FOR PETITIONING AND URGING THE GOVERNMENT TO HAVE DEBATES WITH THE GENERAL PUBLIC ON MATTERS CONCERNING THE PROTECTION AND DEFENCE OF THE COUNTRYSIDE.



GOB's mission is to defend nature and a fundamental part of our work consists in disseminating our values, ideas and proposals. Our ecological voice aims to generate opinion and initiate dialogue and critical reflection among the public.

SOCIAL NETWORKING

Our principal means of communication are through the web page www.gobmenorca.com, Facebook and Twitter with daily publications of notices, official complaints and proposals. Our members put us in contact with a public of thousands of people who, thanks to our campaigns and activities, have shown their interest in receiving GOB information.

In addition, with the object of involving more people, in 2013 we opened the web page Savemenorca.com for the roads campaign, we started a Facebook page for the Recuperation Centre and we foresee the same for the garden centre *Es Viver*. Our information videos have had many visits on You Tube. Our three monthly journal *El Socarrell*, in which we publicise GOB's activities, is sent on line to members and followers and there is also a paper edition. It outlines points of interest concerning the island.

OUR PUBLIC PRESENCE

GOB has a very public presence. Its stalls are found in places like fairs, fiestas and markets all of which provide opportunities for bringing us closer to more people, to explain our work and to make available to the public our information materials explaining the natural environment. This year we have been at the Book Fair, the Culture Celebration, the Environment Fair in Mahón, the Night Market of Es Mercadal, the Agricultural Fair for ecological products at Es Mercadal, the Cricket Club Fete and the Ferreries Companies Trade Fair, amongst others.

The circulation of our campaigns and ideas is done through conventional means of communication and other channels such as in influential publications, or by articles in specialist magazines such as *Roqueta* published in English for the British community of Menorca.

LEADERS OF OPINION

In the campaign for the roads, as spokesperson for the community, we gave many informative talks in 2013 and also took part in the round table talks on the roundabouts project of the main road, organized by the Ateneo of Mahón, with representatives from the Official College of Arquitects and Engineers. We were also present at the Hunting Council and at other commissions and work groups where we were able to give our environmental point of view.

On occasions, the information we give with the rigour that characterises us, offers a different perspective on environmental matters from that of the general media. We act, therefore, as the "environmental conscience" of Menorca. We are now known for the constancy of our activities reinforced by the increased number of our followers.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

APPRECIATION THROUGH KNOWLEDGE

A WELL EDUCATED SOCIETY UNDERSTANDING THE RICHNESS OF THE NATURAL WORLD SURROUNDING IT DOES NOT ALLOW IT TO DETERIORATE. FOR THAT REASON WE WORK IN THE DISSEMINATION OF KNOWLEDGE AND RAISING AWARENESS THROUGH EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES DIRECTED AT ALL AGES.

The Environmental Education Service is for GOB a fundamental instrument for disseminating our aims and inculcating positive attitudes on the environment. Our activities promote the close proximity of nature and the discovery of its charms.

WE GO TO SCHOOL

School activities are one of our most important branches of education. We offer training in class rooms so that children can know and appreciate their natural environment. They can discover how ecosystems function, learn where energy and the water we consume come from, learn to identify some animal species and the vegetation of Menorca, in order to go deeply into the relationship between the countryside and nature. There are many learning games for amusing and educating young schoolchildren. This year we incorporated a novelty: musical storytelling which goes with the infants' book *Mordala the Crab*. More than 2,000 pupils from different towns on the island have enjoyed our activities.

In addition, the long term project "*Bon profit! Educam menjant*" of the consortium of Mestral-GOB, has been very active this year. The aim is to promote the products of local ecological agriculture and inform the education community on the consumption of sustainably produced foods. We have run courses and activities for cooks, families, children and teachers to advocate a more responsible attitude to the consumption of food. Thanks to this initiative, some schools have started to introduce ecological foods to their menus.

TRAINING FOR ALL

We have carried out many training programmes from different areas of GOB for the general public. The Botany Group has renewed the Introduction to Botany course and made many excursions into the country to appreciate plants. The garden centre *Es Viver* has given workshops on pruning, grafting and planting out in the Rubio y Tuduri Park and repeated the course on "Management of an Ecological Family Garden".

The course on "Environmental principles for Cami de Cavalls guides" has aroused much interest, satisfying the necessity for specific training, and celebrates its fourth year. We have also carried out the Three Days for Women Farmers and the Seminars on Agriculture and the Environment, now in their sixth year.

But the most attractive proposals and with the largest number of participants are the excursions of the *A peu* (On foot) programme. Going round the island on a pleasant walk allows us to understand our countryside and to recognise the heritage which it represents. In 2013 about 200 people walked to Son Catlar, S'Enclusa and La Marcona.

Through GOB you can find activities for all tastes. Subscribe to our email list and receive full information.



VOLUNTEERS

THANKS TO YOU



A large group of volunteers with very different talents is available to GOB who work according to their abilities, dedicating their time and knowledge to us. Those that are young may have the patience and dedication to look after an orphaned chick. Others, much older, make available their free time and give a great part of it for contributing their ideas and knowledge. Some volunteers are occasional, participating once in their lives, others, on the other hand, have accompanied us since the birth of the organization. All are of great importance.

In 2013 we strengthened the volunteer groups for the Agricultural Land Stewardship farms and for the garden centre *Es Viver*. In addition we have created a new group of volunteers for the Recuperation Centre who ease the enormous quantity of tasks of the workers. The group of faithful volunteers for the Agricultural Land Stewardship farms, for example, have dedicated seven days to go to farms that have agreements with GOB. Some of the work carried out is to help with pruning and cleaning areas for livestock, weeding paths or clearing rubbish.

At *Es Viver* volunteers have helped in the daily routines of maintenance and in all the occupations associated with the garden centre: harvesting, treatment and sowing of seeds, watering and management of the Sa Creueta kitchen garden, etc. Volunteers learn about the diversity of wild plants on the island, as well as helping us in the work of sustainable gardening.

In the Recuperation Centre for Wild Animals another group of volunteers has been created that regularly carries out cleaning and maintenance of the facilities. Their days have made possible the improvement of cages and surroundings for the animals. Of course, in spring and summer, volunteers have helped us to care for and rear orphaned animals, resulting in the survival of many such as swifts fallen from their nests, owls, greenfinches and other birds, until they can be released into the wild.

Also we must emphasise the help of all those people from many spheres who, in the background have advised us on specific technical matters or helped in our campaigns by increasing the rigour and professionalism of our actions.

THE VOLUNTEERS ARE A FUNDAMENTAL PILLAR OF OUR ASSOCIATION. THANKS TO THE DISINTERESTED PARTICIPATION OF A LARGE NUMBER OF PEOPLE, MANY PROJECTS CAN BE CARRIED OUT WHICH WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE WITHOUT THEM. THE DEDICATION OF VOLUNTEERS YOUNG AND OLD ADDS TO THE EFFORTS OF MAINTAINING THE NATURAL BEAUTY OF OUR ISLAND.



MUTUAL BENEFIT

We all benefit from the voluntary work, the volunteers as much as the recipients. For the volunteer it can be treated as a process of learning and of becoming aware of natural values as well actively participating as a member of the public in environmental areas of common interest. For us it is seen as an inestimable help and gives us the opportunity to explain our aims.

There is a sector of society whose solidarity shows it is greatly involved with environmental matters. It demonstrates the existence of a participating society worried about its land intent on keeping it in a good state of conservation. We are delighted that we are not alone in this work and that so many help in our labours. Thank you to all!

“Life is enriched by volunteering with GOB” says Chita Laurie, one of our volunteer translators.

“What I like best about being a volunteer is to have the pleasure of being in contact with nature and to be able to look after animals which, as a child, I was

observing from a distance. In general, I love everything: feeding the animals, helping to construct new cages, making terrariums, handling animals, setting them free, getting to know new people, helping at meetings, in fact, everything that is required. In addition, I learn something new every day, and, furthermore, I like it because it is advantageous for the future” says Jaume Sureda, 14 years old, active volunteer of CRFS.

“I see volunteering as an important act of participation on the part of the public. It is a way of being an active society. All of us have to champion a life that is fairer. The volunteer contributes to those changes and alternatives which we want for our community, and adds great value to our quality of life” commented Aina Tejero, a volunteer and member of the Board of Directors of GOB.

The help of volunteers is essential. You can help us, also. Join us!

ARTISTS FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

THE INVOLVEMENT OF THE CULTURAL WORLD

THROUGHOUT OUR HISTORY AS AN ORGANIZATION MANY PEOPLE LINKED TO THE CULTURAL WORLD HAVE SUPPORTED US. HERE WE WOULD LIKE TO MARK THEIR CONTRIBUTION GIVEN WITH SUCH A SPECIAL FEELING FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE ISLAND.



The word **culture** comes from the Latin *colere* that is to say to cultivate, work on the land or look after animals: agriculture, apiculture, etc. With time, the meaning of the concept of culture was extended to include intellectual training forming attitudes, values, objectives and practices characterising institutions, organizations, groups or societies whose objective is social transformation.

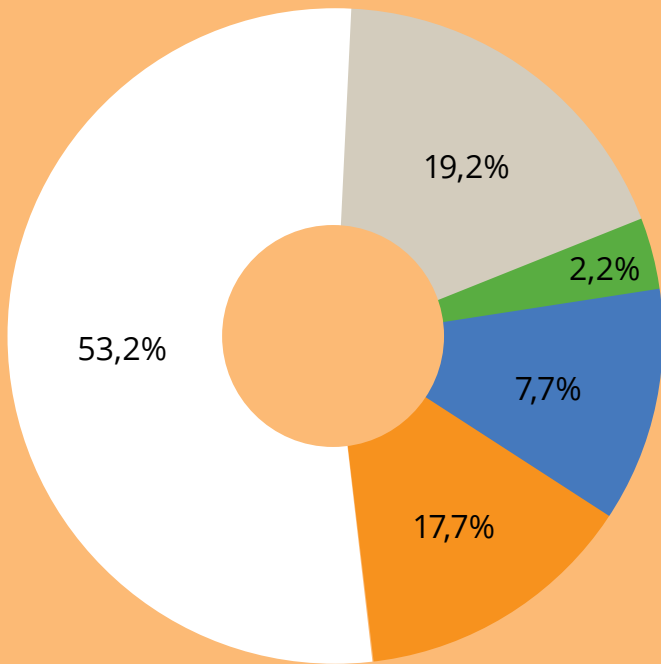
So, one way or another, culture and the world of art are directly tied up with the principles of transformation defended and promoted by GOB and perhaps because of that the commitment between the cultural world and social activism is strongly linked. More than anything artists of the varying arts of the bucolic muse of Thalia contribute their professionalism for one cause, the environment, and always when it is needed.

Designers, singers, actors, painters, photographers, poets, writers have all contributed their work to environmental causes whenever we have asked them. This year, 2013, the campaign for the main road has been the object of work so well done by a group of theatre actors who improvised scenes humorously broadcasting the inappropiate and disproportionate Project of the Island Council. We also highlight the alternative festival opening speech for the Fiestas de Gracia of Mahón which remind us that there are many problems that cannot be solved by "good words".

These are volunteers who offer us their free time and give up the modus vivendi on which they depend. Sometimes, unfortunately, we help in a cultural regression, an intentional confusion between entertainment and culture, a return of the "bread and circus" of ancient Rome, so it is only fair to remember the importance of these artists for dignifying the concept of culture.

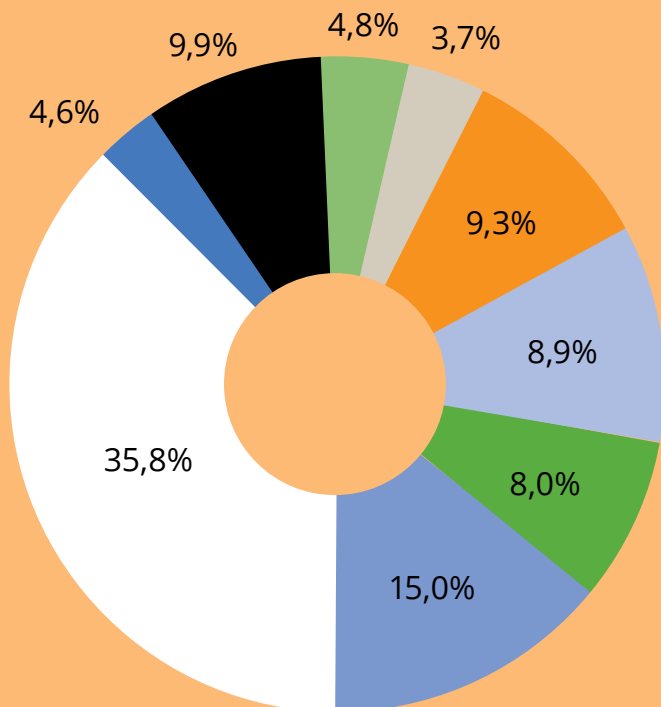


ACCOUNTS 2013



SOURCE OF INCOME

- Contributions and donations
- Private Sponsorship of projects
- Sale of products
- Services given
- Public sponsorship of projects



EXPENSES

- Public and membership services
- Outlets and products
- Environmental policy
- Environmental education
- Recuperation Centre for Wild Animals
- Garden Centre for indigenous plants
- Land Stewardship project
- Other projects
- Organization costs

The budget executed by GOB Menorca during 2013 was 380,090.00 euros.

The source and expenditure of the finances can be seen on the pie charts.

GOB is a non-profit making association and its accounts are audited annually.



YOU ALSO CAN HELP US