HuMUS

Final Report

Quipar Restauration Project

313 - Caravaca de la Cruz, Murcia, Spain

AYUNTAMIENTO CARAVACA DE LA CRUZ

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PUBLISHABLE SUMMARY

The Quipar Valley Restoration Project is a pilot initiative led by the Municipality of Caravaca de la Cruz (Departments of Environment and Rural Development) and the Regeneration Academy Foundation, with support from the EU-funded HuMUS programme. Its objective is to restore soil health across the upper catchment of the Quipar River in southeast Spain, a territory heavily impacted by erosion, aquifer depletion, unsustainable land use, and rural depopulation.

The project adopted a participatory, place-based approach grounded in the HuMUS methodology. It was structured around two pillars:

1.- Co-creation of a Territorial Management Agreement (TMA) involving local actors.

2.- Promotion of soil literacy and regenerative thinking through education and public engagement.

Over 60 interviews and 8 participatory workshops were conducted with farmers, educators, students, local authorities, and NGOs. Participants collaboratively diagnosed challenges, mapped systemic problems, envisioned a shared future, and proposed concrete actions. A systemic stakeholder and force map was developed to guide engagement, and spatial tools helped connect problems with places.

The result of this process was the Territorial Management Agreement of the Quipar Valley, signed in May 2025 by over 30 actors from across the territory. The agreement outlines a 10-year vision and shared commitments in three strategic areas:

- ***Sustainable water and soil management.***
- ***Valorization of local sustainable production.***
- ***Youth engagement and rural repopulation.***

PUBLISHABLE SUMMARY

In parallel, the project engaged over 300 people through awareness and training activities. Five open workshops were held at La Junquera regenerative farm, where participants explored soil functions through real-life examples of land degradation and restoration. Additionally, a Mini Research Program was launched in local secondary schools (five workshops). High school students conducted scientific assessments of soil health—measuring infiltration, microbial activity, and carbon levels—and connected their results to land-use decisions.

This educational component led to the development of a new methodology for teaching soil health, adapted to both academic and informal learning environments. It also resulted in the integration of soil function analysis into the curriculum of participating schools.

The pilot had clear environmental, social, and governance impacts. It helped reframe soil as a living system, activated intergenerational dialogue, and fostered a sense of local agency. It also contributed to institutional alignment and opened pathways for policy integration at the municipal level.

The Quipar Valley Restoration Project offers a replicable model for other Mediterranean territories facing intertwined ecological and socio-economic challenges. By combining systemic diagnosis, participatory design, and experiential learning, it has demonstrated that soil health can be a powerful entry point for building resilient rural futures.