Interreg Euro-MED

Co-funded by the European Union

NaTour4CChange

Destination Marketing and Visitor Communication Strategy for Climate Action in Cabo de Gata-Níjar Natural Park

The Consortium:

Project Information	
Project Acronym	NaTour4CChange
Project Full Title	Governing sustainable tourism in territories with high environmental value: reconnecting tourism and nature for addressing the climate crisis with an ecosystem-based approach
Project Priority	#2: A Greener Med
Project Mission	#4 Enhancing Sustainable Tourism
Specific Objective	#2.4 Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention, resilience, taking into account ecosystem-based approaches
Type of Project	Thematic Project
Contract No	Euro-MED0200735
Start date	1 January 2024
Duration	33 months

Deliverable Information	
Deliverable no	D. 3.8.1
Deliverable title	Destination Marketing and Visitor Communication Strategy for Climate Action in Cabo de Gata-Níjar Natural Park
Contractual date of delivery	31.8.2026.
Actual date of delivery	03.09.2026
Type of deliverable	External
Nature of deliverable	
Work Package	WP 3
Activities	3.8.
Partner responsible	Ministry of Tourism

Project Overview

The Mediterranean region is one of the most vulnerable hotspots in the current biodiversity and climate crises, warming 20% faster than the global average and being the second biodiversity hotspot in the world. The increase of severe climate events are also likely to influence the choice of destinations and time to travel for its over 510 million inhabitants. The effects of climate change will put additional pressure on already strained ecosystems and vulnerable economies and societies, with Tourism being one of the most affected economic sectors.

The recent Transition Pathway for Tourism and the Glasgow Declaration are building a global momentum for Climate Action in Tourism, but policymakers and destinations need support to better develop efficient climate mitigation and adaptation policies using ecosystem-based approaches and improved multi-level governance structures, including robust planning and ensure the long-term engagement of the private sector and citizens. Indeed, ecosystem-based management is considered a good practice to effectively deal with these threats as it considers the different stakeholders and factors affecting ecosystems and the mechanisms involved, in order to find solutions.

NaTour4CChange builds on and capitalizes on successful experiences at the Mediterranean and global level to test solutions for increasing the resilience of coastal destinations in the Mediterranean. The project will aim to set common methods to allow participating regions to assess their tourism-related climate adaptation and mitigation priorities, and take climate action via plans and strategies, supported by cooperative governance.

In coastal destinations, cross-sector teams will deliver specific tourism climate Action Plans, focusing on climate adaptation, where Nature-based Solutions (NbS) will be tested to ensure their feasibility. At the same time, innovative destination marketing and communication approaches will engage private stakeholders, visitors, and residents in climate action.

The project will also ensure cross-fertilization among participating regions and destinations, to achieve common methods and to compare the different tested plans and solutions, leading to lessons, best practices, and policy.

Glossary

Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) means anticipating the adverse effects of climate change and taking appropriate measures to prevent or minimise the damage they may cause, or to take advantage of the opportunities that may arise.

Climate Change Mitigation (CCM) means making the impacts of climate change less severe by reducing the sources of emission of greenhouse gases (GHG) into the atmosphere or by improving the storage of these gases.

Ecosystem Services (ES) are the benefits that an ecosystem brings to society and that improve people's health, economy, and quality of life.

Ecosystem-based Approaches (EbA) focus on managing biodiversity and ecological systems in a holistic way to maintain and enhance ecosystem services benefits and functions.

Nature-based Solutions (NbS) encompasses all actions that rely on ecosystems and the services they provide to respond to various societal challenges such as climate change, food security, resource management, or disaster risk.

Contents

1. Introduction and Context 5
2. Climate Risks and Communication Implications 7
2.1 Priority Climate Risk 1: Water Scarcity and Drought 9
2.2 Priority Climate Risk 2: Biodiversity Loss and Ecosystem Degradation 10
2.3 Communication Implications 10
3. Strategic Communication Objectives 11
Objective 1. Promote responsible water use among visitors 12
Objective 2. Encourage climate-adaptive and low-impact visitor mobility 13
Objective 3. Increase visitor stewardship of protected ecosystems and Nature-based Solutions 13
4. Target Audiences 14
5. Core Messages and Narrative 17
6. Communication Channels and Touchpoints 20
7. Key Campaign Actions 24
8. Stakeholder Engagement 28
9. Monitoring and Evaluation 30
10. Implementation Roadmap 32
ANEX I: List of figures 36
ANNEX. List of Tables 36

1. Introduction and Context

Cabo de Gata–Níjar Natural Park is one of Andalusia's most important nature-based tourism destinations, recognized for its exceptional volcanic landscapes, marine and terrestrial biodiversity, and cultural heritage. Tourism is a key economic sector, but increasing visitor pressure combined with climate change, including rising temperatures, water scarcity, biodiversity loss and coastal degradation, poses significant challenges to the long-term resilience of the destination.



Fig.1 Contextualizing the pilot destination in the western mediterranean

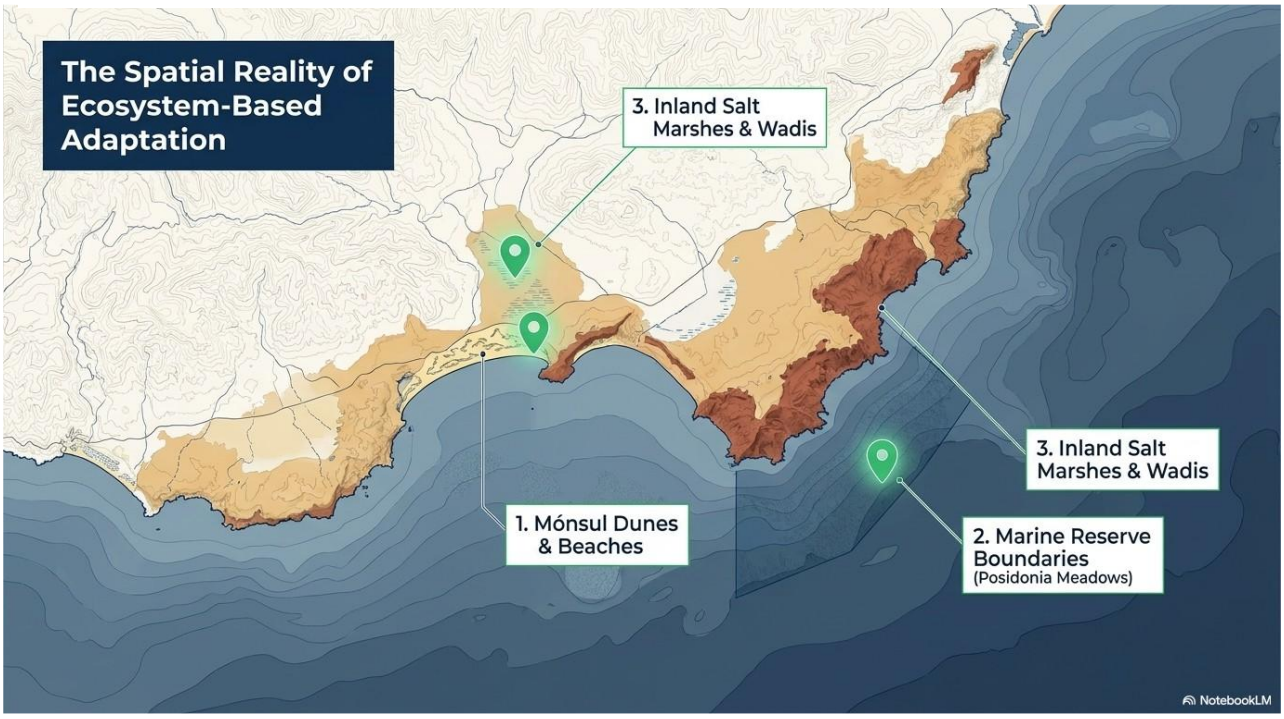


Fig.2 The spatial reality

The strategy is primarily aligned with the **Andalusian Climate Action Plan (**PAAC), specifically its **Communication and Participation Programme**, which identifies communication as a cross-cutting strategic line supporting climate mitigation, adaptation and public participation. The PAAC promotes climate literacy, behavioural change, stakeholder collaboration and the integration of climate communication across all sectoral policies, including tourism. Consequently, this strategy adopts communication not as a promotional activity but as a governance tool that enables visitors, businesses and local communities to actively contribute to climate resilience.

Moreover, the strategy operationalizes the **Destination Tourism Climate Action Plan (Deliverable D3.4.1)** by translating its climate objectives into practical communication actions and campaigns. Particular emphasis is placed on communicating **Nature-based Solutions (NbS),** encouraging low-impact visitor behaviour, promoting sustainable mobility, reducing pressure on vulnerable ecosystems and fostering stewardship of the Park's natural and cultural heritage. Furthermore, the strategy builds on existing tourism marketing practices while addressing current gaps in climate communication. Although the destination is successfully promoted for its landscapes, biodiversity and outdoor experiences, climate adaptation, visitor responsibility and behavioral change are not yet systematically integrated into tourism communication. This strategy addresses these gaps by embedding climate communication into the visitor journey, stakeholder collaboration and destination governance, fully consistent with the objectives of the PAAC Communication Strategic Line.

2. Climate Risks and Communication Implications

The **Destination Climate Action Plan (D3.4.1) (D3.4.1)** identifies climate change as one of the principal long-term challenges for the sustainability and competitiveness of tourism in Cabo de Gata–Níjar. The Park combines high ecological value with a semi-arid climate and limited natural resources, making it particularly vulnerable to climate change. The assessment identifies *heatwaves, water scarcity, ecosystem degradation and increasing tourism pressure* as the most relevant issues affecting both visitor experience and destination resilience.
Consistent with the **PAAC Communication and Participation Programme**, communication should not simply inform visitors about these risks, but promote behavioural changes that support adaptation, strengthen public participation and increase climate literacy. Likewise, the D.1.8.1 **Destination Marketing and Visitor Communications Manual** (in short, *Communications Manual*) recommends that communication priorities be derived directly from climate vulnerabilities and

translated into clear behavioural objectives supported by Nature-based Solutions (NbS).

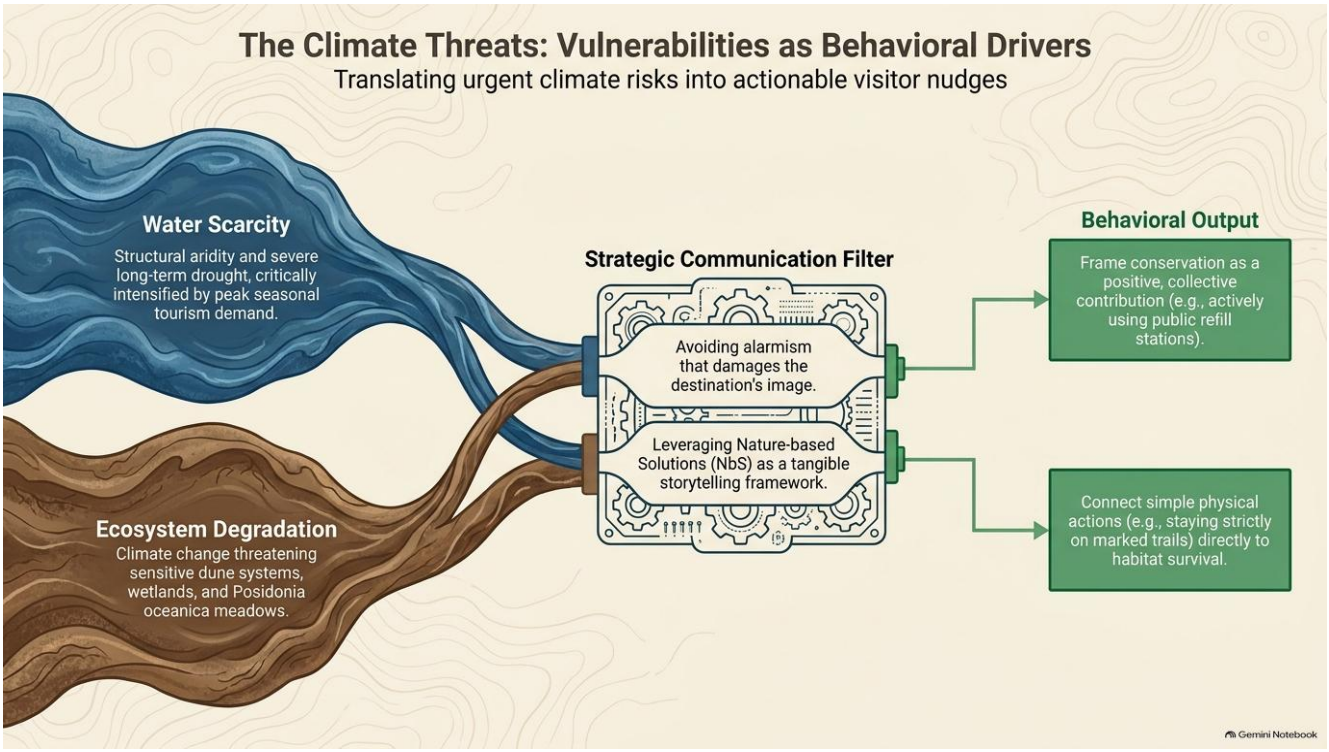


Fig.3 Cabo de Gata-Níjar: Vulnerabilities and threats

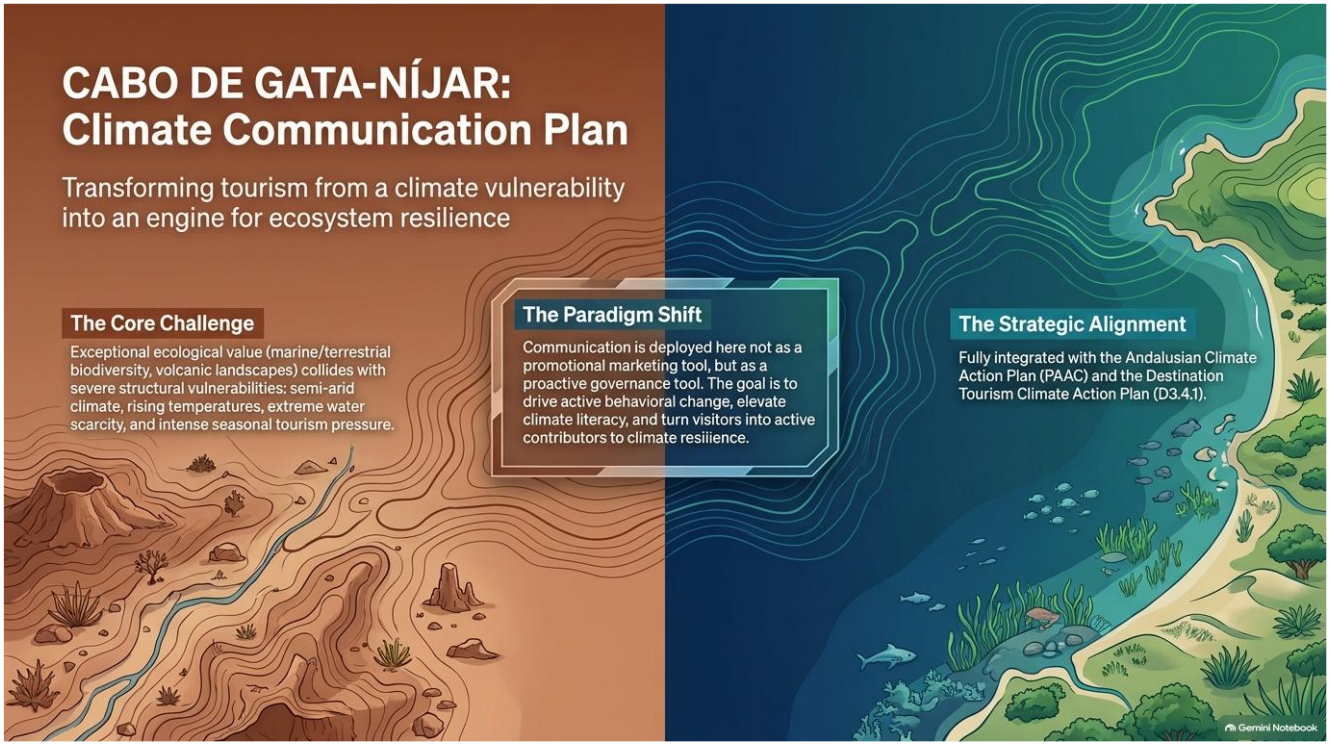


Fig.4 Cabo de Gata-Níjar: Climate-Communication Plan

2.1 Priority Climate Risk 1: Water Scarcity and Drought

Water scarcity is the most pressuring risk for Andalusia and represents the most critical long-term climate challenge for Cabo de Gata–Níjar. Structural aridity, declining water availability and prolonged drought threaten ecosystems, local communities and tourism services. Climate projections indicate that water resources in Andalusia may decrease significantly during this century, with particularly severe impacts in semi-arid territories such as Cabo de Gata–Níjar. Tourism intensifies seasonal demand for water precisely when availability is lowest.

The Climate Action Plan prioritizes measures that improve water efficiency, protect wetlands and coastal aquifers, and strengthen ecosystem resilience through Nature-based Solutions. These actions should be complemented by communication encouraging visitors to reduce water consumption, use refill stations, avoid single-use plastics and recognize water as one of the Park's most valuable natural resources.

Communication on water scarcity should avoid alarmist messages that could negatively affect the destination's image. Instead, following the PAAC and the Communications Manual, messages should frame water conservation as a simple and positive visitor contribution, highlighting that small individual actions collectively protect the Park's ecosystems and ensure the sustainability of tourism. Behavioural

nudges, visual cues and positive storytelling are likely to be more effective than technical information alone.

2.2 Priority Climate Risk 2: Biodiversity Loss and Ecosystem Degradation

The ecological integrity of Cabo de Gata–Níjar constitutes the foundation of its tourism appeal. Climate change threatens sensitive ecosystems including dune systems, wetlands, *Posidonia oceanica* meadows, coastal habitats and xerophytic vegetation. These ecosystems provide essential ecosystem services, protect biodiversity and contribute directly to visitor experiences. Their degradation would reduce the environmental quality and attractiveness of the destination. The Destination Climate Action Plan (D3.4.1) identifies ecosystem restoration and conservation through Nature-based Solutions as a strategic adaptation priority. Actions include dune restoration, wetland conservation, habitat restoration and adaptive visitor management to reduce pressure on vulnerable areas.

According to the Communications Manual, Nature-based Solutions provide an ideal communication framework because they connect biodiversity conservation with tangible visitor actions. Rather than explaining ecological restoration in technical terms, communication should demonstrate how staying on marked trails, respecting protected habitats and participating in conservation activities directly contribute to ecosystem resilience. Storytelling, interpretive trails, guided experiences and community-based initiatives are recommended as effective communication tools.

2.3 Communication Implications

These two climate risks establish the communication priorities for Cabo de Gata–Níjar. In line with the **PAAC Communication Strategic Line**, communication should improve climate awareness while encouraging active participation and responsible behaviour. Similarly, the Communications Manual recommends translating each climate risk into a specific behavioural objective communicated consistently throughout the visitor journey.

The communication priorities for this Strategy are therefore to:

- promote water conservation as a shared responsibility between visitors, businesses and residents;
- encourage climate-adaptive visitor behaviour during periods of extreme heat through seasonal planning and sustainable mobility;
- communicate Nature-based Solutions as visible examples of climate action and biodiversity conservation;

- reduce visitor pressure on fragile ecosystems through positive behavioural messaging and visitor flow management; and
- strengthen visitors' sense of stewardship by demonstrating how individual actions contribute directly to the long-term resilience of Cabo de Gata–Níjar.

This risk-based communication approach supports both the implementation of the Destination Climate Action Plan (D3.4.1) and the objectives of the PAAC Communication and Participation Programme by transforming climate adaptation into clear, positive and actionable visitor communication.

3. Strategic Communication Objectives

The strategic communication objectives for Cabo de Gata–Níjar Natural Park are derived from the priority climate risks identified in the **Destination Climate Action Plan (D3.4.1) (D3.4.1)** and are consistent with the behavioural communication framework established in the **NaTour4CChange Communication Manual (D1.8.1)**. Rather than focusing exclusively on increasing climate awareness, the strategy seeks to encourage specific visitor behaviours that contribute to climate adaptation, ecosystem conservation and the implementation of Nature-based Solutions (NbS). This approach is also aligned with the **PAAC Communication and Participation Programme**, which emphasises communication as a tool for facilitating climate action through participation, behavioural change and social engagement.

The communication objectives are organised around three strategic priorities that respond directly to the destination's principal climate challenges: water scarcity, heat stress, ecosystem degradation and tourism-related environmental pressures.

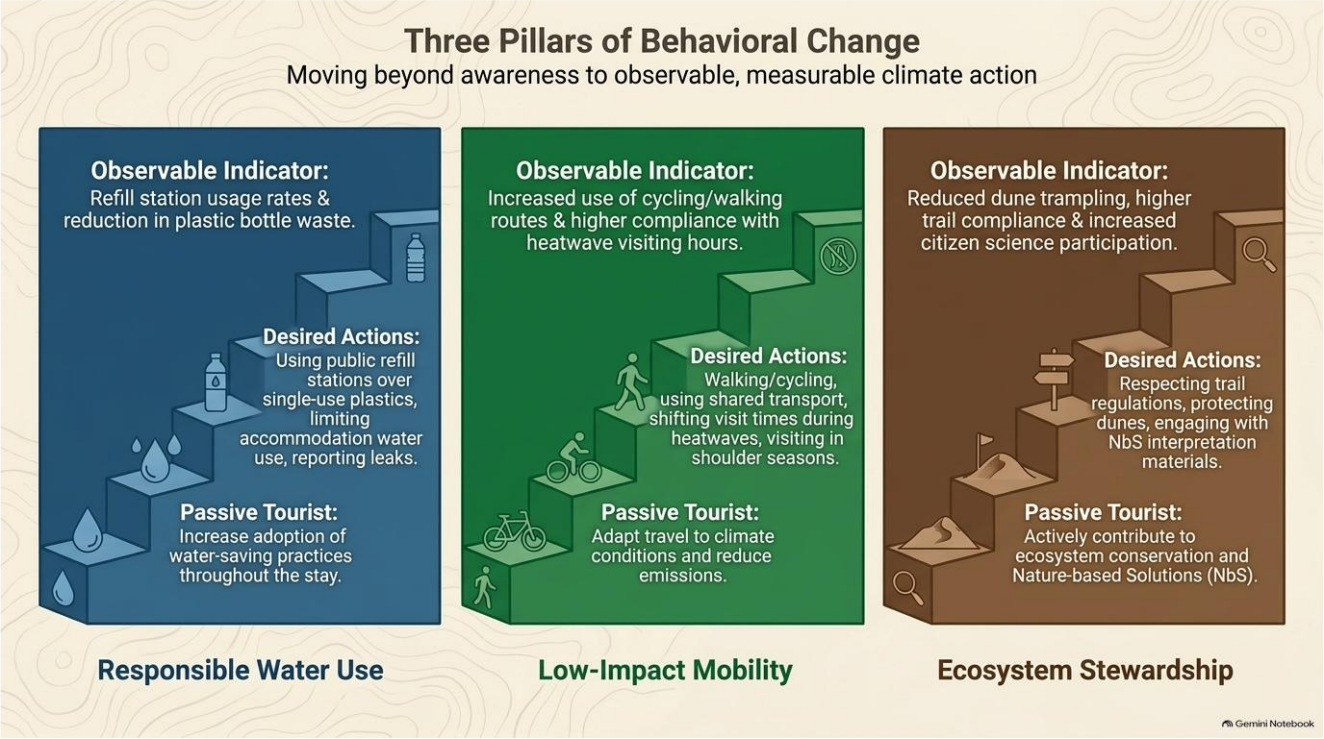


Fig.5 Cabo de Gata-Níjar: Behavioural Change

Objective 1. Promote responsible water use among visitors

Behavioural objective: Increase the proportion of visitors adopting water-saving practices throughout their stay.

Given that water scarcity represents the destination's most significant climate vulnerability, communication should encourage practical behaviours rather than merely explaining the problem. Desired behaviours include using refill stations instead of purchasing bottled water, limiting unnecessary water consumption in tourist accommodation, reporting water leaks when observed and recognising water conservation as an integral part of responsible tourism.

Observable behavioural indicators

- Increased use of public water refill stations.
- Reduction in single-use plastic water bottles.
- Higher participation in accommodation water-saving initiatives.
- Greater visitor recognition of water conservation messages.

Objective 2. Encourage climate-adaptive and low-impact visitor mobility

Behavioural objective: Increase the use of sustainable transport options and encourage visitors to adapt travel behaviour to climatic conditions.

Communication should support adaptation to increasing temperatures while simultaneously reducing tourism-related emissions. Visitors should be encouraged to walk, cycle or use shared transport whenever possible, visit during cooler periods of the day, and distribute visits more evenly throughout the year to reduce pressure during peak summer months.

Observable behavioural indicators

- Increased use of cycling and walking routes.
- Greater uptake of public or shared transport.
- Increased visitation during shoulder seasons.
- Higher compliance with recommended visiting times during heatwaves.

Objective 3. Increase visitor stewardship of protected ecosystems and Nature-based Solutions

Behavioural objective: Encourage visitors to actively contribute to ecosystem conservation through responsible behaviour.

The Destination Climate Action Plan (D3.4.1) identifies ecosystem restoration, dune conservation and biodiversity protection as priority adaptation measures. Communication should therefore strengthen visitors' understanding that simple actions directly support Nature-based Solutions and improve ecosystem resilience. Desired behaviors include remaining on designated trails, avoiding sensitive dune systems, respecting habitat protection measures, participating in conservation activities where appropriate and supporting local businesses committed to environmental sustainability.

Observable behavioral indicators

- Increased compliance with trail regulations.
- Reduced trampling of dunes and sensitive vegetation.
- Higher participation in conservation events and citizen science activities.
- Increased visitor engagement with NbS interpretation materials.

Strategic Alignment

These communication objectives follow the behavioural communication model proposed in the **Communications Manual**, whereby each communication objective is linked to a clearly identifiable visitor behaviour that contributes to climate adaptation or mitigation. The strategy therefore moves beyond awareness-raising towards measurable behavioural outcomes that directly support implementation of the **Destination Climate Action Plan (D3.4.1)**, the **Nature-based Solutions Programme**, the **PAAC Communication and Participation Strategic Line**, and the objectives of the **Andalusian Commitment to Climate Action in Tourism**, which promotes tourism as an active contributor to climate resilience and ecosystem regeneration.

4. Target Audiences

The communication strategy for Cabo de Gata–Níjar Natural Park adopts a segmented audience approach, as recommended by the NaTour4CChange Communication Manual. Rather than attempting to communicate with all visitors equally, resources should be concentrated on the audiences that generate the greatest environmental pressures while also offering the highest potential for behavioural change. Audience segmentation enables communication to be more relevant, behaviour-specific and measurable, ensuring that messages, channels and interventions are adapted to visitors' motivations and contexts rather than relying on generic awareness campaigns. This approach is fully aligned with the behavioural communication principles promoted by the NaTour4CChange Toolkit and the PAAC Communication and Participation Programme, which emphasize targeted interventions based on specific behaviours and audience characteristics.

For Cabo de Gata–Níjar, three priority audiences have been selected based on the tourism profile described in the Destination Climate Action Plan (D3.4.1) and the environmental pressures experienced across the protected area. These audiences represent the greatest opportunity to influence visitor behaviour while remaining operationally feasible for destination managers.

Priority Audience 1. Day Visitors and Beach Users

Day visitors constitute the largest visitor segment during the spring and summer seasons and generate considerable pressure on beaches, coastal dunes, parking areas and recreational facilities. Their short length of stay means they have

limited exposure to destination information and make rapid decisions, requiring communication that is highly visible, simple and action-oriented.

This audience is particularly important because many of the environmental impacts associated with tourism occur during short recreational visits, including littering, trampling of dune vegetation, off-trail movement, excessive water consumption and the use of disposable plastic products.

The principal behavioural priorities for this group are:

- Use refill stations instead of purchasing single-use plastic bottles.
- Dispose of waste correctly and recycle where facilities are available.
- Stay on designated walkways and marked trails.
- Avoid trampling dune vegetation.
- Respect Posidonia banquettes and other natural coastal features.
- Visit during recommended hours to reduce exposure to extreme heat and overcrowding.

Because day visitors often make decisions on-site, communication should rely heavily on behavioural prompts placed at visitor arrival points, beaches, car parks, trailheads and viewpoints.

Priority Audience 2. Nature-oriented Visitors and Active Tourists

This audience includes hikers, cyclists, birdwatchers, photographers and visitors specifically motivated by the Park's natural heritage. They generally spend longer periods within protected areas and interact directly with sensitive ecosystems. Although they often possess higher environmental awareness than average tourists, their activities concentrate within habitats that are particularly vulnerable to climate change and recreational disturbance. Consequently, even small behavioural improvements can produce substantial conservation benefits.

Priority behaviours include:

- Remaining on designated walking and cycling routes.
- Respecting habitat protection zones.
- Avoiding disturbance to wildlife.
- Supporting Nature-based Solution initiatives through participation in restoration activities and citizen science.
- Choosing environmentally certified tourism businesses.
- Sharing responsible behaviours through social media and visitor networks.

This audience also represents an important communication multiplier, as many actively seek environmental information and frequently influence other visitors through online reviews, blogs and social media.

Priority Audience 3. Tourism Businesses

Tourism businesses—including accommodation providers, restaurants, activity operators, visitor centers and local tourism services—are considered a strategic audience because they act as trusted intermediaries between destination managers and visitors.

Unlike visitors, businesses interact with tourists throughout their stay and can repeatedly reinforce climate messages. Their daily contact with visitors enables them to normalise sustainable behaviours through information, infrastructure and service design.

Behavioural priorities include:

- Consistently communicating responsible visitor behaviours.
- Promoting refill stations and reducing single-use plastics.
- Encouraging sustainable mobility options.
- Providing visitors with climate adaptation advice during periods of extreme heat.
- Promoting local products and services with lower environmental impacts.
- Participating in the Andalusian Climate Action Commitment and other sustainability initiatives.
- Integrating climate communication into customer interactions.

Audience Prioritization

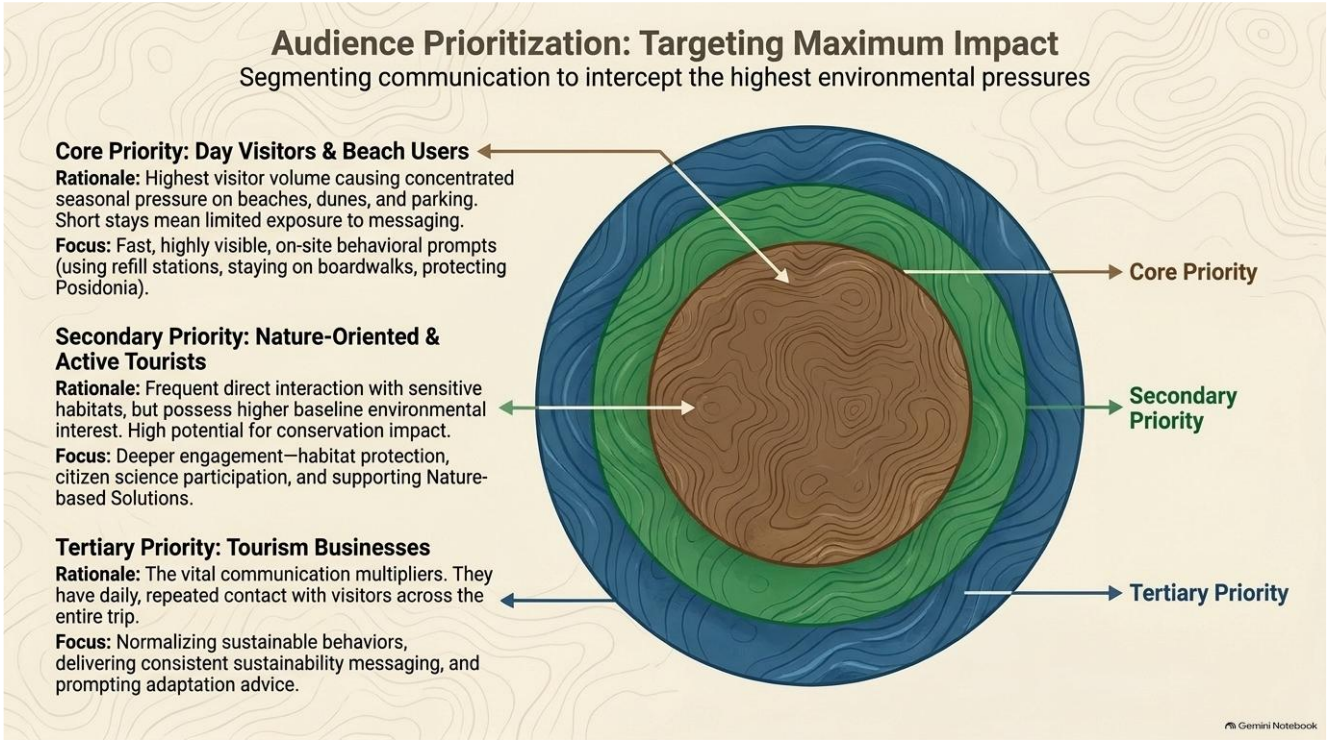


Fig.6 Cabo de Gata-Níjar: Audience Prioritization

5. Core Messages and Narrative

The communication strategy for Cabo de Gata–Níjar Natural Park adopts a *behaviour-centered narrative* that connects climate action with the destination's unique natural and cultural identity. Following the NaTour4CChange Destination Marketing and Visitor Communications Manual (Section 4.3), communication should move beyond communicating climate risks to inspiring positive action through place-based storytelling, solution-oriented messaging, and behavioural insights. Similarly, the PAAC Communication and Participation Programme highlights the importance of improving climate literacy, promoting public participation and encouraging behavioural change through accessible and engaging communication.

Rather than presenting visitors as part of the environmental problem, the strategy positions them as *temporary custodians* of Cabo de Gata–Níjar, whose everyday choices contribute directly to protecting the landscapes and ecosystems that make the destination unique. The narrative therefore reinforces a shared responsibility between visitors, tourism businesses and local communities for preserving the Park's natural heritage and strengthening its resilience to climate change.

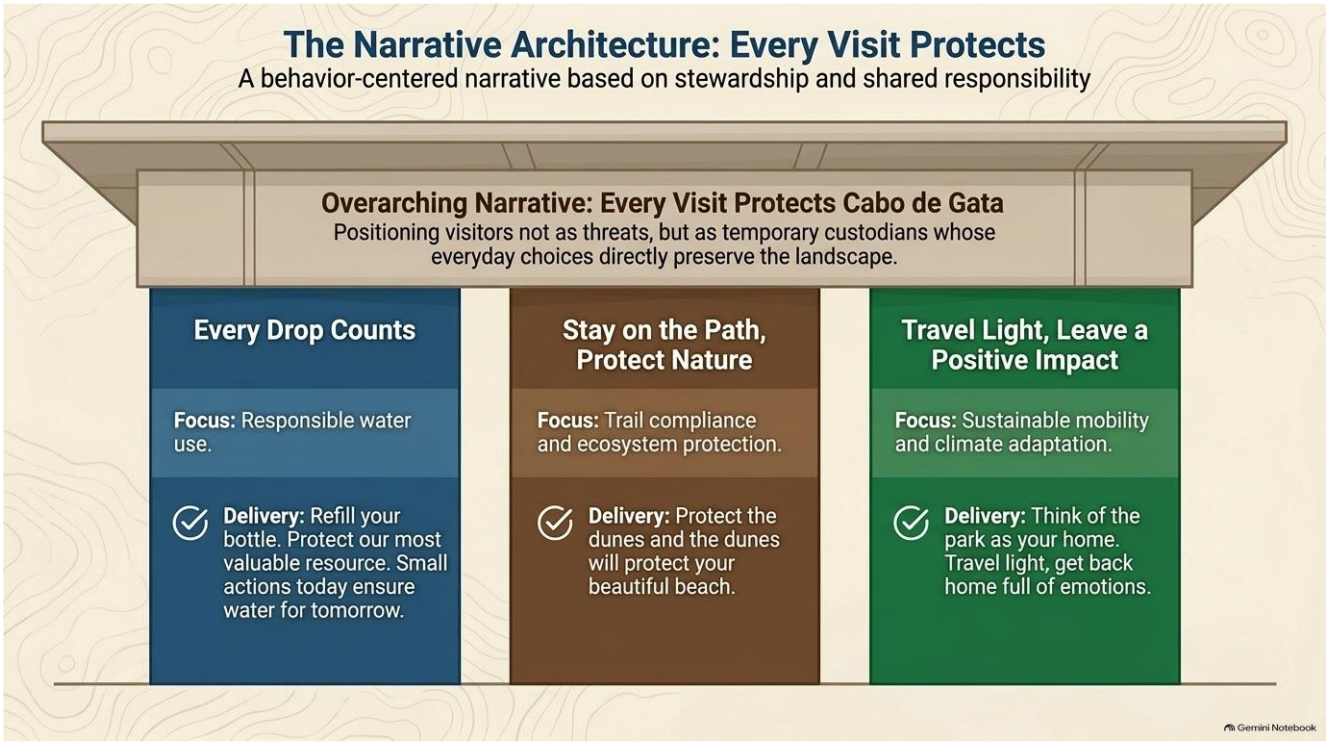


Fig.7 Cabo de Gata-Níjar: the narrative architecture

Narrative Framework

The overarching communication narrative proposed for Cabo de Gata–Níjar is: ***Every Visit Protects Cabo de Gata.*** This narrative reflects the destination's identity as a protected natural area where tourism and conservation are mutually dependent. It conveys that every visitor can make a positive contribution through simple actions such as saving water, respecting protected habitats, choosing sustainable transport and supporting local businesses. Instead of emphasizing restrictions or environmental damage, the narrative focuses on stewardship, collective responsibility and the positive impact of individual actions.

The narrative also reinforces the principles of the **Andalusian Commitment to Climate Action in Tourism,** which recognizes tourism as part of the solution to the

climate crisis by promoting regeneration, collaboration and responsible visitor experiences.

Core Message 1. **Every Drop Counts**

Priority behaviour: *Responsible water use*.

Water scarcity is the most significant climate challenge affecting Cabo de Gata–Níjar. Communication should therefore encourage visitors to value water as one of the Park's most precious natural resources and to adopt simple conservation behaviours throughout their stay.
Example messages

- Every drop counts. Saving water helps protect Cabo de Gata's landscapes and communities.
- Refill your bottle. Protect our most valuable resource.
- Small actions today help ensure water for tomorrow.

The message should be accompanied by practical actions, such as promoting refill stations, encouraging shorter showers in accommodation and reducing unnecessary water use.

Core Message 2. **Stay on the Path, Protect Nature**

Priority behaviour: *Respect designated trails and sensitive habitats*.

Visitors often underestimate the cumulative effects of walking outside marked paths, particularly in fragile dune systems and coastal habitats. Communication should explain that designated trails are not restrictions but simple ways of protecting biodiversity and supporting Nature-based Solutions.

Example messages
- Protect the dunes and the dunes will protect your beautiful beach
Interpretation panels should explain how dunes, native vegetation and coastal ecosystems reduce erosion, support biodiversity and contribute to climate adaptation.

Core Message 3. **Travel Light, Leave a Positive Impact**

Priority behaviour: *Sustainable mobility and low-impact tourism*.

Communication should encourage visitors to reduce their environmental footprint by choosing walking, cycling or shared transport whenever possible while discovering the Park at a slower pace.

Example messages
- Travel light, get back home full of emotions.
- Think of the park as your home

The emphasis should remain on enhancing the visitor experience rather than highlighting carbon emissions alone.

Tone and Communication Style

In accordance with the Communications Manual, communication should adopt a positive, solution-oriented and place-based tone. Messages should emphasize achievable actions rather than environmental problems, using language that is simple, motivating and accessible to a broad range of visitors. Communication should avoid technical terminology and instead explain climate adaptation through everyday experiences that visitors can easily understand.

6. Communication Channels and Touchpoints

Effective climate communication requires more than selecting appropriate communication channels; it requires delivering the **right message at the right moment** in the visitor journey. The **NaTour4CChange Destination Marketing and Visitor Communications Manual** recommends integrating climate communication across all visitor touchpoints rather than treating it as a standalone awareness campaign. Likewise, the **PAAC Communication and Participation Programme** promotes continuous, accessible and participatory communication that encourages behavioural change through repeated exposure and coordinated messaging.

For Cabo de Gata–Níjar, climate communication should build upon existing tourism communication channels—including the destination website, social media, visitor centers and interpretation facilities—by embedding climate messages throughout the visitor journey. Rather than creating new communication platforms, the priority should be to integrate climate adaptation into existing visitor information, ensuring that sustainability becomes a visible and consistent component of the destination experience.

To maximize effectiveness, this strategy focuses on **two priority behaviours** that address the destination's principal climate challenges:

- **Responsible water use**, responding to increasing water scarcity.
- **Protection of sensitive coastal and terrestrial ecosystems**, particularly through respecting marked trails, dune systems and other Nature-based Solutions.

6.1 Existing Communication Channels

Cabo de Gata–Níjar already has a well-established tourism communication network that provides an effective foundation for integrating climate communication. Existing channels include:

- Official tourism and Natural Park websites.
- Destination social media platforms.
- Visitor centers and interpretation facilities.
- Tourist information offices.
- Interpretation panels and educational signage.
- Guided tours and environmental education activities.
- Tourism businesses, including accommodation providers and activity operators.
- Printed visitor maps and brochures.

These channels currently promote the destination's natural landscapes, biodiversity and recreational opportunities. However, climate adaptation and responsible visitor behaviours are not yet systematically integrated across all communication platforms. Consistent with the Communications Manual, the opportunity lies in embedding climate messages into existing communication rather than developing parallel campaigns.

6.2 Communication Across the Visitor Journey

Climate communication should accompany visitors throughout their entire experience, ensuring that information is delivered when decisions are made.

6.3 Priority Communication Actions

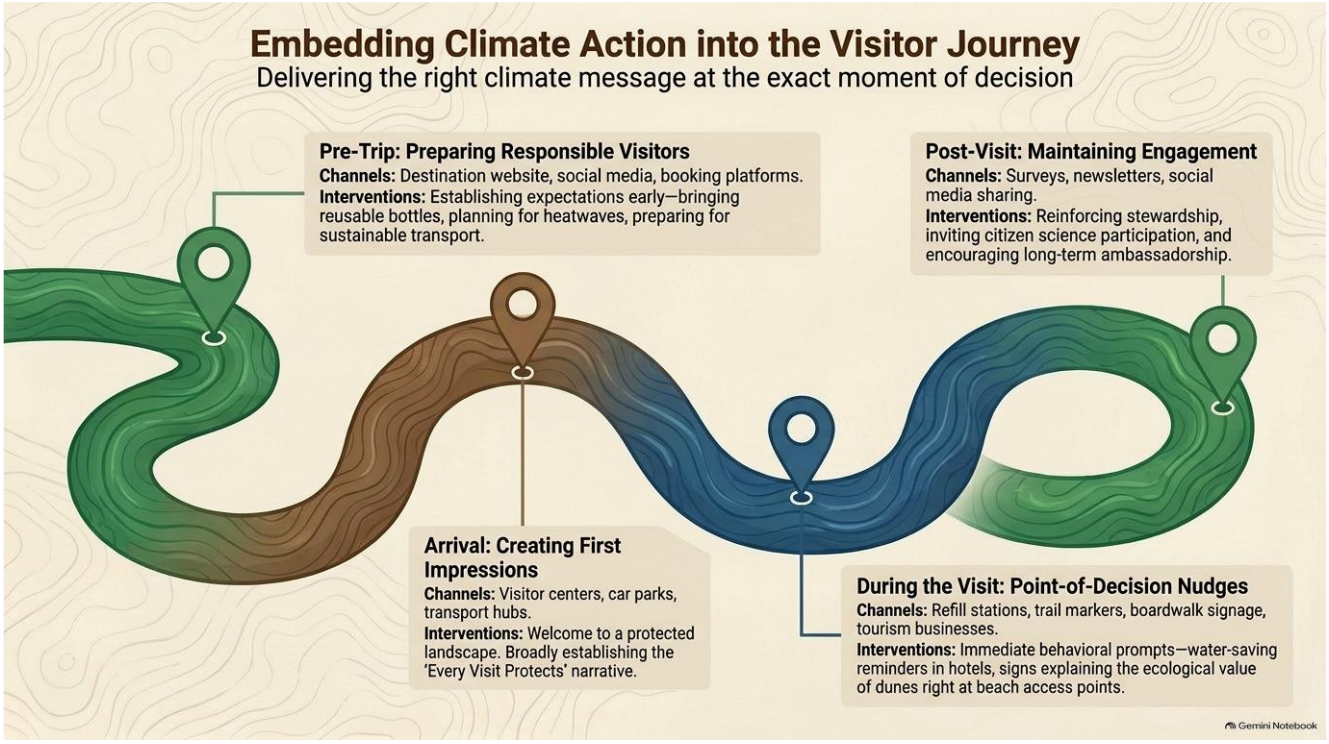


Fig.8 Cabo de Gata-Níjar: the visitor journey

Before the Trip: Preparing Responsible Visitors

The pre-trip stage offers the greatest opportunity to influence visitors' expectations before habits are established. Visitors should receive practical information encouraging sustainable choices before arriving at the destination.

Priority messages include:

- Bring a reusable water bottle.
- Travel using sustainable transport whenever possible.
- Prepare for high temperatures by planning outdoor activities during cooler hours.
- Discover how your visit contributes to protecting Cabo de Gata–Níjar.

Communication should be integrated into the destination website, social media campaigns and booking confirmations, ensuring climate information forms part of standard visitor guidance rather than appearing as supplementary environmental information.

Arrival: Creating First Impressions

Arrival represents a critical moment for establishing visitor expectations. Welcome signage and visitor information should clearly communicate that Cabo de Gata–Níjar

is a protected landscape where responsible behaviour contributes directly to conservation.
Priority messages include:

- Every Visit Protects Cabo de Gata.
- Save water throughout your stay.
- Respect protected habitats.
- Follow marked routes.

Visitor centers should provide practical information explaining why these actions matter, linking visitor behaviour to the Park's climate resilience and Nature-based Solutions.

During the Visit: Behaviour at the Point of Decision

The Communications Manual emphasises that communication is most effective when delivered at the moment behavioural decisions are made. Consequently, on-site communication should rely heavily on behavioural nudges rather than information alone.
Examples include:

Water conservation

- Refill station signage.
- Water-saving reminders in accommodation.
- Restaurant messages promoting reusable bottles.

Habitat protection

- Trail markers encouraging visitors to remain on designated paths.
- Boardwalk signage explaining the role of dunes in protecting the coastline.
- Information panels describing the ecological value of *Posidonia oceanica* and encouraging visitors to respect natural beach dynamics.

Tour guides and tourism businesses should reinforce these messages through direct interaction with visitors, providing consistent communication across the destination.

Post-Visit: Maintaining Engagement

Communication should continue after visitors leave the destination, reinforcing stewardship and encouraging long-term engagement.
Possible actions include:

- Thank-you messages highlighting visitors' contribution to conservation.
- Visitor satisfaction surveys including climate-related questions.
- Social media campaigns encouraging responsible travel stories.
- Invitations to follow conservation projects or participate in citizen science initiatives.

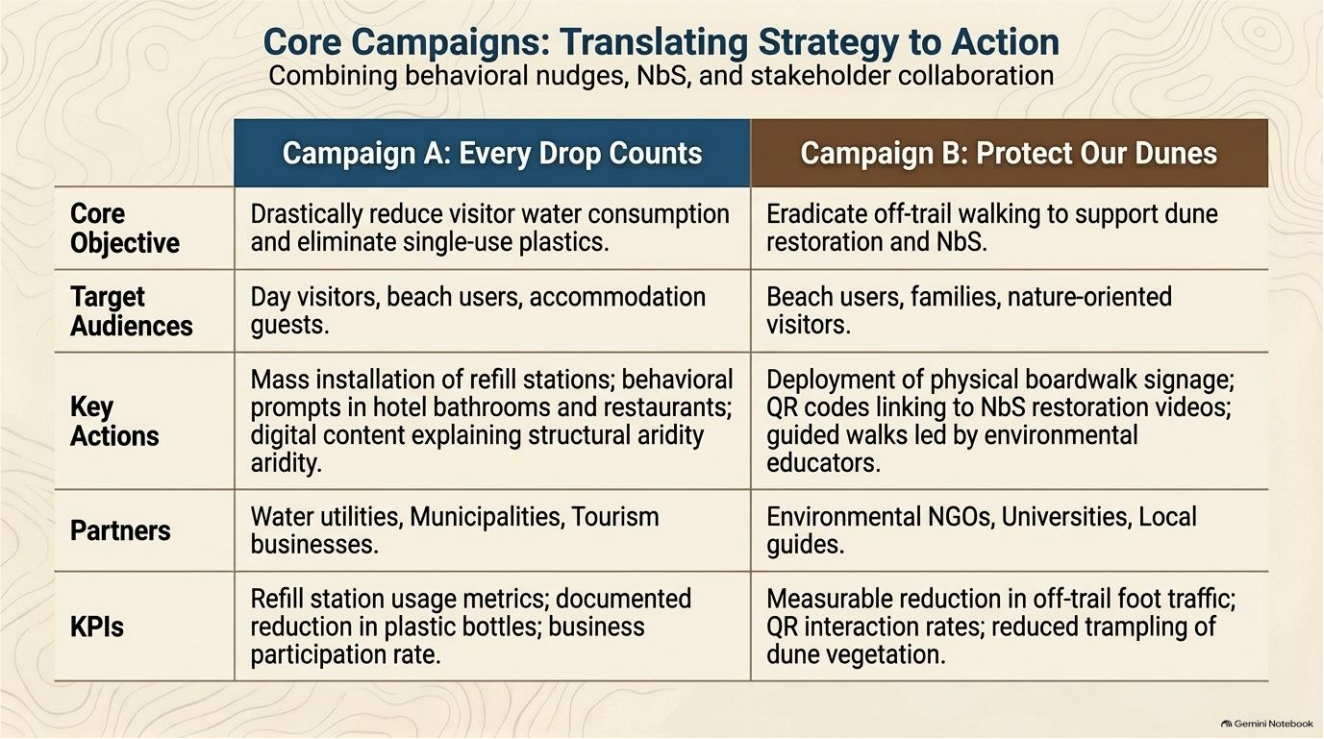
Maintaining post-visit communication helps transform visitors into long-term ambassadors for Cabo de Gata–Níjar and supports the PAAC objective of strengthening public participation in climate action.

---

7. Key Campaign Actions

The communication strategy will be implemented through two complementary campaigns that translate the destination's climate priorities into concrete visitor actions. These two campaigns will translate into action two communication objectives, 1 and 3, and incorporating objective 2 "Encourage climate-adaptive and low-impact visitor mobility**"** as a cross-cutting- element that will be fully developed in the future high-peak seasons**.**

Following the **NaTour4CChange Campaign Planning Canvas**, each campaign combines behaviour-oriented communication, behavioural nudges, stakeholder collaboration and Nature-based Solutions (NbS). Together, these campaigns support the implementation of the **Destination Tourism Climate Action Plan (D3.4.1)** while contributing to the objectives of the **PAAC Communication and Participation Programme**, particularly those related to climate awareness, behavioural change and citizen participation.



Core Campaigns: Translating Strategy to Action

Combining behavioral nudges, NbS, and stakeholder collaboration

	Campaign A: Every Drop Counts	Campaign B: Protect Our Dunes
Core Objective	Drastically reduce visitor water consumption and eliminate single-use plastics.	Eradicate off-trail walking to support dune restoration and NbS.
Target Audiences	Day visitors, beach users, accommodation guests.	Beach users, families, nature-oriented visitors.
Key Actions	Mass installation of refill stations; behavioral prompts in hotel bathrooms and restaurants; digital content explaining structural aridity aridity.	Deployment of physical boardwalk signage; QR codes linking to NbS restoration videos; guided walks led by environmental educators.
Partners	Water utilities, Municipalities, Tourism businesses.	Environmental NGOs, Universities, Local guides.
KPIs	Refill station usage metrics; documented reduction in plastic bottles; business participation rate.	Measurable reduction in off-trail foot traffic; QR interaction rates; reduced trampling of dune vegetation.

Gemini Notebook

Fig.9 Cabo de Gata-Níjar: Core Campaigns

Campaign 1. Every Drop Counts

Behaviour Objective

Reduce visitor water consumption and encourage responsible use of water resources.

Target Audience

- Day visitors
- Beach users
- Accommodation guests
- Tourism businesses

Key Message

Every Drop Counts. Saving water protects Cabo de Gata's landscapes, biodiversity and communities.

Communication Actions

- Install refill stations at visitor centers, beaches and high-use recreational areas.
- Place behavioural prompts in hotels, campsites and restaurants encouraging visitors to reduce water consumption.

- Develop digital communication for the destination website and social media explaining why water conservation is essential in a semi-arid protected area.
- Produce short videos highlighting simple actions visitors can take during their stay.
- Encourage accommodation providers to participate in voluntary water-saving initiatives.

Communication Channels

- Destination website
- Social media
- Visitor centers
- Accommodation
- Restaurants
- Refill stations
- Interpretation panels

Partners

- Natural Park Directorate
- Municipalities of Gata-Nijar, Carboneras and Almería
- Tourism businesses
- Water utilities
- Tourism Board

Timeline

Implementation throughout the year, with increased communication before and during the summer season.

Key Performance Indicators

- Number of refill stations installed.
- Percentage or cubic-meter reduction in water consumption per visitor/overnight stay
- Visitor use of refill stations.
- Reduction in single-use plastic bottles.
- Number of participating tourism businesses.
- Visitor awareness of water conservation messages.

Campaign 2. Protect Our Dunes

Behaviour Objective

Reduce off-trail walking and visitor pressure on sensitive coastal ecosystems while supporting dune restoration and other Nature-based Solutions.

Target Audience

- Beach users
- Day visitors
- Nature-oriented visitors
- Families

Key Message

Stay on the Path. Every step protects Cabo de Gata's dunes and wildlife.

Communication Actions

- Install attractive interpretation panels explaining the ecological importance of dune systems.
- Improve boardwalk signage and trail markings.
- Develop QR codes linking visitors to short videos on dune restoration.
- Include dune protection messages in pre-trip digital communication.
- Organize guided walks explaining how dunes function as Nature-based Solutions for coastal protection.
- Encourage local guides and environmental volunteers to reinforce messages on-site.

Communication Channels

- Beaches
- Boardwalks
- Trails
- QR codes
- Visitor centers
- Guided tours
- Social media

Partners

- Natural Park Directorate
- Municipalities of Gata-Nijar, Carboneras and Almería
- Environmental NGOs
- Local guides
- Universities

Timeline

Spring and summer, with reinforcement during peak visitor periods.

Key Performance Indicators

- Reduction in off-trail walking.
- Increased visitor compliance with designated walkways.
- QR code interactions.
- Visitor participation in guided activities.
- Reduced trampling of dune vegetation.

8. Stakeholder Engagement

The **Natural Park Directorate**, in collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism, Justice, Deregulation and Local Administration of Andalusia, should lead the overall coordination of the communication strategy. Their role is to ensure policy coherence with the PAAC, the Destination Climate Action Plan (D3.4.1) and the Andalusian Commitment to Climate Action in Tourism, while overseeing implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Municipal authorities (Níjar, Carboneras and Almería) should integrate climate communication into local tourism promotion, public information, sustainable mobility initiatives and visitor management. They also play an important role in ensuring consistency across public spaces, beaches, transport hubs and municipal communication channels.

Tourism businesses, including accommodation providers, restaurants, tour operators and transport companies, are the principal communicators during the visitor experience. Their role is to reinforce destination messages through everyday interactions with visitors by promoting responsible water use, sustainable mobility, waste reduction and respect for protected areas.

The **Natural Park visitor centers**, environmental educators and accredited guides should deliver on-site interpretation, explain the role of Nature-based Solutions, and encourage responsible visitor behaviour through guided experiences, interpretation panels and educational activities.

Environmental NGOs, universities and community organizations should contribute scientific knowledge, support the co-creation of communication materials, participate in awareness campaigns and facilitate citizen science and conservation initiatives.

Finally, **schools and youth organizations** should be involved as long-term ambassadors for climate action, participating in educational programmes and community-based initiatives that strengthen local engagement with the Park.

Collaboration Mechanisms

To ensure effective coordination, the strategy proposes the establishment of a **Climate Communication Working Group**, coordinated by the Natural Park Directorate and meeting at least twice each year. The Working Group should include representatives from municipalities, tourism businesses, visitor centers, environmental organizations, universities and regional tourism authorities.
Its main responsibilities would include:

- reviewing annual communication priorities;
- coordinating destination-wide campaigns;
- ensuring consistency between visitor information and climate policies;
- sharing communication materials and good practices; and
- monitoring campaign implementation and behavioural outcomes.

This collaborative structure reflects the participatory governance model promoted by both the PAAC and the NaTour4CChange project.

Capacity Building and Communication Support

A common communication toolkit should be developed for all participating organizations to ensure consistent messaging across the destination. The toolkit should include:

- key climate messages;
- visual identity and branding guidelines;
- message templates for digital and printed communication;
- guidance on behavioural communication and positive framing;
- examples of Nature-based Solution storytelling; and
- recommendations for communicating during periods of extreme heat or water scarcity.

Training workshops should be organised annually for tourism businesses, visitor center staff, guides and municipal personnel. These sessions should focus on climate storytelling, visitor engagement, behavioural communication techniques and effective interpretation of the Park's climate adaptation measures.

Feedback and Continuous Improvement

Stakeholder engagement should be supported by continuous learning and adaptation. Feedback should be collected through visitor surveys, stakeholder meetings, pilot testing of communication materials and regular consultation with tourism businesses and local organizations. This information should be used to refine communication campaigns, improve message effectiveness and respond to emerging climate challenges.

By establishing clear leadership, coordinated stakeholder roles and common communication standards, Cabo de Gata–Níjar can ensure that visitors receive coherent climate messages throughout their journey. This collaborative approach supports the implementation of the **PAAC Communication and Participation Strategic Line**, strengthens the delivery of the **Destination Tourism Climate Action Plan**, and reinforces the role of tourism stakeholders as active partners in building a more climate-resilient destination.

9. Monitoring and Evaluation

The evaluation framework is organised around four complementary dimensions: communication reach, visitor awareness, behavioural change and stakeholder engagement.

Monitoring Framework

Communication Objective	Indicator	Method	Reporting Frequency	Lead Organization
Increase awareness of climate risks and adaptation	Percentage of visitors recalling key campaign messages	Short visitor surveys at visitor centers and online questionnaires	Seasonal	Natural Park Directorate / Visitor Centers
Promote responsible water use	Number of refill station users	Refill station counters or periodic observations	Monthly (high season)	Municipalities / Tourism businesses
Reduce visitor pressure on sensitive ecosystems	Percentage of visitors remaining on designated trails	Direct observations at priority sites and ranger reports	Seasonal	Natural Park Directorate
Encourage sustainable mobility	Visitors using walking, cycling or public transport	Visitor survey and mobility counts where available	Seasonal	Municipalities

Communication Objective	Indicator	Method	Reporting Frequency	Lead Organization
Increase engagement with climate communication	Website visits, QR code scans and social media interactions	Digital analytics platforms	Monthly	Tourism Board
Strengthen stakeholder participation	Number of tourism businesses implementing campaign messages	Annual partner reporting	Annual	Tourism Board / Municipalities
Increase participation in NbS activities	Number of participants in guided walks, restoration activities or citizen science initiatives	Registration records	After each activity	Natural Park Directorate / NGOs

Table 1. Monitoring Framework

Data Collection and Reporting

Monitoring responsibilities should be distributed among the organizations already involved in destination management, ensuring that data collection remains practical and sustainable.

Activity	Responsible Organisation	Tool	Frequency
Visitor surveys	Visitor Centres / Natural Park Directorate	Digital and paper surveys	Seasonal

Activity	Responsible Organisation	Tool	Frequency
Refill station monitoring	Municipalities / Tourism businesses	Counters or manual observations	Monthly (high season)
Trail compliance observations	Natural Park Rangers	Observation sheets	Seasonal
Digital analytics	Tourism Board	Website and social media analytics	Monthly
Partner participation	Climate Communication Working Group	Annual reporting template	Annual
Campaign evaluation	Natural Park Directorate	Monitoring dashboard	Annual

Table 2. Data Collection and Reporting

An **Annual Climate Communication Report** should summarize the results of all indicators, identify strengths and areas for improvement, and recommend adjustments to future communication campaigns. Findings should be reviewed by the **Climate Communication Working Group** and used to refine messages, communication channels and stakeholder engagement activities. This adaptive management approach reflects both the **PAAC Communication and Participation Programme** and the **NaTour4CChange Monitoring & Evaluation Framework**, ensuring that communication evolves in response to evidence and contributes effectively to the implementation of the Destination Tourism Climate Action Plan.

10. Implementation Roadmap

The implementation of the Climate Communication Strategy should follow a phased approach that aligns communication activities with the tourism calendar and the operational priorities identified in the **Destination Tourism Climate Action Plan (D3.4.1)**. Following the recommendations of the **Communications Manual and Toolkit**, implementation should prioritize **quick wins** that can be delivered using existing communication channels and resources, while progressively developing more comprehensive campaigns and stakeholder partnerships. This phased approach also reflects the **PAAC Communication and Participation Strategic Line**, which promotes continuous communication, institutional coordination and adaptive management as key elements of climate governance.

With regard to the monitoring framework, first task will be to establish baseline values for the main behavioural indicators after the first implementation period so that fair, realistic targets can be defined.

Implementation Timeline

Period	Key Actions
Spring (Preparation)	Review and update climate communication content on the destination website and social media; prepare campaign materials; organize stakeholder workshops; develop communication guidelines; train tourism businesses and visitor center staff; install or update interpretation panels and signage before the high season.
Summer (Peak Visitor Season)	Launch **Every Drop Counts** and **Protect Our Dunes** campaigns; implement behavioural nudges at beaches, trails and visitor centers; promote sustainable mobility messages; reinforce communication through tourism businesses, guides and digital channels; monitor visitor engagement and behaviour.
Autumn (Monitoring and Engagement)	Conduct visitor surveys; evaluate campaign performance; organize stakeholder review meetings; promote citizen science and habitat restoration activities; communicate campaign results and good practices through digital platforms.
Winter (Review and Planning)	Analyze monitoring data; prepare the Annual Climate Communication Report; update communication materials based on evaluation findings; review campaign priorities; plan activities and budgets for the following tourism season.

Table 3. Implementation timeline

This annual cycle should be repeated, allowing communication activities to evolve through continuous monitoring and adaptive management.

Quick Wins

Several communication actions can be implemented immediately with limited financial investment by making better use of existing communication channels.
These include:

- integrating climate messages into the official destination website;
- incorporating responsible visitor guidance into social media content;
- updating visitor center information with water-saving and biodiversity messages;

These actions provide immediate visibility for the strategy while creating a consistent climate communication presence across the destination.

Resource Requirements

Successful implementation will depend on appropriate human, financial, technical and institutional resources.

Resource	Requirement	Current Status
Human resources	Communication coordinator, Natural Park staff, municipal tourism officers, visitor centre staff, tourism businesses and environmental educators.	**Largely available**, although additional coordination and training will be required.
Financial resources	Campaign design, production of communication materials, signage, digital content, training workshops and monitoring activities.	**Partially available** through existing destination management budgets; additional regional, national or European funding may support larger actions.
Technical tools	Destination website, social media platforms, QR codes, digital analytics, visitor surveys, monitoring dashboards and interpretation infrastructure.	**Mostly available**, with further development needed for monitoring systems and digital visitor engagement.
Partnerships	Natural Park Directorate, municipalities, tourism businesses, NGOs, universities and regional tourism authorities.	**Established**, requiring formal coordination through the proposed Climate Communication Working Group.

Table 4. Resources

Governance and Coordination

By combining phased implementation, early "quick wins", coordinated stakeholder involvement and continuous evaluation, this roadmap provides a realistic framework for embedding climate communication into the day-to-day management of Cabo de Gata–Níjar. It ensures that communication becomes an operational component of destination governance, supporting the implementation of the Destination Tourism Climate Action Plan and contributing to the long-term resilience, competitiveness and sustainability of the Natural Park.

ANEX I: List of figures

List of figures	Page
Fig.1 Contextualizing the pilot destination in the western mediterranean	6
Fig.2 The spatial reality	6
Fig.3 Cabo de Gata-Níjar: Vulnerabilities and threats	8
Fig.4 Cabo de Gata-Nijar: Climate-Communication Plan	9
Fig.5 Cabo de Gata-Níjar: Behavioural Change	12
Fig.6 Cabo de Gata-Níjar: Audience Prioritization	17
Fig.7 Cabo de Gata-Níjar: the narrative architecture	18
Fig.8 Cabo de Gata-Níjar: the visitor journey	22
Fig.9 Cabo de Gata-Níjar: Core Campaigns	25

ANNEX. List of Tables

List of tables	Page
Table 1. Monitoring Framework	31
Table 2. Data Collection and Reporting	32
Table 3. Implementation timeline	33
Table 4. Resources	34