

KMS VERDES ENVIRONMENTAL SPORTS ASSOCIATION

"Kms Verdes" is an organization created in Tenerife (Spain) in April 2020 by Jonathan Luis Bello, sportsman and industrial engineer, which aim is to unify two major disciplines linked to social development, such as sport and the environment.

How did the idea of creating the organization begin?

After going through a somewhat complicated personal situation, I used sport as a means of recovery. I set myself several goals such as a triathlon and a half marathon. During the training for these events, I began to see things that concerned me about the environment, such as the ecological footprint and the waste that I found in the areas where I was running.

This made me start to become aware of the environmental impact, to investigate this issue and to look for ways I could contribute to the care of the environment. In my last training sessions, I used to carry bags and gloves to pick up garbage while I was practicing sport.

I thought about taking advantage of the effort and energy I generated while doing physical activity to generate environmental actions. During the pandemic, together with collaborators, I made posts on social networks such as Facebook and Instagram to publicize the project. After the confinement, I participated in environmental activities carried out by other organizations.

What are the main objectives of the organization?

The general objective of the association is to raise awareness and integrate the Sustainable Development Goals in the activities and projects we carry out, mainly:

- Goal 3: health and well-being
- Goal 13: climate action
- Goal 15: life on land
- Goal 17: partnerships for the goals

Kms Verdes seeks to promote environmental care through sport. From the association we try to reduce all types of waste, rid nature of garbage and generate energy to achieve many green kilometers. We intend to create a great committed community that will leave a better world for the new generations to come.

Can you tell us about some of the initiatives or projects you carry out?

Kms Verdes carries out several projects and activities, such as cleaning and waste collection and the project "Energy Workshops" on several different topics such as waste management, microplastics, environmental impact through sports, ecological footprint, reforestation, etc.

However, the two projects that combine sport and environment are "Ekopatrulla" and "Care and preservation of the mountains of La Orotava".

Project: "Ekopatrulla"

The "Ekopatrulla" project consists of providing logistical support in sporting events such as popular races to facilitate proper waste management. We help in the organization of these events (control points, provisioning, runner assistance, information...) and we try to ensure that they have the least possible environmental impact.

How did this initiative come about?

After participating in numerous sporting events and seeing the environmental impact they cause, Kms Verdes decided to start this initiative. The members and volunteers of the organization have seen that even two or three months after the end of these events, there were still some leftovers that damage the environment (waste, pollution, etc.).

What are the main objectives of this initiative?

The main objectives of this initiative are:

- To advise clubs and organizations on how to organize sporting events in a sustainable way.
- To make participants aware of the importance of not throwing waste outside the event environment.
- To train volunteers to help with tasks at these sporting events and to inform the rest of the population.

Who are the target groups in this initiative?

Mainly sports clubs and entities, as well as participants in the events and the general public.

What challenges emerged during the implementation of this initiative?

On the one hand, in some events, sometimes the organizing entities do not provide enough containers for recycling.

On the other hand, not everyone who participates in the event participates in the initiative. Athletes tend to concentrate on their activity and forget to carry out this task, and some of those who participate are not very clear about how to recycle.

How are they addressed?

During these events we have an information point and recycling points where volunteers advise participants and the general public about the initiative and in case they have doubts about how to recycle or actively take part in it.

What is the impact of the initiative on the target groups and how do you measure this impact if you measure it at all?

With this initiative we are raising awareness about the impact of organizing an event through knowledge and practice (information talks and voluntary participation in the event) linking sport and environment.

Thus, more and more entities and sports clubs are contacting us to help them in the logistical and environmental part of their events and more and more participants and the general public are actively collaborating, so we are creating an environmental awareness.

Are there partners involved in the initiative? Where is the funding coming from?

The organizers of the event themselves as well as other public and private entities and organizations, mainly from Tenerife and other cities in the Canary Islands, are collaborating in this initiative.

How can this program be sustainable?

This initiative has the support of many collaborators, which is allowing it to be carried out in other neighboring municipalities.

Project: "Care and preservation of the mountains of La Orotava".

The project "Care and preservation of the mountains of La Orotava" consists of carrying out sports and environmental activities to care for and preserve La Orotava, a protected natural area in the north of Tenerife (Spain). These activities started at the end of 2021 and will continue through 2022.

How did this initiative come about?

The members of Kms Verdes decided to present a project to care for and protect the Orotava area with the help of the public entity of their municipality.

What are the main objectives of this initiative?

The main objectives of this initiative are:

- To carry out hiking routes and plogging activities to collect the waste found along the route.
- To carry out talks during these hiking routes to learn about the native flora and fauna of the area.
- Conduct information sessions on environmental awareness and on the results of the project.

Who are the target groups in this initiative?

The general public. Athletes, young people, children, families, schools, people with functional diversity, etc. have participated in the project.

What challenges emerged during the implementation of this initiative?

The problems we have encountered in carrying out this initiative have been bureaucratic. In order to enter a protected natural area, a special permit is needed and the procedures are usually slow.

How are they addressed?

Although we have the support of the necessary public entities to be able to carry out the project, the association still feels that the bureaucratic procedures are slow.

What is the impact of the initiative on the target groups and how do you measure this impact if you measure it at all?

With this initiative we are raising awareness and sensitizing the population in the care of the environment. The positive impact of the implementation of this initiative can be seen in two main indicators: more and more people have been participating in each activity and when doing the hiking trails, Kms Verdes we have gone back several times along the route once finished, and we have been finding less and less waste in the area.

Are there partners involved in the initiative? Where is the funding coming from?

This project is funded by Ecombes*, within the LIBERA project, with the collaboration of public entities, such as the Cabildo, private entities and organizations from Tenerife and other cities in the Canary Islands.

How can this program be sustainable?

Kms Verdes will present a continuation of this project to Ecombes. The objective of this second part of the project is to modify certain aspects of the current project to expand the area of action in La Orotava and to cover a larger space to carry out the activities. Among them are mountain biking routes at the same time as plogging and the creation of an educational route through the area, documenting it digitally through QR codes to make the flora and fauna known to schoolchildren. If the project is not approved by Ecombes, we hope that the city council and other public entities will support it to continue with its sustainability.

** Ecoembes is a non-profit organization that cares for the environment through the recycling and eco-design of light household packaging in Spain.*

Links:

* Sport activities:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1216868321982532/?ref=share>

* Environmental activities:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2386567334927351/?ref=share>

* Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/kmsverdes.itimec>

* Instagram

#kmsverdes

* LinkedIn

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/asociacion-dep-amb-kmsverdes-651263209>

* YouTube

<https://m.youtube.com/channel/UCmwdhEy0SMFrTt87yMqfLDg/featured?>

* Web page

www.kmsverdes.es