

# Sustainable tourism planning of the Protected Landscape of the Millars River



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The territorial scope that includes the studied area of this Final Degree Project corresponds to the final stretch of the Millars River, from the "Termet" to "Les Goles", of which the municipal terms of Vila-real, Burriana and Almazora participate. (Figure 1), known as Millars Mouth (García, 2005).

It is a space of scarce, almost null, tourist advantage, despite its special protection, to be declared Protected Landscape, according to the Law 11/1994 of Protected Natural Spaces of the Valencian Community. It is also included in the Catalog of Humid Areas of the Valencian Community, declared as Special Protection Area for Birds (SPA) and as a Site of Community Importance (SCI), configuring it as a unique space in the province of Castellón. Hence, the main objective of this FDP is to carry out a sustainable tourism planning and management proposal of a supra-municipal nature and coherent in relation to the reality of the space and its surroundings. This is justified on the one hand by its Rector Plan for Use and Management (PRUG), where sustainable tourism is encouraged; and on the other, in Title II of Law 15/2018, of June 7, of the Government of Tourism, Leisure and Hospitality of the Valencian Community, dedicated to the territorial planning of the supra-municipal tourist activity.

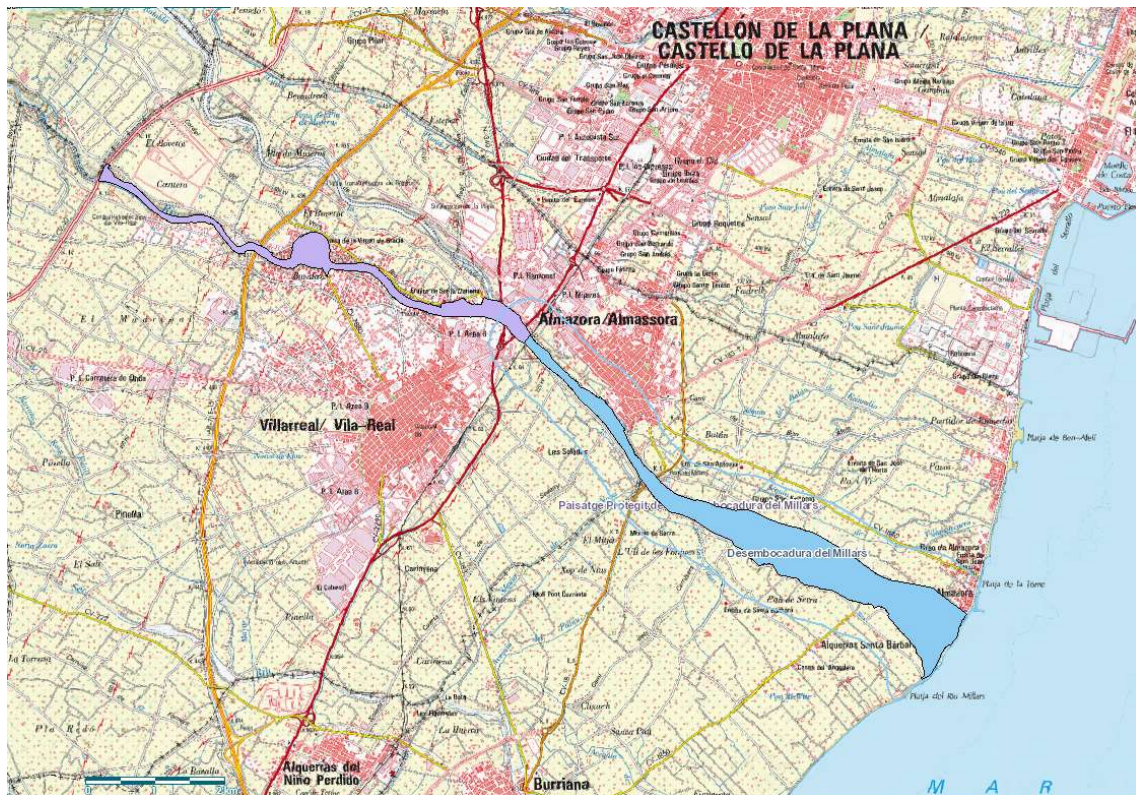
For this reason and in agreement, in addition, with the Tourism White Paper of the Valencian Community (Agencia Valenciana de Turismo, 2017) it is necessary to give the space under study the importance that characterizes it, converting it into an ecological corridor of fluvial character, always taking into account the limitations and determinations that the Territorial Action Plan of the Litoral Green Infrastructure (PATIVEL) establishes in turn given the contact of this protected natural space with the sea at the height of "Les Goles".

In general, the recreational activities that take place in Valencian protected natural areas are still poorly developed and, if they do, it is in a timely manner or due more to its status as a scenario that supports other activities, which that of a resource really used for the development of a product of nature tourism. To make this possible, it is necessary to

start giving value to the rich heritage that exists in these protected areas, in addition to creating products that provide greater impact to the tourist offer of the surrounding destinations. All this, in addition to diversifying the supply of coastal destinations, can help reduce seasonality and, as a consequence, favor the sustainability of the territory in relation to the carrying capacity of resources.

Beyond the link with nature tourism can help to consolidate other types or products, less developed in this area, which can positively affect the differentiation of the tourist destination space, while generating positive synergies on the local population.

**Figure 1:** Map of the delimitation of the area under study (Protected Landscape of the Millars).



**Source:** Institut Cartogràfic Valencià (Visor GVA).

## 2. HYPOTHESIS

For the elaboration of this work, it is based on the hypothesis that the final stretch of the Millars River has sufficient potential to generate sustainable tourism dynamics that can help to structure the territory. In relation to it, we will try to establish the tourism

potential of the area under study, which will generate an offer of sustainable tourism products in a coastal and fluvial environment.

In view of its status as a protected landscape, sustainable tourism activities can be developed in which the three municipalities (Vila-real, Burriana and Almazora) that share the delimitation of the study area can participate together to create new infrastructures and access, in addition to the use of tourism territorial resources, companies that act directly or indirectly with tourism, and the institutions involved, can create products that promote sustainable tourism.

### **3. OBJECTIVE OF THE INVESTIGATION**

Based on the hypothesis, the main objective of this research is to prepare a proposal for sustainable tourism planning of a supramunicipal nature and coherent in relation to the reality of the space and its surroundings, which positively affects the management of this protected natural space. This is justified on the one hand by the Master Plan for the Use and Management (PRUG) of the Protected Landscape of the Millars Mouth, where sustainable tourism is encouraged; and on the other hand, in Title II of Law 15/2018, of June 7, of the Government of Tourism, Leisure and Hospitality of the Valencian Community, dedicated to the territorial planning of the supramunicipal tourist activity.

For this reason and in agreement with the Tourism White Paper of the Valencian Community (Agencia Valenciana de Turismo, 2017) it is necessary to give the space under study the importance that characterizes it, converting it into an ecological corridor of fluvial character, always taking into account the limitations and determinations that the Territorial Action Plan of the Litoral Green Infrastructure (PATIVEL) establishes in turn given the contact of this protected natural space with the sea in "Les Goles".

### **4. METHODOLOGY**

To respond to the objective stated in the previous section. For the development of research, it has been decided to develop the strategic tourism planning method for supramunicipal areas, with a marked territorial and integrated component, which will

favor the sustainable development of tourism activity (Hall, 2000; López, 2014; González y Anton, 2016; Simancas, 2016).

Therefore, in the first place, the zoning and delimitation of the space under study must be established, which can be administrative or functional. In our case, the territorial delimitation of the study area responds strictly to functional criteria, derived from the declaration as protected landscape of the mouth of the Millars River.

Once the zoning is established, an integrated analysis of the basic aspects (Plane A) and then the components of the tourism system will be carried out (Plane B), since *"tourism activity is constituted as a functional and dynamic system, The socio-economic and spatial time of a complex nature, where different elements interrelate in a continuous process of readjustment and constant change. For this reason, the integrated tourist system is formed by two planes. The first, or Plane A, of basic themes that represent the support of integrated tourism activity, composed of territorial, demographic and socio-economic aspects. The other plane, Plane B, acts on the basis of the previous one and whose content is made up of the elements of the tourist system, tourist resources, whether basic or complementary, markets, potential and real demand, companies related to tourism, as well as those that generate synergies and institutions, which must facilitate factors and remodel resources and supply, affecting the territory and making possible the integration of tourism products"* (López, 2014).

The results of the analysis will be contrasted with interviews with social agents, who act and influence the territory. Its results will allow identifying the problems and advantages that the environment poses about the studied space, besides being a key aspect when it comes to knowing the reality of the area at different levels, and contemplating the preparation of the diagnosis and strategies.

Thus, once the analysis phase is completed, a diagnosis of the spatial situation will be made through the application of the SWOT method, in order to know the strengths and positive aspects to be exploited, the weak points that should be improved in the destination, the opportunities we can take advantage of and threats that we must control or mitigate to minimize negative consequences.

After elaborating the phases of analysis and diagnosis, we will proceed to define the specific objectives to be achieved. After defining them, a strategy proposal will be made, which will be developed through actions in its application in the short, medium and long term.

With this work, a planning instrument will be available to facilitate the integrated and sustainable tourism management of tourism in this protected area, in addition to pursuing the objectives of improving social, economic and environmental profitability through sustainable development, in accordance with the PRUG.

For the development of the research, in the first place it has resorted to the consultation of indirect research sources such as the Master Plan for the Use and Management of the Protected Landscape of the Millars Mouth (PRUG); the Territorial Action Plan for the Green Litoral Infrastructure (PATIVEL); Cartography through the GVA Viewer; documents of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food and Environment; and the Generalitat Valenciana. The use of statistical data from the National Institute of Statistics (INE) and the Valencian Institute of Statistics (IVE) has also been used.

In relation to the sources of direct research, we have used the visit to the energy agency of Vila-real, the headquarters of the Millars Consortium and the municipalities of Almazora and Vila-real for the preparation of interviews with public agents, besides the field work to the protected space to know the reality of the environment.

## **5. CONCEPTUALIZATION**

### **5.1. Concept of sustainability**

Already in 1987 the Brundtland Report, prepared for the United Nations, warned for the first time about the negative environmental consequences of economic development and globalization, trying to offer solutions to the problems arising from industrialization and population growth. In this sense, sustainability seeks to guarantee the needs of the present without compromising future generations, without renouncing any of the essential pillars: environmental protection, social development and economic growth (Acciona, seen in 2018).



Therefore, sustainability involves assuming that the environment is not an inexhaustible source of resources and requires actions for its protection and rational use, mainly through promoting sustainable and social development, whose purpose is to meet present needs while avoiding harming the capabilities of future needs. (Cantavella, 2017).

## **5.2. Concept of sustainable tourism**

The concept of sustainable tourism, part of the basis of the Charter of Sustainable Tourism (1995). Its fundamental principles placed tourism development in sustainability from an integral vision that incorporated throughout its cycle, and in the long term the ecological and economic viability, and the ethical and social equity of local communities. All this, to generate a responsible tourism infrastructure that encourages all agents, public and private, governmental and administrative bodies, and tourists and locals, towards principles and goals for sustainable tourism development.

In line with the Charter of Sustainable Tourism, the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas is approved. Through it applies sustainable development tourism in European protected areas, and where the priorities of Agenda 21 (1992) and those of the EU (European Union) are contained in its 6th Action Program and Environmental Strategy for Development Sustainable (Martínez, 2017). Therefore, its main objectives are: *"To increase knowledge of Europe's protected areas as a fundamental part of our heritage and increase support for its necessary conservation so that they can be enjoyed by present and future generations"* And *"Improving sustainable development" and tourist management of protected areas, taking into account the needs of the environment, the local population, local businesses and visitors"* (Europarc, 2010).

Subsequently, in 2009, through the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism (CEMT), a reference framework for responsible and sustainable tourism, demanded by the OMT or UNWTO (World Tourism Organization) in 1997. Its purpose is to guide interested stakeholders in the development of tourism, which encompasses the central and local governments, the indigenous communities, the tourism sector and its professionals, and

national and international visitors (Martínez, 2017). Recognizes tourism as a factor of sustainable development, through the protection of natural heritage, ecosystems, flora and fauna (...), where agents assume the limitations on their activities if they are exercised in vulnerable areas (...) and where it is valued and recognize the importance of nature and ecotourism tourism as long as it respects the natural heritage and the local population and adjusts to the occupancy capacity of tourist sites (OMT, 2001).

The World Charter for Sustainable Tourism +20, approved at the 2015 World Summit on Sustainable Tourism, serves as a reminder, validating the above principles and adds that tourism must be an instrument of peace and tolerance that preserves the material and immaterial heritage for present use and for future generations, focusing on the compatibility of tourism with the protection and preservation of the environment, climate change, development of resilience, contribution to the world economy, fight against poverty, the use of ICT (Information and Communication Technologies) and local goods and services (Martínez, 2017).

Therefore, by means of a compilation of the tools seen so far, Sustainable Tourism can be defined in that type of tourism "that takes full account of the current and future economic, social and environmental repercussions to meet the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and the host communities" (OMT, 2018).

### **5.3. Concept of sustainable tourism development in protected areas**

In recent decades, protected natural areas, in their different forms of protection, have experienced a great increase, in turn, trends in tourism demand have been increasing progressively (López, 2009) either due to the maturity and massification of other destinations such as those related to sun and beach tourism or due to the greater specialization and access to information available today (Querol, 2017). Therefore, it can be verified that only by declaring a space as protected, does it generate expectations of an increase in demand. This tourist growth is not exempt from generating problems, mainly related to the carrying capacity together with the inadequate use of the spaces for the tourist practice in question.

All this creates the need to manage the protected spaces in a responsible and sustainable

way, without forgetting the main objective, the protection of them. In this way, institutions and administrations must recognize this tourism fact in this type of space as an opportunity for development, which implies the application of a series of measures that, through appropriate management models, generate a symbiosis between tourist uses of space and their protection in a responsible manner (López, 2009).

Therefore, a sustainable tourism development requires a responsible action of institutions and administrations towards the wise use of the territory, through research initiatives leading to useful measures and methodologies for planning and management at regional and local level, such as it is reflected in Figure 2, Annex I (Vera, 2001).

## **6. DEVELOPMENT OF THE INVESTIGATION**

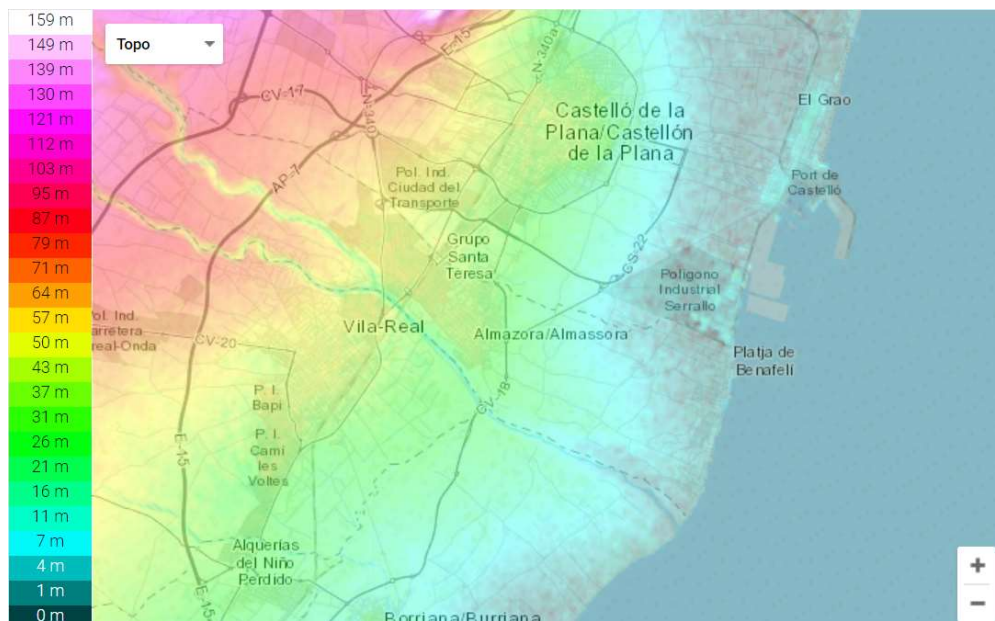
### **6.1. Analysis of the basics**

#### **6.1.1. The physical environment**

##### **6.1.1.1. The relief**

The study area from morphological criteria is formed in a plain with clayey soils and that extend along the coast along approximately 13 kilometers between Almazora and Burriana, and inland in about 10 kilometers. It is only interrupted by the gentle depression of the Millars from the "Termet" to "Les Goles" and the ravines of the "Paseo Botánico Calduch" in Vila-real and those of the Rambla de la Viuda in Almazora. Figure 3.

**Figure 3:** Relief of the study area.



**Source:** Topographic-map.

Being a coastal area, it is necessary to analyze the action of coastal dynamics, since the section from Sagunto to the north of the province of Castellón, is considered by experts, such as Josep Pardo, as the most regressive coasts of Spain and specifically the the coasts of Castellón as the most serious in the Valencian Community, mainly due to the construction of ports and seafront promenades, in addition to its geographical position and the disposition of the Gulf of Valencia, which makes the northern zone predominant erosive processes and the southern area of sedimentation, the most affected coasts are located in the region of La Plana Alta, such as the Benicàssim and Almazora beaches, the latter due to the influence of the southern extension of the Port of Castelló (Guardiola, 2007). For this reason, it has been necessary to carry out actions to stop this aggressive erosion, creating artificial dykes and breakwaters to reduce the loss of short-term sediments from the coasts.

### 6.1.1.2. The climate

The analysis of the climate, to be considered a factor of localization of the tourist activity, has been carried out through the exploitation of the statistical series of temperature and precipitation corresponding to the observatory of Almazora in the

period from 1981 to 2010, given the variability of Mediterranean climate results (Table 1).

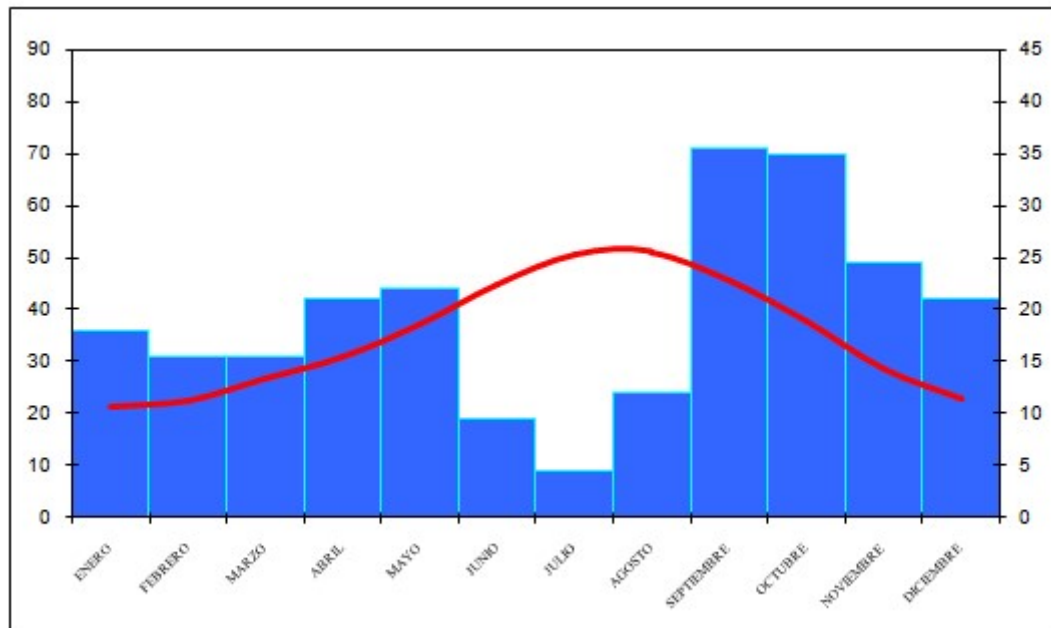
**Table 1:** Normal Climatological Values Almazora / Castellón 1981-2010.

MESES	PRECIPITACION MEDIA	TEMPERATURA MEDIA
ENERO	36	10,6
FEBRERO	31	11,3
MARZO	31	13,4
ABRIL	42	15,4
MAYO	44	18,5
JUNIO	19	22,5
JULIO	9	25,3
AGOSTO	24	25,6
SEPTIEMBRE	71	22,9
OCTUBRE	70	19
NOVIEMBRE	49	14,3
DICIEMBRE	42	11,4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>468</b>	<b>17,5</b>

**Source:** Aemet and Own elaboration.

During this period, the average temperature is below 18°C, favoring a purely temperate climate with a dry season and a hot summer. On the other hand, rainfall is below 600 mm annual average, which is presented as a normal value; however, it damages agriculture because the Levantine coast, which has good land for cultivation, because it is clay-like, has the disadvantage of the high scarcity of rainfall, which is why irrigation systems are used routinely. (Figure 4).

**Figure 4:** Gaussen Climogram of the “Plana alta” taken by Table 1 data.



**Source:** Aemet and Own elaboration.

The behavior of the precipitations allows to differentiate the four seasons of the year. Thus, those of the winter and spring months revolve around 40mm on average, due to the scarce contribution of Atlantic storms, which reach the east of the peninsula quite depleted. Dry season is also evident in summer in the months of June, July and August, which form the temperature peak. It is worth noting the usual autumn torrential rains, caused by the southward deviation of the Azores Anticyclone, which loses its effectiveness over the Iberian Peninsula at this time of the year, allowing numerous storms to enter in, some of them being strangled by the "Jet Stream", which precipitates these storms towards the Mediterranean Sea. Given their circulation in the opposite direction to the clock, they enter into the peninsula by the Levant, generating extraordinary rainfalls, collected from this "warm" sea, creating the known cold drops, which in this area can generate episodes of flooding (Figure 5. Annex I)

The behavior of both elements, has been contrasted through the Gaussen climogram, whose results determine that the study area has a Mediterranean climate, with mild average temperatures, thanks to the marine influence in both winter and summer, higher than 10°C in the coldest months, and around 25°C in the warmer months, being a favorable factor for the practice of outdoor activities.

### **6.1.1.3. The hydrography**

The space that includes the area under study belongs to the Millars river basin and the protected wetland of "Les Goles", an area that, due to its flatness, the type of soil and its climate, makes it especially dangerous as at the risk of flooding, although with a high draft index in the central area of the channel, as can be seen in the PATRICOVA cartography.

It is worth mentioning the level 1 and 2 dangerousness of the Millars mouth, which in its course has a high flood frequency, but with a high degree of draft, so that the natural containment capacity is quite high. This level 1 risk is flanked by an area of risk 2, which with an average frequency (100 years approx.) Has an equally high draft capacity, thanks to the natural action of the river's own flow. Around the flow of the Millars, there is another area of danger, this time of level 5 that with a frequency, in this case low (500 years, approx.) Has a high draft force, which prevents flooding due to the flow itself from the river.

From Santa Quitèria, both the river and its tributary, the "Rambla de la Viuda", present a level 6 danger, of low frequency but of low draft, which in case of torrential rain can create strong avenues that can be controlled by the mouth of the river, except in extreme cases as happened with the cold drop of 2000, which caused the overflow of María Cristina reservoir in the town of Alcora, causing a flood at the mouth of the Millars and the Rambla de la Viuda (Figure 6. Annex I).

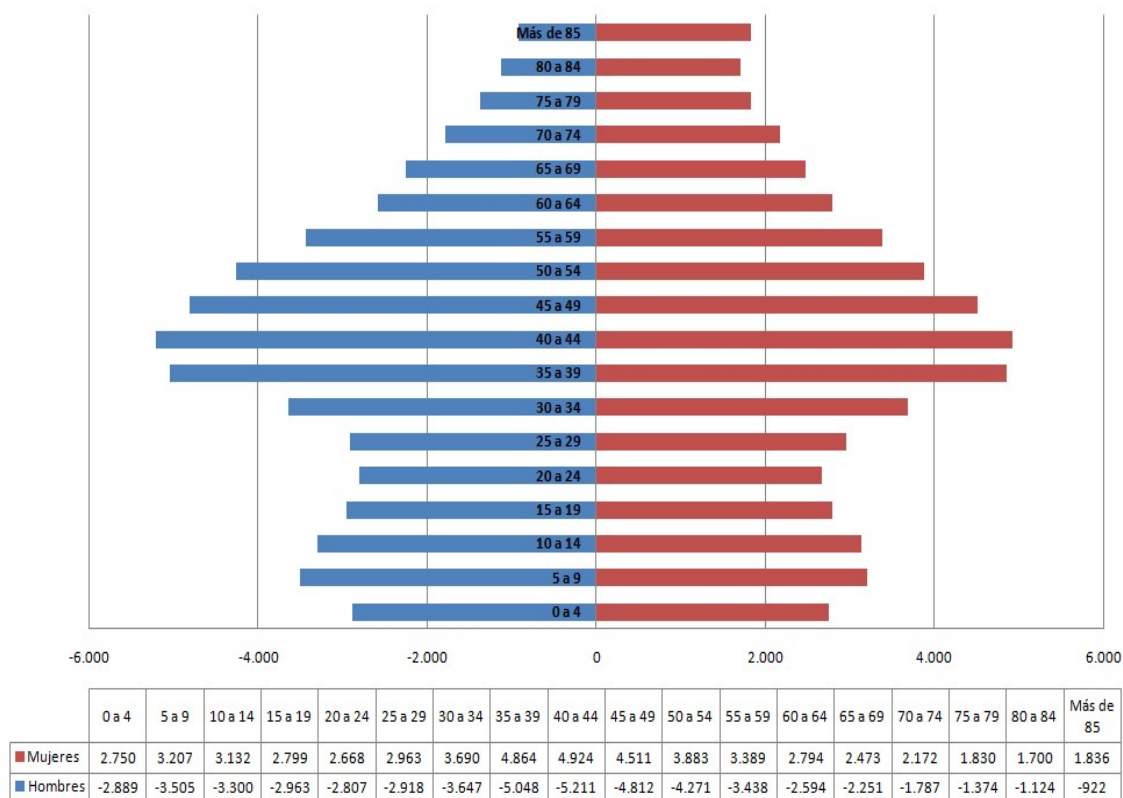
## **6.1.2. Demographic and socio-economic analysis**

### **6.1.2.1. Structure of the population by age and sex**

The study area has a population of 110,446 inhabitants in 2017, according to the latest revision of the Register of Inhabitants. Regarding its structure, it is expressed through the population pyramid, which has a composition of a decreasing or regressive nature in the form of a bulb, which implies a very low population growth in a society with a high expectation of life, characteristic of developed countries. What, a priori, in the future

will generate, if the migratory movement does not remedy it, a population loss in an aging society (Figure 7).

**Figure 7:** Almazora, Vila-real and Burriana population pyramid.



**Source:** IVE data (2017) and Own elaboration.

The base of this pyramid has a clear narrowing, which corresponds to those born between 2013 and 2017. It is a period of economic recovery where women have a fundamental role in the population structure. In the births between 2005 and 2013 there is a widening, where, despite corresponding to a period of time of strong economic crisis has allowed the population does not decrease. It is for this reason that the population has not lost significantly in this period of time.

In the next age range, between 10 and 24 years, there is a clear narrowing, with the period from 20 to 24 being the shortest. This stretch of fourteen years, which includes those born between 1990 and 2004, corresponds to a period of time of economic prosperity whose main characteristic is the new role of women in modern society, with



employment priorities and significantly reducing the number of children , in addition to having them at a more advanced age, which greatly affects the current and future population factor and which generates this narrowing in this graph.

The most representative section corresponds to the population between 25 and 64 years old, where in its central part there is a majority of men, mainly due to immigration, which accounts for around 15% of the total population of these three municipalities.

The top of the pyramid represents the population over 65 years old where there is a clear predominance of women, mostly accused from the age of 75, due to their greater life expectancy compared to men and evidenced by the Spanish Civil War occurred between 1936 and 1939 in addition to the post-war, period in which there was a low birth rate and a high mortality rate, especially of males. (IVE, 2017).

#### **6.1.2.2. Socio-economic analysis**

Regarding the distribution of the economic activity of the three municipalities, taking as reference the municipal records of the Valencian Institute of Statistics with data for 2017, we can determine that the unemployment rate has been decreasing in the last years of economic recovery. An unemployment rate that is led by women in the highest working age groups (25 to 65 years old), this inequality in the central section is very high, between 25 and 44 years old, which implies a strong economic imbalance and aggravates the situation of dependence on women included in this age group.

The sectors of activity are led by services and construction, assuming around 65% for the services sector and around 12-13% for construction. In the case of Vila-real and Burriana, the industrial sector is around 7% and in the case of Almazora it is 11%, and the primary sector, however, has a scarce representation, around 4% in Almazora and Vila- real and 7% in the case of Burriana.

#### **6.1.2.3. Distribution of housing**

This section, based on the latest data available, corresponding to the Population and Housing Census of 2011, will try to respond to the scarce tourist activity of these

municipalities related to the residential component, through the calculation of the tourist-residential index, which compares the main dwellings and the secondary ones.

Therefore, based on data from the 2011 Census, Almazora has a total of 10,208 main homes, Burriana has 13,080 and Vila-real, with a larger population, has 19,043 homes of this type. In the case of secondary homes, Almazora has 2,252, Burriana, with 3,075, and Vila-real for not having a coast in its municipal area has only 1,837. As for vacant homes, Almazora has of 2,734, Burriana 3,642 and Vila-real, with a total of 4,532.

With these data we can apply an indicator linked to tourism activity, which is specified in the tourist-residential function rate of each municipality, its calculation is to multiply the number of secondary residences per hundred and divide the resulting number among the number of occupied as main conventional. The indexes above 90 and 100 correspond to highly sought and specialized places; between 40 and 90 will be specialized regions, but without high exploitation, finally, the indexes below 40 represent areas with little attraction for the visitor or spaces with little incentive.

The results express a scarce tourist attraction due to its high imbalance between main and secondary homes, these being, in the case of Almazora, a value of 22.06, for Burriana, the most tourist of the three, 23.51 and Vila-real, for not having coast and its proximity to other municipalities much more tourist like Benicàssim, Burriana, Moncófar or Nules, a scant 9.65. The cases of Almazora and Burriana, very similar and of little attraction, owe their cause to the proximity and excellent accessibility to highly specialized centers such as Benicàssim or Oropesa, which suppose a powerful competition against municipalities with little or incipient tourist development, in addition, the three municipalities have greater specialization in other sectors, and a very limited tourism dynamic.

### **6.1.3. The incorporation of Sustainable Development Goals**

Sustainability, as we have seen before, refers to the balance of a species with the resources of its environment, and that, by extension, is applied to the exploitation of a resource below the limit of its renewal.

The tourism, as a system of exploitation of spaces, must take into account the current and future economic, social and environmental impacts to satisfy the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and the host communities. Thanks to the diversity of relationships involved in tourism activity, sustainable tourism has the capacity to act as a catalyst for change in the world, benefiting the struggle of causes such as hunger, peace and security, the promotion of local economies or climate change among many others.

In order to increase the awareness of the population in general and of public and private managers in particular, as well as to increase its scope, last year 2017 has been designated by the United Nations as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development. In this way, the World Charter for Sustainable Tourism +20 continues its trajectory as a vehicle of the tourism sector towards the achievement of the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations.

In relation to the foregoing and also taking into account that the study area is a protected area, this research should promote a sustainable tourism style, which is why it is suitable among the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), consider in part SDG 6, which involves guaranteeing water availability, its sustainable management and sanitation, in particular reaching target 6.3; and on the other, SDG 11, whose goal for 2030 is to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable, with special emphasis on goals 11.2, 11.3 and 11.4 (ONU, 2015).

Regarding Objective 6.3, it means trying to improve, with a 2030 deadline, the quality of water, reducing pollution, eliminating dumping and minimizing the emission of chemical products and hazardous materials, halving the percentage of wastewater untreated and increasing recycling and reuse without risks. In this sense, we will take into account the purification system of the three municipalities, taking as reference the Factsheets about the WWTP (EDAR) prepared by the Public Wastewater Sanitation Entity (EPSAR) of the Generalitat Valenciana (Figures 8, 9 and 10). Annex I).

Thus, none of the three municipalities has tertiary treatment of wastewater treatment and therefore do not guarantee the sustainable use of the environment. Vila-real and

Almazora, even so, have a better pre-treatment, primary treatments and secondary treatments with respect to Burriana. Therefore, it should be emphasized to improve the purification system and use water for agricultural use, taking into account its greater exploitation in this economic sector, and which will mean, for this locality, a greater investment, in the long term, in the improvement of their wastewater treatments to adapt and achieve this objective of sustainable development.

Regarding the goals of objective 11 of Sustainable Development, in the case of 11.2, it aims to provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all and improve road safety. In particular, by expanding public transport, paying special attention to the needs of vulnerable people, women, children, people with disabilities and the elderly.

In this sense, the infrastructure and road networks will be taken into account where we find a network of perfectly ordered roads, taking as main reference the N-340, which connects the three locations, the CV-185 between Vila-real and Burriana and the CV - 18 that unites Almazora and Burriana. On the other hand, from the point of view of public transport, there are some deficits, as is the case of the communication between Vila-real and Burriana with Almazora, where the bus stops of the lines coming from these locations are far from the urban center. The attractive effect generated by the city of Castellón de la Plana on these locations is very high, which makes it necessary to ignore the passage of the bus by these and create almost direct routes to the capital. The situation of the use of transport by rail is not better, since there is only a direct communication between Vila-real and Almazora, although the latter with the station quite far from the urban center. Even more alarming is the case of Burriana, whose train station is located about 2 kilometers from the town, in Alquerías del Niño Perdido.

For these reasons it is necessary to apply policies that generate better dynamics among these three municipalities around public transport by road. In the case of rail transport, it is more complex since the infrastructure is developed, but a useful measure could be to create urban bus lines to access the stations.

Regarding the goal 11.3, it aims to increase inclusive and sustainable urbanization and

the capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable planning and management of human settlements.

In relation to it, the Department of Urbanism of Almazora deals with the urban planning, reflected in the General Plan of Urban Planning of 1998 and of the Strategy of Sustainable Urban Development 2017-2023, its development and application, by means of the processing and implementation of the Integrated Action Programs, or directly urbanizing the land, through the appropriate documents, either through execution units or through the remodeling of public roads, and granting the corresponding construction licenses for new buildings or licenses for small or large works in existing buildings. It also deals with the construction and renovation of service infrastructures and the granting of authorizations for the exercise of industrial or commercial activities that the laws assign to the municipality, as well as certain competencies in environmental matters (Ayuntamiento de Almazora, 2018).

Vila-real, for its part, has as its main objective in its municipal Department of Urbanism, to ensure the balanced and sustainable development of the city. To this end, It is the responsible for urban planning and the road network of the city, through urban planning instruments based on current legislation. It is also the area that manages the development and revision of the General Plan of Urban Planning, as well as the one in charge of ensuring that the different actions and works carried out in the locality comply with the regulations in force in matters of spatial planning (Ayuntamiento de Vila-real, seen in 2018).

Burriana is subject to a Sustainable Urban Development Strategy (EDUSI) since 2016, and the insertion of these on the Internet from the Order of April 26, 2007, of the Department of Territory and Housing, which regulates the urban information related to the procedure of formulating and approving programs for the development of integrated actions and reparcelling projects. (Ayuntamiento de Burriana, 2018).

In this way, taking into account the inclusion of plans and strategies and the character of sustainable and integrating urban growth that the three municipalities have, we can determine that they are on track to achieve this goal of Sustainable Development.

To achieve goal 11.4, whose objective is to protect and safeguard the cultural and natural heritage, we must take into account the Natura 2000 Plan to which the protected landscape of the Millars River belongs. This plan is a European ecological network of areas for the conservation of biodiversity, and consists of three lists: Sites of Community Importance (SCI), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) established in accordance with the Habitat Directive and Special Protection Areas for Birds (ZEPA) designated under the Birds Directive, whose purpose is to ensure the long-term survival of species and habitat types in Europe, helping to stop the loss of biodiversity (Mapama, 2018).

In the Natura 2000 Network, the areas to be conserved coincide with the protected areas, which helps them to remain sustainable and to protect the natural heritage alive in areas such as the study area, which houses nesting populations of five species of waterfowl, and winter regularly many other species. It has had regional importance for the Black-footed Chorlitejo and Common stilt, although recent changes in the morphology of the channel have reduced the characteristics of the environment for the nesting of these birds since 2003. It is an area of passage and wintering for various species of waterfowl that enrich biodiversity and landscape (Mapama, seen in 2018).

## **6.2. Analysis of the elements of the tourism system**

### **6.2.1. Tourist Resources**

The first step in the methodological application of the analysis of tourism resources is the realization of the inventory through two phases. The first corresponds to the choice of research sources, whether direct or indirect, and another related to the preparation of the inventory, highlighting aspects of quantification and spatial distribution.

Regarding indirect research sources, it is advisable to influence both those that are related to tourism and those that intervene in one way or another in tourism development. On the other hand, direct observations complete information extracted from indirect sources.

To collect systematically the information about the resources and to carry out the inventory, we use the resource files. When we have all the resources in files, we can make the inventory, assess them and see their tourist potential. The file that we will use is elaborated on a methodological basis according to the OAS and the UNWTO (Table 2).

**Table 2:** Inventory of tourism resources.

Nº	NAME OF THE RESOURCE	CATEG.	TYPE	SUBTYPE 1	SUBTYPE 2
1	Playa de Pla de la torre	A	1.3	1.3.1	1.3.1.1/2
2	Playa del riu Millars	A	1.3	1.3.1	1.3.1.2
3	Les Goles del Millars	A	1.4	1.4.5	1.4.5.2
4	Observatorio de Aves	A	1.8	1.8.4	1.8.4.2
5	Ermita de Santa Quitèria	B	2.1	2.1.1	2.1.1.5
6	Ermitori de la Verge de Gràcia	B	2.1	2.1.1	2.1.1.5
7	Restos del Castillo de Almaz.	B	2.1	2.1.3	2.1.3.1
8	Puente del Camino de la Ermita	B	2.2	2.2.1	2.2.1.1
9	Puente de Santa Quitèria	B	2.2	2.2.1	2.2.1.1
10	Puente sobre el Millars (N-340)	B	2.2	2.2.1	2.2.1.1
11	Puente nuevo (CV-18)	B	2.2	2.2.1	2.2.1.1
12	Azud de Almazora	B	2.2	2.2.1	2.2.1.2
13	Azud de Vila-real	B	2.2	2.2.1	2.2.1.2
14	Azud de Burriana	B	2.2	2.2.1	2.2.1.2
15	Paseo Botánico Calduch	B	2.2	2.2.5	2.2.5.1
16	Torrelló del Boverot	B	2.3	2.3.1	

**Source:** Own elaboration.

Once the inventory has been prepared, a quantitative analysis will be carried out, distributing the resources by category. Each resource on the territory, according to its category, will be captured. (Table 3). The objective of the quantitative analysis is to know which categories offer greater representation and their territorial distribution.

**Table 3:** Distribution of tourism resources by categories.

CATEGORIES	N°	%
A- Atractive or natural and scenic resource	4	25%
B- Históric-monumental resource	12	75%
C- Artisan and gastronomic resource	0	0%
D- Folklore, parties and scheduled events	0	0%
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source:** Own elaboration.

In this way, the resources previously inventoried will be territorially distributed in the studied area in the manner shown in Figure 11.

**Figure 11:** Location of basic and complementary resources on the map.



**Source:** Own elaboration from Google Maps viewer.

Thus, in the Protected Landscape of the River Millars, we can see a clear majority of historical-monumental resources, most of them related to the characteristics and activity generated by the river and its channel, we can also find a homogeneous spatial distribution of the resources, where the natural and scenic elements are concentrated in the eastern area of the space, in the mouth, and a concentration of historical resources more towards the interior of the studied area, where there is a greater proximity to the populations, in this case Vila- Real and Almazora besides the bridges, which unite the three municipalities.



Finally, an integrated evaluation will be carried out to know the current and potential tourism value of the complementary tourist resources that will be determined by the hierarchy.

Thus, this qualitative analysis will be necessary to calculate the hierarchy of each of the resources, starting from the development of a series of factors and variables, in turn, considering a set of indicators, will make it possible to specify the current value of tourism resources. Thus on a basis of a maximum hierarchical value of 50 points, on one hand, the internal factors (X) of the resource, to which a maximum hierarchical value of 30 is assigned, and on the other the external factors (Y), are evaluated with a maximum of 20 points.

Once the values of all variables and indicators that make up the internal and external factors have been calculated, the sum of the results will provide us with the hierarchical index (X + Y), to which the formula  $(X + Y) / 50 * 5$  will be applied. Thus, we obtain the hierarchy of complementary tourist resources, in this way for resources with a hierarchical value 1, we will understand that they are resources that complement others, those of level 2, those that motivate local tourist flows, of value 3, regional, for level 4 we consider national attractions and for level 5, including, in this category the beaches, will be considered of international tourist interest (López, 2014).

**Table 4:** Integrated evaluation and hierarchy of complementary resources.

Recursos			Factores internos (X)				TOTAL	Factores externos (Y)			TOTAL	TOTAL	JERARQUÍA
Nombre del recurso	Nº	CAT	A	B	C	F. INTERNOS	A	B	F. EXTERNOS	(X+Y)	(X+Y)/50*5		
Les Goles del Millars	3	A	7,00	3,09	2,70	12,79	8,00	4,00	12,00	24,79	2		
Observatorio de aves	4	A	7,00	3,09	2,70	12,79	8,00	3,00	11,00	23,79	2		
Ermita de Santa Quitèria	5	B	7,00	3,09	2,70	12,79	8,00	3,00	11,00	23,79	2		
Ermitori de la Verge de Gràcia	6	B	7,00	3,22	2,70	12,92	8,00	3,00	11,00	23,92	2		
Restos del Castillo de Almazora	7	B	2,00	3,34	2,70	8,04	8,00	3,00	11,00	19,04	2		
Puente del Camino de la Ermita	8	B	5,00	2,20	2,70	9,90	8,00	3,00	11,00	20,90	2		
Puente de Santa Quitèria	9	B	6,00	2,96	2,70	11,66	8,00	3,00	11,00	22,66	2		
Puente sobre el Millars (N-340)	10	B	3,00	3,09	2,70	8,79	8,00	3,00	11,00	19,79	2		
Puente Nuevo (CV-18)	11	B	4,00	3,46	2,70	10,16	8,00	3,00	11,00	21,16	2		
Azud de Almazora	12	B	3,00	3,09	2,70	8,79	8,00	3,00	11,00	19,79	2		
Azud de Vila-Real	13	B	3,00	2,59	2,70	8,29	8,00	3,00	11,00	19,29	2		
Azud de Burriana	14	B	3,00	4,34	2,70	10,04	8,00	3,00	11,00	21,04	2		
Paseo Botánico Calduch	15	B	7,00	2,44	2,70	12,14	8,00	3,00	11,00	23,14	2		
Torrelló del Boverot	16	B	7,00	4,34	2,70	14,04	8,00	3,00	11,00	25,04	3		

**Source:** Own elaboration.

Table 4 determines a generalization of hierarchy 2 where the resources that motivate local tourism flows predominate, with the exception of Torrelló del Boverot, which

reaches hierarchy 3, with the potential to generate tourist flows of a regional nature. Probably because it is an Iberian settlement that receives mainly school visits from nearby towns in addition to the help it receives from the Almazora Museum, the main interpretation center of this resource, which organizes, periodically, guided tours and activities around this deposit. We must also take into account the case of Les Goles, which, despite not reaching the hierarchical value 3, receives visits of a regional nature, also mostly school, although visits of a local nature are much more abundant. The rest of the resources have a more or less purely local visits index, so their configuration and hierarchy is framed in value 2, forming part of a path that unites all the resources that make it up to generate higher-level tourist interests.

## **6.2.2. Markets**

### **6.2.2.1. Potential demand**

In relation to the analysis of potential demand, this will be based on the demand segment that offers the greatest linkage according to the intrinsic characteristics of the studied area, and which corresponds to active nature tourism. Thus, according to the National Association of Active Tourism Companies (ANETA) and the General Secretariat of Tourism, active nature tourism is defined as *"One that has as main motivations the realization of recreational and leisure activities, the interpretation and / or knowledge of nature, with a different degree of depth and the practice of sports activities of different physical intensity and risk that expressly use resources in a specific way, without degrading or exhausting the"* (ANETA, 2014).

Therefore, we must consider that they are activities carried out in a protected natural environment with a high risk of being damaged or degraded, which requires a special degree of responsibility and awareness on the part of tourists, institutions and operating companies that exploit the medium.

It is also a tourist typology with seasonality, where the high season is concentrated in the driest months of May, June, July and August, and where the most popular activities correspond to hiking, canyoning, canoeing and rafting (ANETA, 2014: 26-27).

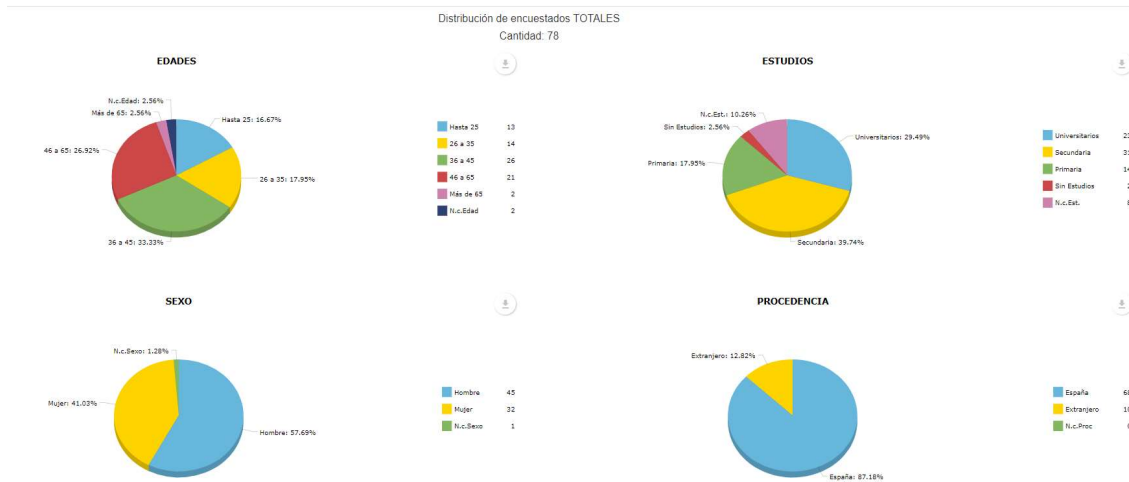
In parallel, according to the Tourism White Paper of the Valencian Community, we can stipulate the average profile of the tourist who visits the Valencian Community for tourism purposes of an active nature, that is, the potential tourist of this research. Thus, it is configured as the European tourist who performs low intensity activities, with an average age of 36 years and traveling in a group, choosing their destinations for the landscape, active tourism activities and climate, spending an average € 870 per trip and with a stay of around 10 days. (Agència Valenciana del Turisme, 2017: 199).

#### **6.2.2.2. Real demand**

The analysis of the real demand has been carried out through the results of the visitor surveys carried out in the Tourist Info of the studied area. To this end, the Open Data Tourist Info platform created for this purpose by the IDAL (Intelligent Data Analysis Laboratory) has been exploited as a result of an agreement with the Valencian Tourism Agency, using the latest data collected in the tourist offices of each of the municipalities. So for the case of Vila-real and Burriana-Arenal, we will have the statistics for 2015 and for the case of Almazora with those of 2011, since there is no more recent data available.

In the first place, we will take into account the profile of the tourist; where, in the case of Vila-real (Figure 12), a clear majority of tourists between the ages of 36 and 65 can be seen, with more than 60% of visitors between the two age ranges and almost 90% of the visitors total are national, close to 30% with university studies and secondary studies almost 40%, adding a total of 70% of people who visit this town with medium or higher education. This is probably very much related to business tourism, which is related to the slightly higher presence of men, since in general there are still more trips of men for business than for women (Rovati, 2006).

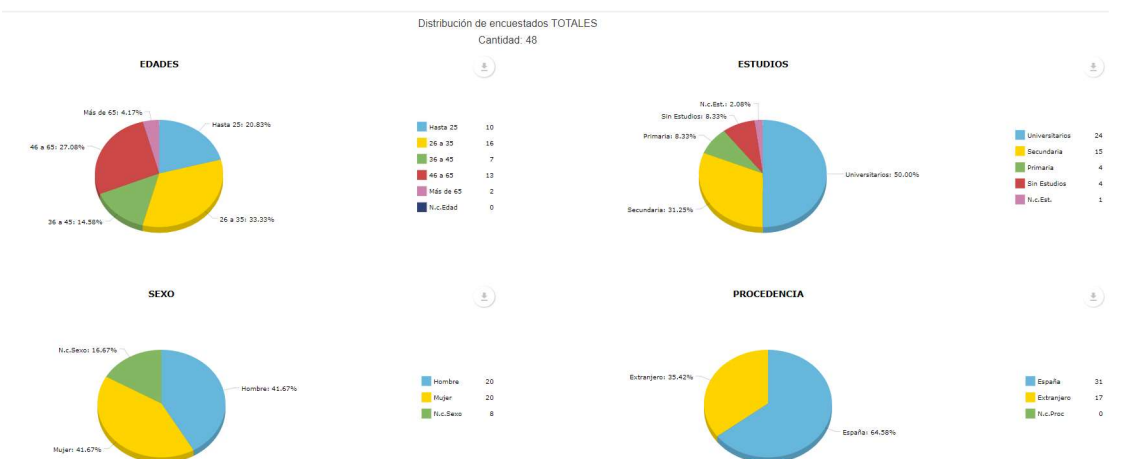
**Figure 12: Profile of the Vila-real tourist.**



**Source: IDAL, 2016.**

In the case of Burriana (Figure 13) we can find a tourist profile where the age brackets are more balanced, in this way, the tourist profile up to 35 years is a 54%, probably due to the boom that has generated more recently the tourism in this destination, linked to the great music festival that is celebrated, the Arenal Sound Festival, while the tourism of people aged 36 and older occupies the remaining 46% and with a high rate of tourists with university studies , reaching 50%. Regarding the origin, there is still a majority of national tourism but with an important weight of foreign visitors of 35%, many of them probably attracted by the aforementioned music festival.

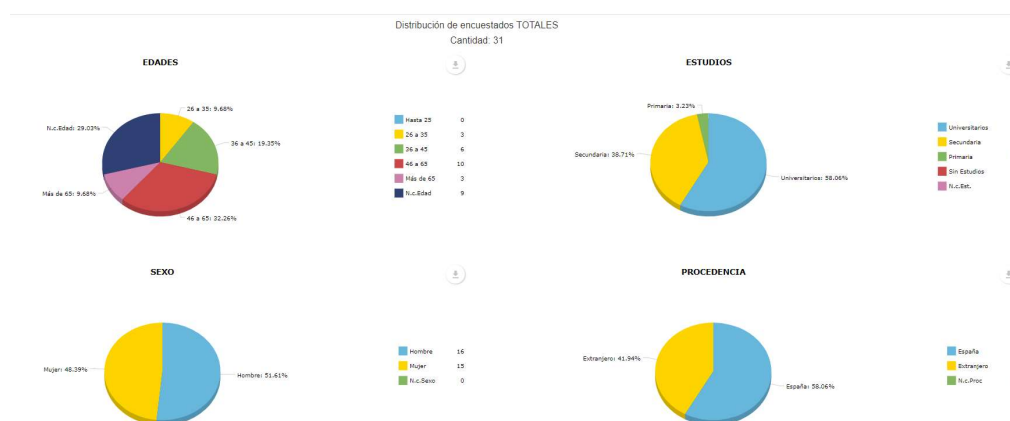
**Figure 13: Profile of the Burriana-Arenal tourist.**



**Source: IDAL, 2016.**

For its part, in Almazora (Figure 14) the most representative age segments correspond, on the one hand to those between 46 and 65 years old, with 32.26%; and on the other hand, those from 26 to 35 years old with 19.35% with a majority of higher education, and an important equality between national and foreign visitors, being the first majority with 58.06%.

**Figure 14:** Profile of the tourist of Almazora.

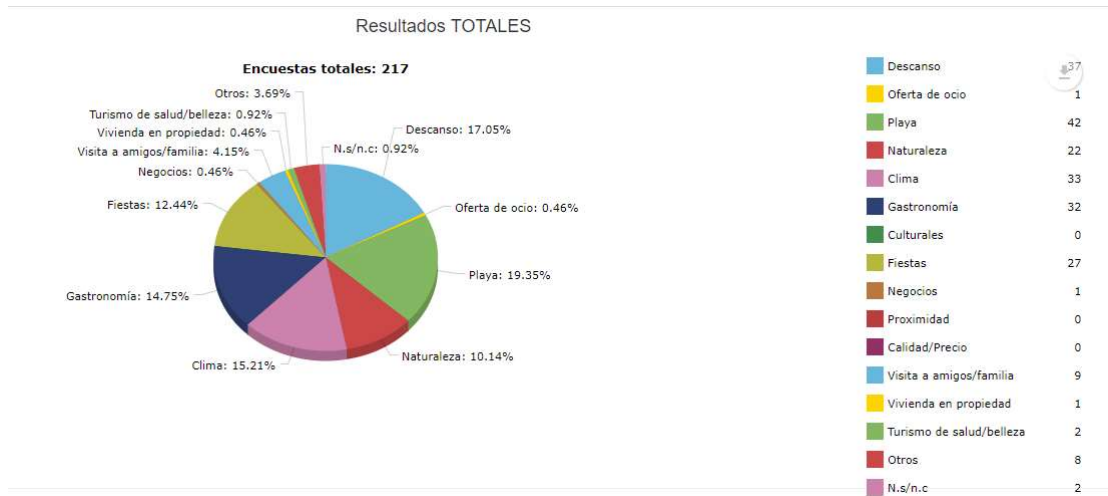


**Source:** IDAL, 2016.

In a more detailed analysis, we will go to the results of the questionnaires made to tourists who have visited the Tourist-info of these destinations, where they respond according to their tastes, preferences or habits when carrying out their tourism activity. For this reason and following the research line of this Work, we will take into account the questions asked about the reasons that lead them to visit these destinations, the activities they have carried out during their stay in them, and the type of information they would like to receive. and they have not received.

Thus, in relation to the main reasons that lead visitors to know the destination of Vila-real, (Figure 15) excels, out of a total of 217 surveys, first sun and beach tourism with a 19.35 %, probably given its proximity to other coastal destinations such as Burriana, Nules or Almazora, followed closely by reasons of rest (17.05%), climate (15.21%), gastronomy (14.75%) and parties (12.44%), with a 10.14% interest in nature and a low 0.46% of business tourists passing through the tourist office, probably because this type of tourists do not usually seek recommendations or tourist information in them.

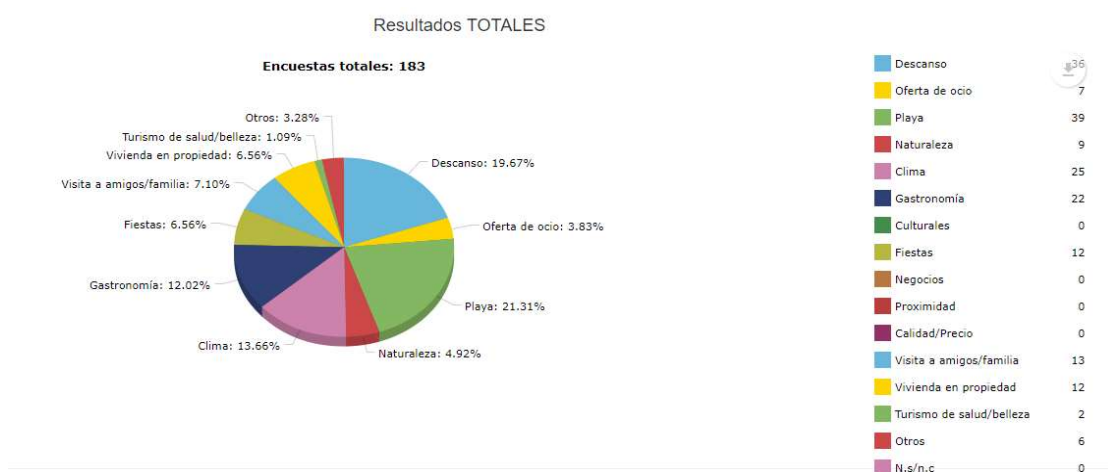
**Figure 15:** Graph of visit motivations of Vila-Real.



**Source:** IDAL, 2016.

Regarding the destination of Burriana, (Figure 16) we can see that the reasons linked to the beach and rest stand out, reaching between them 40% of the 183 interviewed, all this is the result of the dynamics that are generated, thanks in large part to its benign Mediterranean climate, reason that supposes 13.66% of the visits and the quality of its gastronomy, reaching this one 12%. However, with a scarce 4.92%, nature tourism remains as the main reason to visit the municipality, diminished by the strength exerted on the littoral space by sun and beach tourism and the quality of these.

**Figure 16:** Graph of visit motivations of Burriana-Arenal.

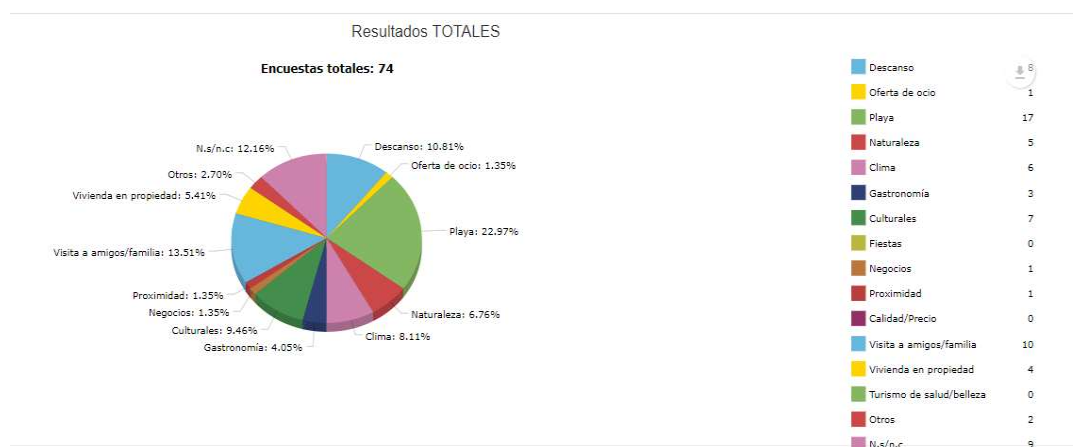


**Source:** IDAL, 2016.

As for Almazora, with only 78 people surveyed and with data from 2011, sun and beach

tourism stand out, generating, the climate (8.11%) and the beach (22.97%), an interest on visitors more than 30%, despite the high competition and provision of better-equipped beaches in the surroundings (Castellón, Burriana, Benicàssim) and where the rest reasons (10.81%) and cultural tourism (9.46%) also stand out , the latter closely linked to the Torrelló del Boverot, an Iberian settlement located at the western limit of the municipality. The interest for nature tourism is 6.76%, directly related to the protected landscape of the Millars river, Les Goles and its bird reserve, which are unique in the province of Castellón (Figure 17).

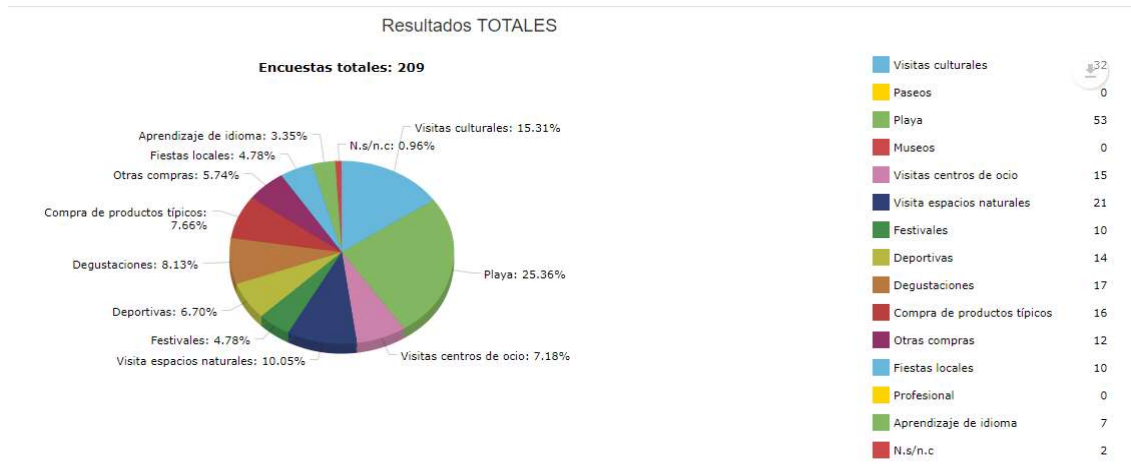
**Figure 17:** Graph of visit motivations of Almazora.



**Source:** IDAL, 2016.

For the next variable, related to the activities carried out during the visit to the study area. We can see in Vila-real (Figure 18) stand out with 25.36%, those related to sun and beach tourism, despite not having a coastline in its municipal area. Cultural visits also stand out, with 15.31%, given the high patrimonial value that exists in the municipality. Other activities stand out, such as the visit to natural areas with 10.05%, thanks to the good work that has been done on the right bank of the Millars River, with the rehabilitation of the botanical path, the Hermitage of Mare de Déu de Gràcia , among other. Finally, the activities for visiting leisure spaces (7.18%) and sports activities (6.70%) that can be related in large part to the El Madrigal football stadium (since 2017, Estadi de la Ceràmica).

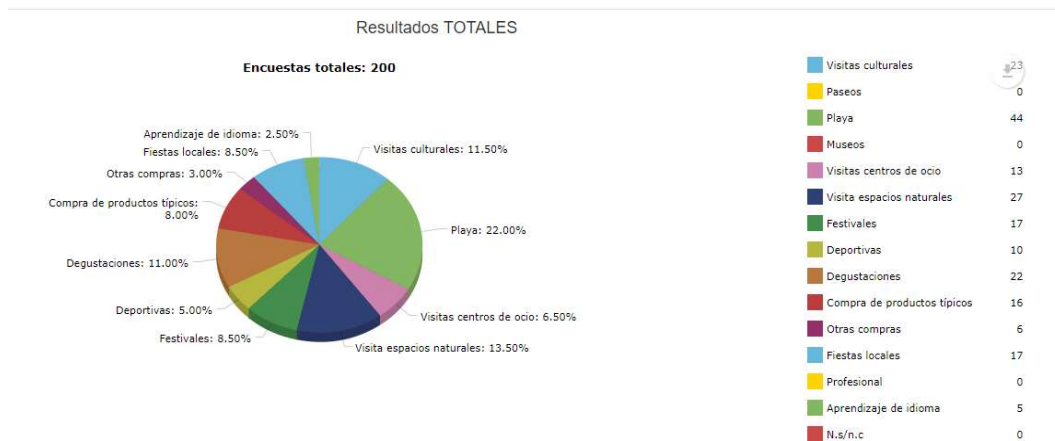
**Figure 18:** Graph of activities carried out by visitors in Vila-real.



**Source:** IDAL, 2016.

In the case of the municipality of Burriana (Figure 19) we find again that the activities related to the beach lead with 22%, as mentioned above, closely related to the quality of the beaches and climate. Also highlight the visits to natural areas with 13.50%, thanks to the spaces of Les Goles and especially to the municipal site of Clot de la Mare de Deu, where, in its vicinity, some active tourism activities are carried out.

**Figure 19:** Graph of activities carried out by visitors in Burriana-Arenal.



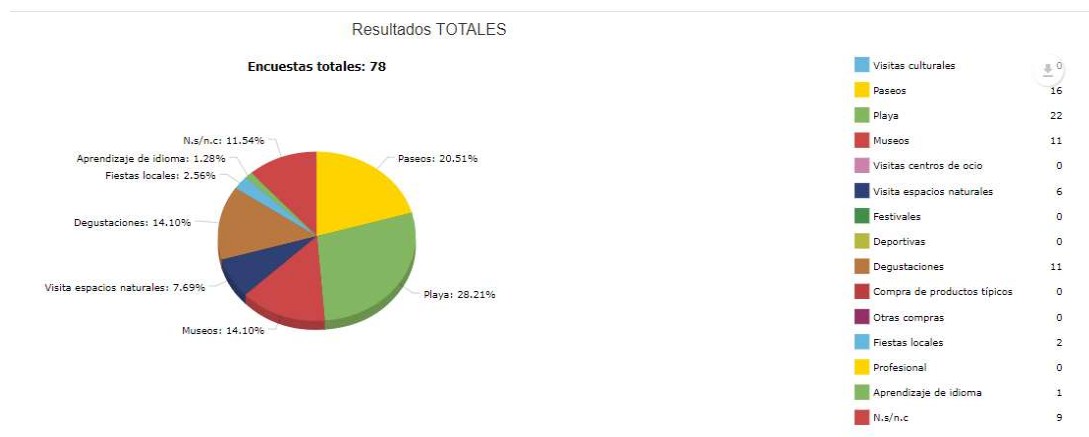
**Source:** IDAL, 2016.

In Almazora (Figure 20) again and as with the rest of the studied area, the activities related to the beach stand out (28.21%). Linked to rest tourism, we found 20.51% of activities related to walks. Both the activities related to visits to museums, in the case of this town linked to the Torrelló del Boverot, as well as those related to gastronomic



tastings that we can relate to the first edition of the Ruta de la Tapa of the municipality, which took place in 2011 they account for 14.10% respectively. Finally, with 7.69% we find activities related to the visit to natural spaces, linked to the protected landscape of the Millars River.

**Figure 20:** Graph of activities carried out by visitors in Almazora.



**Source:** IDAL, 2016.

To finish this block of analysis of the real demand, the direct opinion of the visitors on the information that has not been offered to them in the tourist offices and the one that they would have liked to receive will be taken into account. Thus, although the majority of visitors, 64.10% do not answer this question (Ns / Nc), we find that in the case of Vila-real the information that is most missed is related to resources and infrastructures. In Burriana, with a non-participation index of (22%), the same aspects stand out, as well as culture, offers, routes and maps; and in the case of Almazora with a non-participation grade of 96.77%, only more information about offers is missing.

From there, we can conclude this section defining the profile of the tourist with a predominant age segment between 26 and 45 years, with secondary and higher education, of national origin, and with an obvious predilection for the product of sun and beach thanks to the basic resource of the beaches and the Mediterranean mild climate available on the three destinations, which is why, in relation to nature tourism, it can be determined that the profile of the tourist who visits this area, does not take into account, in most of the cases, the natural and landscape resources that the space has for practice active nature tourism.

### **6.2.3. The regulated tourist offer**

In this section, companies will be analyzed, both those that have a direct relationship with the tourist activity in the case of commercial accommodations, and those that generate synergies on tourism development. The objective is to know the business diversification, paying special attention to those companies that have a greater incidence on the studied territory, and that correspond to accommodation, travel agencies, apartment rentals and active tourism companies.

Thus, in the case of Almazora, Burriana and Vila-real, (Table 5) we can see a manifest lack of tourist relationship companies, except in the case of travel agencies for the municipality of Vila-real, being wholesalers the most of them, taking into account the total population and the high difference with the other two destinations, which despite having a greater tourist attraction due to having a coastline, lack this type of companies that facilitate the promotion and use of resources that they have.

It is worth mentioning the limited contribution of the three municipalities, especially Almazora. As for hotel establishments, of the total of 14, five are listed as hostels or pensions, another five of basic amenities of one star, just two hotels of two stars, one of three and one of four-star hotel, this one located curiously in Vila -real, the population with the lowest rate of tourist attraction. Its reason lies in the potential of business tourism generated by the ceramic companies that are located in the vicinity of this city.

Another element to take into account is the scarce presence of active tourism companies, which are concentrated in Burriana and focus on the exploitation of diving activities and rental of water vehicles around Clot de la Mare de Deu. In addition to horse riding through the Club Hípico Mediterráneo, which, given its location in the vicinity of the bed of the Millars River, can be an opportunity to promote equestrian tours on its roads.

In general terms, we can determine a limited regulated tourist offer, saving the differences that suppose the number of agencies, much higher in the case of Vila-real. The same dynamics are experienced by active tourism companies, located only in Burriana, as well as having two Tourist-info, one in the population center and the other

in the Grao, thanks to the tourist growth that the two beaches bring to the town, Malvarrosa and Arenal, and the force of attraction generated by the already consolidated musical festival that takes place in the latter.

**Table 5:** Table of tourist offer in the municipalities of Almazora, Burriana and Vila-real in 2017.

Empresas turísticas/Municipio	Almazora	Burriana	Vila-Real	Total	Tipo/Categoría
Agencias de viaje	2 (2/0/0)	3 (2/0/1)	12 (5/0/7)	17 (9/0/8)	(m/M/Mm)
Establecimientos hoteleros	2 (1/1/0/0/0/0)	6 (3/1/1/0/0/0)	6 (1/3/1/0/1/0)	14 (5/5/2/1/1/0)	(0*/1*/2*/3*/4*/5*)
Oficinas turísticas (Tourist info)	1	2	1	4	
Alojamiento rural	0 (0/0/0)	0 (0/0/0)	1 (0/0/1)	1 (0/0/1)	Acamp/Alberg/c.rural
Cámpings	0 (0/0/0/0/0/0/0)	0 (0/0/0/0/0/0/0)	0 (0/0/0/0/0/0/0)	0 (0/0/0/0/0/0/0)	(0/1e/2e/3e/4e/5e)
Empresas de alquiler de apartamentos	0	3	2	5	
Empresas de turismo activo	0	4	0	4	
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>45</b>	

Source: Agència Valenciana de Turisme, 2018 and Own elaboration.

Being more specific, we can analyze the regulated accommodation of the three municipalities based on their evolution (Table 6), considering the data from the Valencian Tourism Agency (GVA) in 2000, 2006 and 2016, to determine if this evolution, in places and accommodations, has been favorable in recent years.

**Table 6:** Regulated accommodation and places in Almazora, Burriana and Vila-real.

Año	Alojamiento reglado/Municipio	Plazas totales				Tipo/Categoría	Plazas totales			
		Almazora	Burriana	Vila-Real	Total		Almazora	Burriana	Vila-Real	Total plazas
Año 2000	Hoteles	1 (0/1/0/0/0)	2 (0/1/1/0/0)	1 (0/0/0/1/0)	4 (0/2/1/1/0)	oro (1*/2*/3*/4*/5*)	19	163	161	343
	Hostales	1 (0/1/0)	0 (0/0/0)	1 (1/0/0)	2 (1/1/0)	plata (1*/2*/3*)	21	0	17	38
	Apartamentos	8 (0/8)	5 (0/5)	0 (0/0)	13 (0/13)	(1a/2a)	38	29	0	67
	Cámpings	0 (0/0)	0 (0/0)	0 (0/0)	0 (0/0)	(1a/2a)	0	0	0	0
	<b>Total (Año 2000)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>19</b>		<b>78</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>448</b>
Año 2006	Hoteles	1 (0/1/0/0/0)	2 (0/1/1/0/0)	2 (0/1/0/1/0)	5 (0/3/1/1/0)	oro (1*/2*/3*/4*/5*)	19	163	213	395
	Hostales	1 (0/1/0)	1 (1/0/0)	1 (1/0/0)	3 (2/1/0)	plata (1*/2*/3*)	21	18	41	80
	Apartamentos	8 (0/0/8)	34 (0/0/34)	3 (0/0/3)	45 (0/0/45)	(Lujo/1a/2a)	38	160	12	210
	Cámpings	0 (0/0)	0 (0/0)	0 (0/0)	0 (0/0)	(1a/2a)	0	0	0	0
	<b>Total (Año 2006)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>53</b>		<b>78</b>	<b>341</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>685</b>
Año 2016	Hoteles	1 (1/0/0/0/0)	3 (1/1/1/0/0)	2 (0/1/0/1/0)	6 (2/2/1/1/0)	(1*/2*/3*/4*/5*)	22	144	213	379
	Hostales	1 (0/1)	3 (0/3)	4 (1/3)	8 (1/7)	(Hostal/Pensión)	15	46	82	143
	Apartamentos	23 (23/0/0)	43 (43/0/0)	4 (4/0/0)	70 (70/0/0)	(Estándar/1a/Superior)	101	205	16	322
	Cámpings	0 (0/0/0/0/0)	0 (0/0/0/0/0)	0 (0/0/0/0/0)	0 (0/0/0/0/0)	(1*/2*/3*/4*/5*)	0	0	0	0
	<b>Total (Año 2016)</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>84</b>		<b>138</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>311</b>	<b>844</b>

Source: Agència Valenciana de Turisme, 2018 and Own elaboration.

Therefore, for the first year of reference stands out the scarcity of hotel supply, manifested in the fact that only the municipalities of Vila-real with a single four-star hotel and Burriana, with a two-star hotel and a three-star, concentrating between them 72% of the total places of the three municipalities. On the other hand the offer of Almazora is reduced to eight apartments, against the five of Burriana and the nonexistence of these in Vila-real, although all these of 2nd category.

In relation to the data collected in 2006, a stagnation can be seen in Almazora, conserving the same supply as it had in 2000. In the case of Vila-real, there is a slight increase with the appearance of a new hotel of two stars contributing 52 new places and three apartments, reaching a total of 266 places and minimally diversifying the accommodation offer. Contrary to what is seen in Burriana, thanks to the incipient appeal generated by its beaches, this municipality is committed to quantitative growth based on the creation of 29 new second category apartments with 160 places, reaching a total of 341, being the main tourist attraction among these three locations.

Regarding the data for 2016, we found a slight negative balance in the locality of Almazora from a qualitative criterion, since it loses its two-star hotel but slightly increases its offer with a one-star hotel and a pension, and also increases its offer of apartments going from eight to twenty-two, exceeding 100 places. In the case of Burriana, highlight the slight evolution, taking into account the boom between 2000 and 2006, in its establishments, adding only a new one-star hotel, three pensions, and nine apartments, standing at 396 places. Vila-real maintains its hotel offer and only adds three new pensions and one apartment, exceeding 300 accommodation places.

In short, although in quantitative terms the study area has a weak regulated accommodation offer with 844 total places, the overall evolution of the three destinations is positive, although there is a large difference between the data from 2000 to 2006 and 2006 to 2016. Despite being the last, a longer period of time, there are no large changes, most likely caused by the strong and long economic crisis that began in 2007 that greatly affected the construction sector and the demand for real estate.

#### **6.2.4. Public agents with incidence in the management of the studied area**

Within the tourist system of the studied area, the last element that must be analyzed corresponds to the public agents involved in the integral management of this space, considering the incidence of the Júcar Hydrographic Confederation and the Millars Consortium. For each one, its main functions in the management of the territory will be reflected.

Thus, in relation to the Hydrographic Confederation of Júcar, an agency belonging to the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food and Environment, whose main functions are:

- The elaboration of the basin's hydrological plan, as well as its follow-up and revision.
  
- The administration and control of the Hydraulic Public Domain. - The administration and control of uses of general interest or those that affect more than one autonomous community.
  
- The project, construction and operation of works carried out with charge to the own funds of the Organization and those that are entrusted to them by the State.
  
- Functions that derive from agreements with autonomous communities, local corporations and other public or private entities, or those signed with individuals.

(Confederación Hidrográfica del Júcar, 2016).

For its part, the Millars Consortium is integrated since March 27, 2007 by policy makers from the three municipalities that share the protected area of the Millars River, together with the Diputació de Castelló and the Valencian Government. The main objective of this entity is to conserve and give value to the Protected Landscape of the Millars River. Its purposes are:

- Conserve, regenerate and increase the ecological and landscape value of the natural habitats of the space.
  
- Conserve and improve the harmonic landscapes generated by the interaction between the natural environment and human activity.
  
- Protect and preserve the cultural heritage present in the area.

- Promote the rational management and sustainable use of environmental and cultural resources, within the framework of a sustainable development strategy.
  
- Promote the social use of the protected space through the study and orderly enjoyment of environmental, landscape and cultural values, promoting sustainable tourism in relation to them.
  
- Integrate the exercise of economic and social land uses, both current and those that may derive from the purposes of the protected area, allowing its evolution according to changes in the economic, social and territorial realities of the surrounding municipalities.
  
- Promote and enhance the sustainable use of resources to guarantee biodiversity.
  
- Achieve and maintain an adequate level of quality and quantity of surface water, avoiding actions that may cause its degradation.
  
- Progressively correct the negative impacts on habitats and landscape, through regeneration and intervention on natural and artificial processes capable of provoking them.
  
- Promote public and private participation in the management of the protected space.
  
- Promote the coordination and concurrence of initiatives between the Generalitat Valenciana, the local and state administrations, the European institutions and the private sector in matters of protected landscape management.
  
- Coordinate and unite efforts for the conservation and improvement of the Protected Landscape of the Millars River Mouth.

(Consorti del Millars, 2018).

Therefore, for the elaboration of any instrument with incidence on the territory, being in

our case the tourist planning, we must consider both entities, which are in charge of managing the use and preservation of this space.

#### **6.2.4.1. The PRUG of the Protected Landscape of the Millars River**

The Master Plan for Use and Management (PRUG) of the protected landscape of the mouth of the Millars River, arises from the need to regulate and control the various negative environmental impacts caused by human action, either by livestock or intense agricultural dynamics, industrial and urban environment around this protected space.

The application of the PRUG is intended to improve aspects related to the administration and management of the protected space, in addition to the management of public use, in accordance with Law 11/1994. Thus, the PRUG sets the framework in which the activities that take place within the limits of the protected area are regulated, especially those related to its status as a protected landscape, such as research and protection or conservation of the natural and cultural heritage.

The PRUG is drawn up within the regulatory framework of decree 79/2005, of April 15, of the Consell, after the declaration of Protected Landscape, and the objectives to be developed in the regime of protection of the space are established.

On the other hand, through articles 37 and 41 of Law 11/1994, of December 27, of the Generalitat, on Protected Natural Spaces of the Valencian Community; and Article 34 of Law 42/2007, of December 13, on Natural Heritage and Biodiversity, establishes the scope, content and legal processing of these plans. The approval of this instrument is made through Decree 169/2012, of November 9, being in force from November 21, 2012. The objectives pursued, taking into account the aforementioned, about its purposes, are:

- Conserve, regenerate and increase the ecological and landscape value of natural and semi-natural habitats.
  
- Conserve and improve the harmonic landscapes generated by the historical interaction between the natural environment and human activity.

- Protect and preserve the architectural and ethnological cultural heritage of the area.
- Promote the rational management and sustainable use of environmental and cultural resources.
- Encourage the social use of space through study and teaching, and the orderly enjoyment of the values it treasures, promoting sustainable tourism.
- Integrate the exercise of the economic and social uses of the land.
- Integrate the uses of renewable and non-renewable natural resources, with special emphasis on water resources.
- Achieve and maintain an adequate level of quantity and quality of surface water avoiding actions that degrade them.
- Progressively correct negative impacts on habitats and landscape through regeneration and intervention on the natural and artificial processes that may provoke them.
- Promote public and private participation in the management of the protected space.
- Promote coordination between public and private, local, provincial, autonomous, state and European entities in relation to the management of the protected space.
- Coordinate and join forces for the conservation and improvement of the protected landscape.

(Conselleria de Infraestructuras, Territorio y Medio Ambiente, 2012).

Considering these objectives, among which is the promotion of sustainable tourism, and in view of the proposal of sustainable strategies, this research should take into account these objectives as they are determined and framed within environmental legislation.



### **6.3. Interviews with public agents that have an impact on the studied area**

In the methodology of this research, a section dedicated to conducting Delphi type interviews is contemplated, to a panel of experts to compare the results obtained from the analysis phase (Document 1, Annex 1). The interviewees belong to the municipalities of Almazora, with the representation of the tourism councilor, and Vila-real, with the councilor of territory and urban mobility of this consistory, and with the head of the Consorci del Millars based in Vila-real.

In the development of the work methodology, interviews with private agents were contemplated, but it is regrettable that despite contact with the people in charge of El Coso de Burriana and La Ermita de Almazora restaurant, it was not possible to complete the interview.

The purpose of applying the interviews, lies in having a complementary assessment on the territorial and tourist reality in the area under study, being also useful for the development of the future proposal of strategies.

These interviews were conducted through the Delphi technique applied to a panel of experts from the local and supramunicipal administrations who have influence and work on this space, all by using the Likert Scale with values of rank 1-5 where:

1. In total disagreement
2. Quite disagree
3. indifferent
4. Quite agree
5. Totally agree

The structure of this interview is based on three clearly differentiated parts. In the first, block 1, the elements of the tourism system will be evaluated, in block 2, some aspects that could result a handicap for sustainable tourism development in this space, will be considered. Finally, in section 3, a series of open-ended questions will be asked (Table 7).

**Table 7:** Results of the interviews Block 1 and 2.

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Vila-real</b>	<b>Almazora</b>	<b>ConSORCI Millars</b>	<b>Average</b>
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<b>Average</b>				
<b>Block 1. Assessment of the elements of the tourist system.</b>	<b>1,9</b>	<b>2,8</b>	<b>4,4</b>	<b>3</b>
The landscape of the Millars estuary is unique.	3	5	5	<b>4,3</b>
Accessibility is adequate	2	3	5	<b>3,3</b>
The planning of public use is adequate.	2	2	5	<b>3</b>
La vigilancia del entorno de Les Goles es acorde con su nivel de protección.	4	2	5	<b>3,7</b>
Since the declaration as a protected landscape, demand has increased.	2	2	5	<b>3</b>
The signaling of the tourist resources is correct.	3	4	5	<b>4</b>
The information service is adequate.	1	3	3	<b>2,3</b>
The local population recognizes the value of the Protected Landscape.	1	2	3	<b>2</b>
The offer of accommodation (hotels, hostels, campsites) is sufficient.	1	1	3	<b>1,7</b>
There are enough marked itineraries.	2	5	5	<b>4</b>

The maintenance and cleaning is adequate.	1	2	5	2,7
Groups with reduced mobility can access without difficulty.	1	2	3	2
There are interpreted itineraries.	2	4	5	3,7
<b>Average</b> <b>Block 2. Aspects considered can be a handicap for sustainable tourism development.</b>	<b>1,3</b>	<b>3,4</b>	<b>2,5</b>	<b>2,4</b>
The delay in the approval of the PRUG.	2	5	1	2,7
The null or limited joint management of this space between the three municipalities.	1	2	1	1,3
The non-structuring of a tourism products offer of a supramunicipal nature.	1	3	3	2,3
The scarce relationship between public and private agents.	1	2	1	1,3
The little known destination brand.	1	5	4	3,3
The high seasonality.	1	5	3	3
The weak offer of regulated accommodation establishments.	1	5	4	3,3
The local population poorly motivated.	1	5	3	3
Weak presence of groups	1	2	1	1,3

aware of the conservation of this protected landscape.				
The lack of a strategic planning instrument for activities related to tourism, leisure and recreation.	2	3	3	2,7
The limited promotion in the tourist offices, as collaborating information points (PIC)	2	1	4	2,3

**Block 1:** Green Background - Favorable aspects / Red Background - Aspects to be improved.

**Block 2:** Green Background - Favorable aspects / Red Background - Aspects to be improved.

**Source:** Own elaboration.

The block 1 of valuation of elements of the tourist system (positive evaluations) has an average of 3 points, which means that it is at the intermediate point, that is, its quality is sufficient but can be improved in general terms.

Regarding block 2 (of negative evaluations), the average of 2.4 indicates that there are deficiencies in terms of sustainable tourism development of the space, which indicates that this aspect must be influenced while at the same time enhancing the positive aspects of the block 1 and defects are corrected.

For block 3, of open questions, a triple table has been prepared with the answers of the three experts who have collaborated in this research (Table 8).

**Table 8:** Answers to open questions, Block 3, Interviews with experts.

**Answers of the councilor of territory and urban mobility of Vila-real**

<b>Are enough awareness campaigns carried out for the local population and visitors?</b>	No, some activities are carried out but they do not generate great interest in general, which is why more should be done.
<b>How would you rate sustainable tourism in the long term?</b>	As something contradictory, tourism today implies frequent visits and, therefore, wear and tear. And in many cases, with the aim of attracting tourism, artificial attractions are sometimes created that force the environment, selling it as a sustainable tourism product and which in reality is harmful to the environment.
<b>What actions do you consider to be fundamental for the sustainable development of tourism activity?</b>	Greater control over the landscape, more assessment campaigns, knowledge and awareness to the population and tourists / visitors and greater control of legality regarding the limitation of public and private domain.
<b>Capacity to have some sustainability certification. (EMAS, ISO 14001 ... .Q)</b>	If the Consorci is interested and can be obtained, yes, although to be successful in tourism it is not necessary to have a certificate.
<b>Degree of investment in the maintenance and enhancement of resources.</b>	The Consorci does not have a tourist focus on space, only environmental, for them the tourist resource limits the environment.
<b>How would you rate the actions of the Consorci del Millars?</b>	I think they meet the objectives in a sufficient way.
<b>If you consider any relevant aspect that has not been contemplated, you can contribute it.</b>	This space has the characteristics to be a green corridor, provided that it is properly cared for and maintained, invested in it and that its natural and real estate is enhanced.

**Answers from the Tourism councilor of Almazora**

<b>Are enough awareness campaigns carried out for the local population and visitors?</b>	Yes, since 2016 when the strategic tourism plan is being implemented.
<b>How would you rate sustainable tourism in the long term?</b>	I think it is somethin necessary, but sustainable is not only thinking about the use of environmental resources, it is also important to consider the passage capacity of the different zones so as not to alter the environment.
<b>What actions do you consider to be fundamental for the sustainable development of tourism activity?</b>	The collaboration between public and private entities.
<b>Capacity to have some sustainability certification. (EMAS, ISO 14001 ... .Q)</b>	I think that we could access to some ISO.
<b>Degree of investment in the maintenance and enhancement of resources.</b>	For three years, quite a lot, although it is true that it would take a significant investment in the elimination of canes and replace them with native plants.
<b>How would you rate the actions of the Consorci del Millars?</b>	Poor, not only in maintenance, but also in the value of the river.
<b>If you consider any relevant aspect that has not been contemplated, you can contribute it.</b>	The need for the involvement of the irrigation community in order to obtain the necessary flow of water, thus improving the fauna and flora of the river, enhancing nature and environment, as well as improving the tourism product.

**Answers from the manager of the Consorci del Millars.**

<b>Are enough awareness campaigns carried out for the local population and visitors?</b>	Yes, currently, the Consorci del Millars prepares a chapter each month, regarding the Protected Landscape within a documentary series where different aspects of interest are addressed.
<b>How would you rate sustainable tourism in the long term?</b>	We do not carry out tourist activities.
<b>What actions do you consider to be fundamental for the sustainable development of tourism activity?</b>	To promote ornithological photographic tourism and in this way to raise awareness among visitors, as well as school visits of the municipalities of La Plana.
<b>Capacity to have some sustainability certification. (EMAS, ISO 14001 ... .Q)</b>	We believe that we could opt for some certification, but this would entail allocating more funds, enhancing vigilance, a greater presence in maintenance, etc. what is difficult at the moment.
<b>Degree of investment in the maintenance and enhancement of resources.</b>	Annually, the Consorci invests € 124,000 in the maintenance and vigilance of the Protected Landscape.
<b>How would you rate the actions of the Consorci del Millars?</b>	Positive, in addition to each year are improving, with the eradication of illegal discharges, social and environmental awareness, putting value on the landscape, etc.
<b>If you consider any relevant aspect that has not been contemplated, you can contribute it.</b>	Financing the maintenance and enhancement of these natural spaces by the different administrations

**Source:** Own elaboration.

The answers of Block 3 (open questions) will be taken into consideration the recommendations of the representatives of the public entities of Almazora, Vila-real and the Consorci del Millars, in order to establish the strategies, so that these and their objectives revolve around to correct the negative aspects and enhance the positive viewed in blocks 1 and 2, maintaining the main objective of this research to promote the

sustainable tourism development of this protected natural space through a planning proposal.

#### 6.4. Integrated tourist diagnosis

This phase of the investigation is articulated in a diagnosis through the SWOT technique, it is very useful to improve the competitive position of the destination, because it is an essential instrument for the formulation of objectives, strategies and programs that will compose them. That is why we must act in the search for efficiency, taking advantage of our strengths, minimizing weaknesses and taking advantage of possible opportunities, facing external threats.

For this reason, it is essential for the convenient development of this research, to know from an integrated perspective the situation of the area under study. This will facilitate the setting of objectives, as well as the proposal of sustainable tourism development strategies on the protected area of the Millars River, so the factors determined by the following SWOT matrix must be taken into account (Table 9).

**Table 9:** SWOT matrix of the territory of the mouth of the Millars River.

STRENGTHS	OPPORTUNITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The declaration of the mouth of the Millars as a protected space through the figure of Protected Landscape.</li> <li>- Sole Protected Landscape declared in the province of Castellón</li> <li>- The maintenance of urban services and infrastructures.</li> <li>- Terrestrial communications network.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The coastal / river greenway project.</li> <li>- The current economic context.</li> <li>- Possible diversification of the offer.</li> <li>- The planning of public use in protected natural spaces.</li> <li>- Coordination between administrations for compliance with environmental regulations: Urban Wastewater, Birds Directive, Natura 2000 Network.</li> </ul>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- High biodiversity.</li> <li>- Ecological connectivity.</li> <li>- The PATIVEL.</li> <li>- Wet areas "Les Goles".</li> <li>- Restoration and gastronomy.</li> <li>- The coordination between the regional, provincial and local administration: Consorci del Millars.</li> <li>- The local tourism policy (Sustainable Tourism).</li> <li>- Tourist resources throughout the protected area.</li> <li>- Guided visits to the Protected Landscape of the Millars.</li> <li>- School visits of the surrounding municipalities.</li> <li>- Videos on the Consorci website</li> <li>- Photography contests.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Application of the SDGs.</li> <li>- Use of ICT.</li> <li>- The help lines of the Agència Valenciana de Turisme</li> <li>- Communication infrastructures: Castelló airport.</li> <li>- Profile and new trends and preferences of tourists.</li> <li>- The location in emerging destinations.</li> <li>- Greater access to information by demand.</li> <li>- Sustainable tourism.</li> <li>- Coordination between tourist agents.</li> <li>- The sustainability certifications.</li> <li>- The new Law of Tourism, Leisure and Hospitality of the Valencian Community, in which it considers the territory as a tourist asset.</li> <li>- The involvement of the irrigation community in order to obtain the necessary flow of water, thus improving the fauna and flora of the river.</li> <li>- Possibility of reaching potential tourists with interests in alternative tourism.</li> </ul>
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WEAKNESSES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The low participation of all social agents and civil society.</li> <li>- Delay in the approval of the Public Use Plan PUP.</li> <li>- Poor beach services.</li> <li>- The information given in the Tourist-Info.</li> <li>- Poor connection through public transport.</li> <li>- There are no accessibility plans for people with reduced mobility.</li> <li>- The effects of "Port de Castelló".</li> <li>- Lack of quality certificates and environmental management.</li> <li>- The regressive coastal dynamics.</li> <li>- Lack of interpretation centers.</li> <li>- Scarce diversification of the regulated offer.</li> <li>- Lack of Tourist Business Associations.</li> <li>- Low accommodation regulated respect to secondary residences.</li> <li>- Reduction of some types of accommodation (Hotels).</li> <li>- Accommodations managed by small</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The concentration of demand in the summer season (Seasonality).</li> <li>- Lack of awareness for sustainability.</li> <li>- Non-developed infrastructures according to demand expectations.</li> <li>- Presence of infrastructures in nearby areas.</li> <li>- Climate change.</li> <li>- The scarce environmental education of the local population.</li> <li>- Existence of other nearby tourist areas.</li> <li>- The state policy on tourism.</li> <li>- Tourist peak of sun / beach and musical festivals in the area.</li> </ul>

<p>and medium enterprises.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Non-existence of structured products.</li> <li>- Lack of interpreted routes and itineraries.</li> <li>- No promotion of local crafts.</li> <li>- Scarce / No use of ICT.</li> <li>- Lack of Brand.</li> <li>- No assistance to fairs.</li> <li>- Lack of Promotion.</li> <li>- Lack of structured local marketing plans.</li> <li>- Tourist brands and base-line of the municipalities.</li> <li>- Weak funding for the maintenance and enhancement of the protected landscape by the different administrations</li> </ul>	
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**Source:** Own elaboration.

To determine the diagnosis of the situation through the SWOT method, we will take into account a series of items related to the analysis carried out on the basic aspects, case of territorial planning and urban planning, general infrastructure and services, environment and specific elements of the tourist system that are specified in the tourist resources, the offer of accommodation and complementary offer, the degree of commercialization and the tourist management. These items are structured in the previous matrix to define the current situation of the space under study in each section to determine their strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities for integrated and

sustainable tourism development, which will make it easier to establish objectives and the proposal of sustainable tourism strategies in the area.

Thus, in the first place, we can see a strong disconnection between public and private agents and civil society, because there is no interaction or coordination between them, being the public entities those that place the greatest emphasis on the protection of space and its development from a sustainability perspective, meeting the demands of higher organisms that impose the guidelines of action for the preservation of the space.

Regarding infrastructure, we can find positive aspects (Airport, terrestrial communications) whose can be exploited, and negative (Accessibility, ports, public transport) that can be minimized or corrected with a correct intervention, creating new connections from a sustainable and ecological point of view to maintain and protect the space.

In the environmental aspect, there is a dichotomy between the possibility of taking advantage of the protection elements offered by the NATIVEL, the Natura 2000 Network, the Birds Directive or the SDGs to promote sustainable tourism in the protected area of the Millars River, and at the same time to minimize or stop climate change or the regressive dynamics of the coast that, together with other artificial ones such as the southern extension of El Port de Castelló, affect and accelerate the former, posing a serious threat to the conservation and maintenance of the protected area.

As for the elements of the tourism system, tourism resources have the potential to be put into sustainable value and generate product dynamics. For its part about the offer of accommodation and marketing, we find a poor use of these elements, so it is essential to adapt to the new trends and preferences of visitors and act in a line that allows to take advantage of and encourage the use of ICT, whose suppose a clear opportunity for a tourist development with the intention to differentiate, because there is a high degree of competition in the area in the tourism of sun and beach.

Finally, as regards tourism management, there is a need to promote the development of public-private corporations that manage and guarantee the correct use of the land. In addition, establish a plan for training, awareness and local participation in search of the

identity of belonging to the territory to promote the correct use of natural and landscape heritage and create a link between the protected area and the population, for their future conservation, protection and tourist exploitation from a sustainable and balanced point of view.

The diagnosis shows the urgent need to strengthen the links between the population and public and private entities, thus generating, through the use of aid and external financing, the implementation of a policy of sustainable tourism development, maintaining and respecting the level of protection in search of minimizing the seasonality of sun and beach tourism through the creation of an alternative tourist network of nature and landscape unusual in this sector of the Mediterranean coast through the promotion and improvement of tourism offer in the area.

### **6.5. Specific objectives**

For the definition of the specific objectives, the result obtained from the diagnosis through the SWOT technique will be considered, in order to specify the needs of the area under study for its sustainable development and its capacity as a potential space to generate tourism product dynamics of nature and sports; as well as the interviews applied to the panel of experts.

- **Objectives about the territorial planning, infrastructures and the environment:**
  - Sensitize and give knowledge of the protected area to the civil population and private companies in the area.
  - Improve accessibility from the municipalities.
  - Strengthen territorial planning.
  - Transverse the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).
  - Strengthen internal connectivity in the studied area.

- Carry out load capacity studies.
- **Specific objectives about the elements of the tourism system:**
  - Enhance the natural and cultural heritage.
  - Increase the awareness of visitors about the values and sustainable use of this space.
  - Articulate tourism resources from a supramunicipal perspective.
  - Create differentiated products.
  - Strengthen public-private cooperation in tourism development.
  - Promote business initiatives linked to sustainable tourism use.
  - Take advantage of ICT to facilitate sustainability.

## **7. STRATEGIES FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT**

With the proposal of strategies and their subsequent action programs, it is intended to meet all the objectives, general and specific, raised above, in addition to integrating in them the needs raised in the diagnosis through the SWOT matrix, also considering the results of the interviews.

The proposal is structured in two strategies, which from the perspective of sustainability, the first has a transversal nature, and the second strategy develops the elements of the tourism system from the point of view of the product. The programs are articulated in development actions, in which their short-term execution priority has been considered (S.T) (1-2 years); medium term (M.T) (3-4 years); and long-term (L.T) (5-6 years).

This is intended to give the space a greater visualization, first for the local civil society,

because it is the one that has to see in its protected space a tourism opportunity; and in second place to the tourists who visit the territory to generate in them the interest to enjoy an enriching experience.

### **7.1 Territory sustainability strategy**

- **Infrastructure program:**

- Define the real load capacity of the space as a tool for measuring and controlling visitor flows for optimal and sustainable use of the protected space. (S.T)
- Create access for all types of users through ramps for groups with reduced mobility, bicycles Etc. (S.T)
- Invest in greater control of the emission of solid waste in the space through greater vigilance and sanctions for non-compliance with current laws. (M.T)
- Improvement, adaptation, lighting and signaling of all accesses to the routes of the protected area by road and on foot from Almazora, Burriana and Vila-Real (L.T)
- Promote the tertiary treatment of wastewater in WWTPs (EDAR) of the three localities and take advantage of them for agricultural use with the purpose of releasing water for public use from the irrigation community to emanate it over the riverbed and be able to enjoy in the space of an ecological flow improving the flora, fauna. (L.T)

- **Awareness program:**

- Carrying out awareness-raising seminars aimed exclusively at private tourism agents to generate interest and active participation, in addition to obtaining funding and real action on the actions of sustainable product strategies and joint cooperation with public entities. (S.T)

- Carry out a greater number of informative and awareness-raising sessions for the local population and visitors about the protected landscape, its potential, its projection, planning and importance in the territory. (M.T)
  - Carry out a marketing plan jointly between private and public companies of the three populations, also creating its own brand of space that distinguishes it from similar ones and makes it unique. (M.T)
  - Promotion of tools such as GeoCaching (GeoMillars), as a platform to increase knowledge and appreciation of the Protected Landscape, encouraging in turn the use of new technologies on a natural space. (M.T)
  - Enable a volunteer program for the planting of autochthonous vegetation and the elimination of invasive species. (L.T)
- **Program for the use of ICT:**
    - Promote, through the different social networks, the different events, their promotion, their diffusion, create contests Etc. Seeking, in addition, the active citizen participation through surveys and participation in forums and publications. (S.T)
    - Launch a mobile application with the routes and the different resources of the space, as well as points of interest, useful information, Etc. (S.T)
    - Create plates with QR reading in the different resources to access a historical and detailed explanation of the resource. (S.T)
    - Training through official courses for tourism professionals in the knowledge and use of ICTs applicable to the space and mentioned above. (S.T)
  - **Territorial planning program:**



- Negotiate an ecological flow with the Irrigators Association. (S.T)
- Categorize the space as an ecological river corridor to awaken interest in the local population and therefore the visitor / tourist. (S.T)
- Public-private separation, enabling roads for public use in private spaces inside the protected space. (M.T)
- Achieve sufficient public and private investment for an optimal space management. (M.T)
- Promote the drafting and approval of the Public Use Plan (PUP) of the space. (L.T)

## **7.2. Strategies for sustainable tourism products**

- **Product of nature tourism:**

- Increase the schedule of guided and interpreted visits. (S.T)
- Create a regime of guided visits for bird watching. (M.T)
- Creation of an interpretation center near the protected Landscape, where all the necessary information about the place is included and where the staff is qualified to provide it. (L.T)

- **Product of active tourism:**

- Prepare a study on the tourist profile which demands the active tourism product to know what type of offer can be provided in the area. (S.T)

- Creation of a public-private entity for the planning, management and control of active tourism activities. (S.T)
- Organization of sporting events on foot, annually or biannually. (M.T)
- Develop a system of indicators to determine the impacts (sociocultural, economic and environmental) of sporting events that are organized over the space. (M.T)
- **Routes and itineraries:**
  - Apply a Geographic Information System (GIS) for the design and management of routes and itineraries to know the possible environmental impact about the use of the route, history and relevant spatial information about this territory. (S.T)
  - Create an inventory of routes, marked and suitable for public use both for walking and cycling. (S.T)
  - Prepare an interpretation plan of the tourist resources located in the routes and itineraries. (M.T)
  - Enable a greenway that covers the area under study and which links with other roads and adjacent routes. (L.T)

## **8. CONCLUSIONS**

It can be determined that what is established in the starting hypothesis (Section 2) of this research is entirely feasible, viable and valid, after the elaboration and analysis of each section, especially with the articulation of the actions that make up the strategies to promote the sustainable tourism development.

Therefore, for the elaboration of this research work, we have tried to maintain coherence at all times on the bases of sustainability and sustainable tourism

development in the Protected Landscape of the Millars River. All this with the purpose that the development of tourism activity can generate positive synergies in the surrounding populations in general terms and in the area under study in a concrete way, providing them with a new tourism model in accordance with the Master Plan for Use and Management (PRUG).

For this reason, this study area has been selected, where a proposal for sustainable tourism planning has been drawn up in order to promote new tourism dynamics that attract new demand models and that allow the generation of a sustainable and quality offer. This offer will generate a positive projection on the territory, on the one hand if private and public entities work from the perspective of promoting its orderly growth, and on the other hand if they can create importance on it, first of all on the local population, which deserves, because it is the only one in the province and for its capacity to generate new tourist flows on this space.

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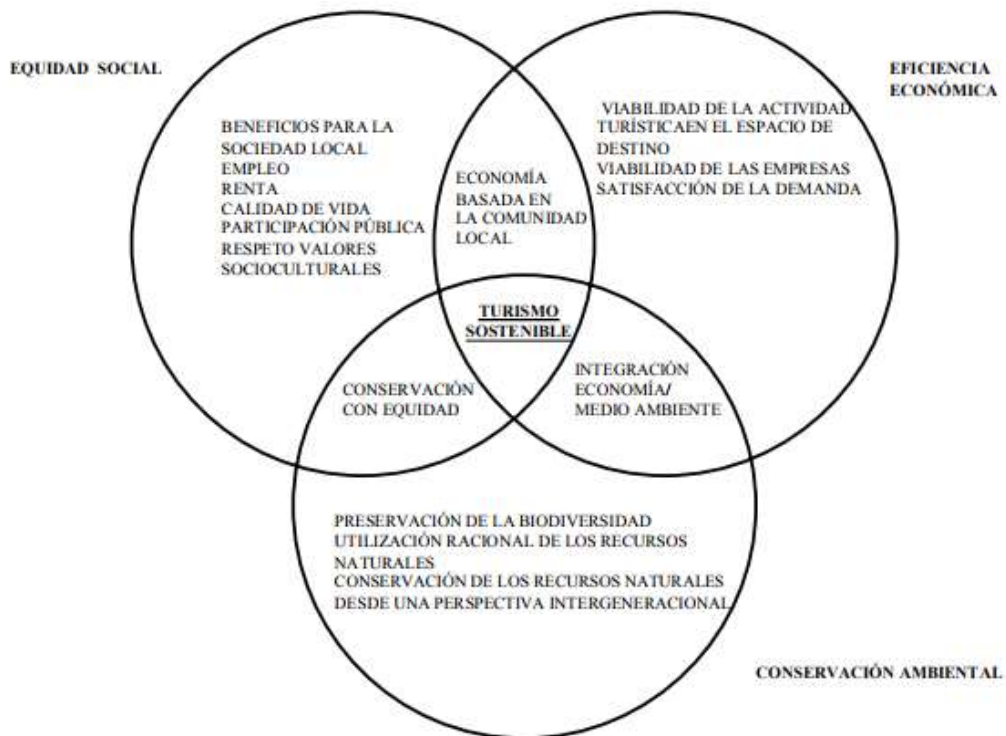
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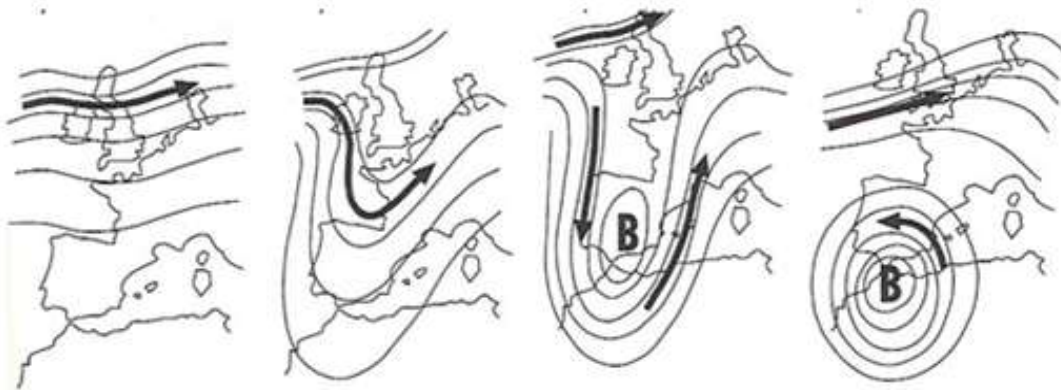
## 10. ANNEX I

**Figure 2:** Concept of sustainable tourism.



**Source:** (Vera, J.F. 2001) from (Hall, 2000) and (ETB, 1991).

**Figure 5:** Phases in the formation of a Cold Drop.



**Source:** Las Provincias (Rivera, 2012).




**Figure 6:** Risk of flooding of the Millars estuary.



Peligrosidad por Inundación

**Peligrosidad 1**

 Peligrosidad 1. Frecuencia alta (25 años) y calado Alto (>0.8 m)

**Peligrosidad 2**

 Peligrosidad 2. Frecuencia media (100 años) y calado alto (>0.8 m)


**Peligrosidad 3**

 Peligrosidad 3. Frecuencia alta (25 años) y calado bajo (<0.8 m)


**Peligrosidad 4**

 Peligrosidad 4. Frecuencia media (100 años) y calado bajo (<0.8 m)


**Peligrosidad 5**

 Peligrosidad 5. Frecuencia baja (500 años) y calado alto (>0.8 m)

**Peligrosidad 6**

 Peligrosidad 6. Frecuencia baja (500 años) y calado bajo (<0.8 m)

**Peligrosidad Geomorfológica**

 Peligrosidad Geomorfológica

**Source:** Cartoweb and Own elaboration.

**Figure 8:** Technical sheet of the Vila-Real water treatment plant.

<p><b>Línea de Agua</b></p> <p><b>PRETRATAMIENTO</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Reja de gruesos</li> <li>Reja de finos</li> <li>✓ Tamizado</li> <li>Tanque Homogeneización</li> <li>✓ Desarenador</li> <li>✓ Desengrasador</li> </ul> <p><b>TRATAMIENTO PRIMARIO</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Físico-Químico</li> <li>✓ Decantación</li> </ul> <p><b>TRATAMIENTO SECUNDARIO</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aireación prolongada</li> <li>✓ Fangos activados</li> <li>Lagunaje</li> <li>Lagunaje aireado</li> <li>Lecho de turbas</li> <li>Lecho bacteriano</li> <li>Biodiscos</li> <li>Biocilindros</li> <li>Eliminación nitrógeno</li> <li>Eliminación fósforo</li> </ul>	<p><b>TRATAMIENTO Terciario</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coagulación Floculación</li> <li>Infiltración - Percolación</li> <li>Filtración</li> <li>Ultrafiltración</li> <li>Ósmosis inversa</li> </ul> <p><b>DESINFECCIÓN</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ultravioletas</li> <li>Cloración</li> </ul>	<p><b>Línea de fangos</b></p> <p><b>ESPEADOR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Gravedad</li> <li>Flotación</li> <li>Mecánico</li> </ul> <p><b>ESTABILIZACIÓN</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Aerobia</li> <li>Anaerobia</li> <li>Estabilización con cal</li> </ul> <p><b>DESHIDRATACIÓN</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Centrífuga</li> <li>✓ Filtro</li> <li>Eras de secado</li> <li>Filtro prensa</li> <li>Mesa filtrante</li> </ul> <p><b>POST-TRATAMIENTO LODOS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compostaje</li> <li>Secado Térmico</li> <li>Incineración</li> </ul> <p><b>Generación Eléctrica</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cogeneración</li> <li>Placas solares</li> </ul>
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**Source:** EDAR Gva (2018).

**Figure 9:** Technical sheet of the Burriana water treatment plant.

<p><b>Línea de Agua</b></p> <p>PRETRATAMIENTO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reja de gruesos</li> <li>Reja de finos</li> <li>✓ Tamizado</li> <li>Tanque Homogeneización</li> <li>✓ Desarenador</li> <li>✓ Desengrasador</li> </ul> <p>TRATAMIENTO PRIMARIO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Físico-Químico</li> <li>✓ Decantación</li> </ul> <p>TRATAMIENTO SECUNDARIO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aireación prolongada</li> <li>✓ Fangos activados</li> <li>Lagunaje</li> <li>Lagunaje aireado</li> <li>Lecho de turbas</li> <li>Lecho bacteriano</li> <li>Biodiscos</li> <li>Biocilindros</li> <li>Eliminación nitrógeno</li> <li>Eliminación fósforo</li> </ul>	<p>TRATAMIENTO TERCARIO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coagulación Floculación</li> <li>Infiltración - Percolación</li> <li>Filtración</li> <li>Ultrafiltración</li> <li>Ósmosis inversa</li> </ul> <p>DESINFECCIÓN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ultravioletas</li> <li>✓ Cloración</li> </ul>	<p><b>Línea de fangos</b></p> <p>ESPESADOR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Gravedad</li> <li>Flotación</li> <li>Mecánico</li> </ul> <p>ESTABILIZACIÓN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Aerobia</li> <li>Anaerobia</li> <li>Estabilización con cal</li> </ul> <p>DESHIDRATACIÓN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Centrífuga</li> <li>✓ Filtro</li> <li>Eras de secado</li> <li>Filtro prensa</li> <li>Mesa filtrante</li> </ul> <p>POST-TRATAMIENTO LODOS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compostaje</li> <li>Secado Térmico</li> <li>Incineración</li> </ul> <p><b>Generación Eléctrica</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cogeneración</li> <li>Placas solares</li> </ul>
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**Source:** EDAR Gva (2018).

**Figure 10:** Technical sheet of the Almazora water treatment plant.

<p><b>Línea de Agua</b></p> <p>PRETRATAMIENTO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Reja de gruesos</li> <li>Reja de finos</li> <li>✓ Tamizado</li> <li>✓ Tanque Homogeneización</li> <li>✓ Desarenador</li> <li>✓ Desengrasador</li> </ul> <p>TRATAMIENTO PRIMARIO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Físico-Químico</li> <li>✓ Decantación</li> </ul> <p>TRATAMIENTO SECUNDARIO</p> <p>Aireación prolongada</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Fangos activados</li> <li>Lagunaje</li> <li>Lagunaje aireado</li> <li>Lecho de turbas</li> <li>Lecho bacteriano</li> <li>Biodiscos</li> <li>Biocilindros</li> <li>✓ Eliminación nitrógeno</li> <li>✓ Eliminación fósforo</li> </ul>	<p>TRATAMIENTO Terciario</p> <p>Coagulación Floculación</p> <p>Infiltración - Percolación</p> <p>Filtración</p> <p>Ultrafiltración</p> <p>Ósmosis inversa</p> <p>DESINFECCIÓN</p> <p>Ultravioletas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Cloración</li> </ul>	<p><b>Línea de fangos</b></p> <p>ESPEADOR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Gravedad</li> <li>Flotación</li> <li>Mecánico</li> </ul> <p>ESTABILIZACIÓN</p> <p>Aerobia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Anaerobia</li> <li>Estabilización con cal</li> </ul> <p>DESHIDRATACIÓN</p> <p>Centrífuga</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Filtro</li> <li>Eras de secado</li> <li>Filtro prensa</li> <li>Mesa filtrante</li> </ul> <p>POST-TRATAMIENTO LODOS</p> <p>Compostaje</p> <p>Secado Térmico</p> <p>Incineración</p> <p>Generación Eléctrica</p> <p>Cogeneración</p> <p>Placas solares</p>
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**Source:** EDAR Gva (2018).

**Document 1:** Interview with private agents of the surroundings of the Protected Landscape of the Millars River:

Estimado señor o señora:

Juan Safont Femenía estudiante del Grado en Turismo de la UJI. En estos momentos estoy elaborando mi Trabajo de Final de Grado: “Desarrollo sostenible en el paraje natural de la desembocadura del Millars”, dirigido por el Profesor. Dr. Juan Bautista Ferreres Bonfill.

El objetivo TFG es fomentar el desarrollo sostenible del turismo en la desembocadura del río Millars y en él se contempla la realización de una serie de entrevistas a los agentes sociales del área de estudio. La entrevista consta de dos bloques de preguntas, el primero dirigido a valorar los elementos del sistema turístico y el segundo de prospectiva para determinar el futuro del desarrollo turístico.

Usted, ha sido seleccionado/a, por su experiencia y conocimientos, para formar el panel de expertos.

Agradeciendo de antemano su participación, le ruego remita el presente cuestionario a la siguiente dirección de correo electrónico: **al314355@uji.es**

Ante cualquier duda, puede contactar con el número teléfono: 637936441, o el número de teléfono del Prof. Dr. Juan Bautista Ferreres Bonfill: 964 728527 o remitiéndole un mensaje a la dirección: [ferreres@uji.es](mailto:ferreres@uji.es)

Sus aportaciones serán tratadas con estricta confidencialidad y solamente utilizadas para este fin estrictamente académico.

Señale con una con una escala de 1 a 5 según su grado de acuerdo o de desacuerdo.

1. En total desacuerdo
2. Bastante en desacuerdo

3. Ni de acuerdo ni en desacuerdo
4. Bastante de acuerdo
5. Totalmente de acuerdo

### **Bloque 1. Valoración de los elementos del sistema turístico**

El paisaje de la desembocadura del Millars es singular

La accesibilidad es adecuada

La planificación del uso público es adecuada

La vigilancia del entorno de les Goles es acorde con su nivel de protección

Desde la declaración como paisaje protegido se ha incrementado la demanda

La señalización de los recursos turísticos es correcta

El servicio de información es adecuado

La población local reconoce el valor del Paisaje Protegido

La oferta de alojamiento (hoteles, hostales, campings) es suficiente.

Existen suficientes itinerarios señalizados

El mantenimiento y limpieza es adecuado.

Los colectivos con movilidad reducida pueden acceder sin dificultad

Existen itinerarios interpretados

## **Bloque 2. Aspectos que considera pueden suponer un hándicap para el desarrollo turístico sostenible**

El retraso en la aprobación del PUP

La nula gestión conjunta de este espacio entre los tres municipios que lo conforman.

La no estructuración de una oferta de productos turísticos de carácter supramunicipal

La escasa relación entre los agentes públicos y privados

La marca-destino poco conocida.

La elevada estacionalidad

La débil oferta de establecimientos de alojamiento reglado.

La población local escasamente motivada.

Débil presencia de colectivos sensibilizados en la conservación de este paisaje protegido.

La falta de un instrumento de planificación estratégica de las actividades vinculadas al turismo, ocio y recreación.

La escasa promoción en las oficinas de turismo

### **Bloque 3. Preguntas abiertas:**

¿Se realizan suficientes campañas de sensibilización a la población local y a los visitantes?

¿Cómo valoraría el turismo sostenible a largo plazo?

¿Qué acciones considera que son fundamentales para el desarrollo sostenible de la actividad turística?



Capacidad para disponer de alguna certificación de sostenibilidad. (EMAS, ISO 14001....Q)

Grado de inversión en el mantenimiento y puesta en valor de los recursos.

¿Cómo calificaría las actuaciones del Consorci del Millars?

Si considera algún aspecto relevante que no se ha contemplado puede aportarlo.

**Gracias por su colaboración.**

**Source:** Own elaboration.

