

New report shows the critical situation of water in Donana, WWF warns

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Credit: Jorge SIERRA / WWF-Spain

The health of Spain's Doñana National Park is fully dependent on water. But the aquifer that feeds Doñana's marshes is drying up at an alarming speed, and its deterioration is affecting rivers, marshes, lagoons, as well

as the plants and animals that make Doñana unique.

This is the main conclusion of a [report](#) that WWF has published today. With the help of top researchers, the report gathers most of the available scientific information about the state of water in this World Heritage site.

The report finds that Doñana's [aquifer](#) would need between 30 and 60 years to recover completely from the current overexploitation. That would first require strong measures to be taken to end illegal and unsustainable water use, the report warns.

Hundreds of thousands of birds that are flying from Europe to spend the winter in Spain's Doñana National Park will find the marshes almost empty of water.

The Spanish government admits in official reports that the huge underground water deposit that feeds the marshes has suffered a dramatic decline since the 1970s. Right now, water governance around Doñana is so weak that the amount of water extracted each year from the aquifer is unknown.

The report published today by WWF is one of the most thorough scientific analyses ever made about the state of [water](#) in Doñana, and the effects that the lack of this precious resource is having on ecosystems.

For instance, it has been noticed that the populations of wintering ducks that rely on a healthy marsh –such as the endangered marbled teal- are declining.

Temporary lagoons, one of the natural features that makes Doñana unique in Europe, are drying up at an appalling rate. As a result, 40 per cent of the species of dragonflies that lived in Doñana, associated to

those lagoons, have been lost.

Provided by WWF

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