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## We can't afford to take our countryside for granted – Environment Minister Jose Herrera

Kevin Schembri Orland

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Last update: about 9 months ago



Environment Minister Jose Herrera said today that Malta cannot afford to take the countryside for granted.

He delivered a speech during the closing conference on the LIFE+ Natura project for Buskett, aimed at stabilising soils so as to protect present Annex 1 habitats. The project focused on the Buskett Woodland area. The project area is a Natura 2000 classified site, and is an important bird sanctuary, an area of high ecological importance, and a national monument protected by the Cultural Heritage Act.

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Buskett and the surrounding area is also important as it is a concentration roosting point for migratory birds of prey, many of which are of international importance.

This project, which is part funded by the European Union Life+ programme, aims to protect and enhance the habitats of this largest semi-natural woodland in Malta by regenerating its watercourse, protecting the stability of the ground on its valley sides and removing the alien species that are harming habitats. The works which were carried out by the end of the project included the rehabilitation and construction of about 80 retaining walls, the reconstruction and re-instatement of 49 arch buttresses which span part of the watercourse, the removal of alien plants which are competing with native species and the planting of 3,300 indigenous trees, grown from seeds or cuttings deriving from local stocks, which will extend the existing woodland coverage by almost 38,000m<sup>2</sup>.

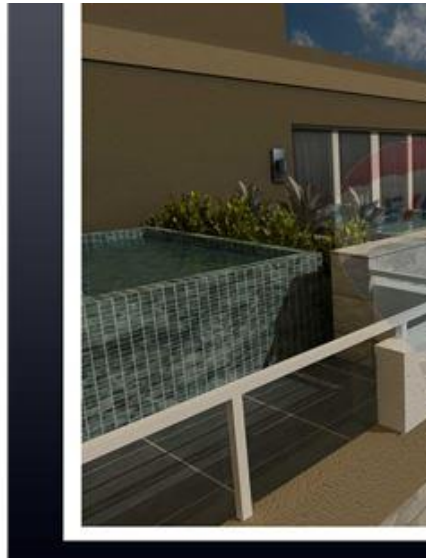
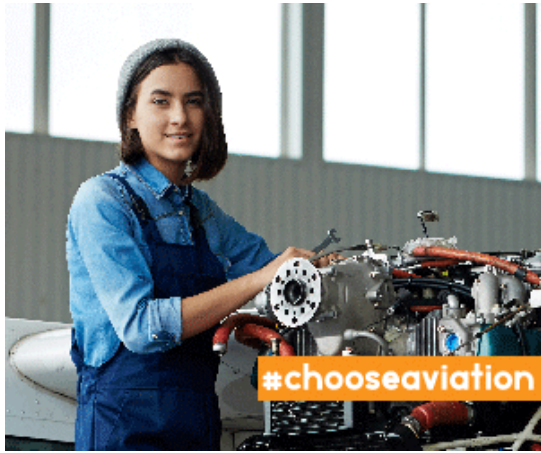
Minister Herrera, during his speech, highlighted the importance of protecting biodiversity and the natural environment which helps contribute to sustainable growth.

He said that government is striving to conserve important habitats and species.

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quickmick408 • 9 months ago

I think he's right, but he couldn't give fcuk. He needs to go down to the PA with a bullhorn and keep shouting till they take it on board

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Camillu S. • 9 months ago

More bla bla but no action. Minister with no guts or power to act.

^ | v • Share



s camilleri • 9 months ago

U ejja, come on . This man must be joking. His sister's partner instigated and pushed a change in the rural policy that allows the development of a residential unit if there is the ruins of an old room (even if the ruins are no more and you can prove its past existence from an old map). Policies designed to decimate the countryside thanks to a close relative of the Environment Minister.

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Andrew Camilleri • 9 months ago

Crocodile tears Mr Minister. Unless you bolt the door very tightly and securely the horse will continue i

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**John Vella** • 9 months ago

That's good news, thanks to Dr Herrera. Maybe it's time to start work at Zonqor park, the national park that was promised since 2015.

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**Paul Newman** • 9 months ago

Planning Authority take note of what this minister is saying please or he is just a voice in the desert?

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**rcamilleri** • 9 months ago

The minister should convince Joseph Muscat about his views if he really believes what he says. End the hypocrisy.

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