



HM Government of Gibraltar

Ministry of Health, the Environment,
Energy and Climate Change

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Minister for Environment at High Level Meetings in Geneva

Minister for Environment and Climate Change, Dr John Cortes has just returned from high level meetings in Geneva, Switzerland. Dr Cortes was accompanied by Prof Daniella Tilbury, who will shortly take up the post of Vice Chancellor of the University of Gibraltar, in her current role as adviser to the UN on Sustainability. The visit follows on from last year's workshop on Sustainability organised in Gibraltar by Prof Tilbury and the Department of the Environment.

The first meeting, at the Palais des Nations, the United Nations Geneva HQ, was with the Chief of Environment for Europe and Sustainable Development Section of UNECE (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe) Zaal Lomtadze, together with members of his team.

Dr Cortes also held a meeting with Inger Anderson, the Director-General of IUCN, the World Conservation Union, together with Enrique Lahman, Global Director for Union Development. This visit was of particular interest to Dr Cortes, as he has worked with IUCN for several decades and recently achieved membership of the Department of the Environment to follow from the membership by GONHS (the Gibraltar Ornithological & Natural History Society) that he had previously spearheaded.

Inger Anderson was familiar with nature conservation work in Gibraltar and was impressed with the progress being made in environmental policy on the Rock. Following the meeting, the Director-General tweeted:

"Plsd to meet Minister of Env @cortes_john #Gibraltar. Bravo#Gibraltar 4 great progress on #conservation"

A third meeting was held with Jan Dusik, Director of the Regional Office for Europe of UNEP, the United Nations Environment Programme, and Wondwosen Kibret, UNEP's Programme Officer, for Civil Society.



The meetings served to strengthen Gibraltar's international links and credentials. Dr Cortes showcased the huge progress made in environmental governance in Gibraltar over the last three years. He also explained plans for future greening of Gibraltar including cleaner power generation, nature conservation and waste disposal. There was a great deal of support for and interest in Gibraltar from all the different institutions, with future collaboration and participation in initiatives being discussed and planned.

Dr John Cortes stated, "It was a hugely successful and motivating visit. The reception that Gibraltar received from both the UN Agencies and the IUCN was tremendous. I was very proud that these entities, the top in the world in Environment and Sustainability, were already informed of the work we are doing here. I was most encouraged. We are now planning a number of initiatives which will benefit Gibraltar and its international standing further. It's given me a great boost of energy to continue on this journey."