

EL TIEMPO



The San Alberto River in Cesar Province Will Be Reclaimed Using a Biotechnical System

For the first time, the Department seeks to optimize the water quality of this tributary.

PHOTO BY: CORPOCESAR

LO **LUDYS OVALLE JÁCOME**
June 23, 2021, 03:20 P.M.

The high levels of pollution from sewage dumping, as well as from the agro-industrial activities that are carried out in the cultivated areas, are factors that deteriorate the San Alberto River (South Cesar Province).

The tributary is a symbol of life for the more than 20,000 inhabitants of this municipality and represents the livelihood of many families in this locality.

According to Eduardo Lopez, CORPOCESAR's Environmental Sanitation Coordinator, "municipal wastewater that comes from the homes, bathrooms, laundry wash, gardens, showers and from some farmers in the region are polluting the river."

To improve the environmental conditions of this flow, the Regional Autonomous Corporation of Cesar Province (**CORPOCESAR**) **bet on a pilot project based on bioremediation (EBD Tech), a biotechnological process that attacks the pollutants that affect the natural condition of this river.** "Metallic devices (similar to a coin) were placed around the oxidation lagoon and they function as magnets and are activated by satellite to decompose the organic matter that pollutes the river," highlighted López.

It is the first time that this type of project has been carried out in Cesar and so far, the impact has been positive.

"It was determined that the most critical stretch of contamination occurs in the oxidation lagoons located in the municipality of San Alberto where sewage is dumped. This affects between 80 to 85 percent of the river's length," said Yolanda Martínez Manjarrez, Director of CORPOCESAR.

“

Municipal wastewater that comes from the homes, bathrooms, laundry wash, gardens, showers and from some farmers in the region are polluting the river.

”

According to CORPOCESAR, the laboratory results obtained during the different phases of this project have allowed the domestic wastewater treatment system in this town to work efficiently.

"The odors from the lagoon are controlled and there was a change in the pollutant load, which indicates that the quality of the water that is discharged into the river was improved," the official said.

The project ended recently and had an approximate cost of 500 million pesos (US\$133,000) and was financed employing resources from the General Royalties System (SGR) (Sistema General de Regalías (SGR)).

Given the results obtained, it can be replicated in other lagoon treatment systems in the region that are not working properly, such as Agustín Codazzi, San José de Oriente (La Paz), Manaure, Aguachica, El Paso, Valledupar among other locations.

“

Metallic devices (similar to a coin) were placed around the oxidation lagoon and they function as magnets and are activated by satellite to decompose the organic matter that pollutes the river.

”

"The devices continue to act optimally and their system requires maintenance by the municipality to continue analyzing the wastewater treatment results. It is important that they continue to finance this type of project," Martínez pointed out.

Ludys Ovalle Jácome
Special Envoy for El Tiempo
Valledupar, Cesar, Colombia

Link to original publication in Spanish:
<https://www.eltiempo.com/colombia/otras-ciudades/con-sistema-biotecnologico-recuperaran-rio-san-alberto-en-el-cesar-598216>