



## MEETING WITH IBONE BENGOTXEA

Yesterday, on **October 8**, the citizens' platform **Guggenheim Urdaibai Stop** held a meeting with **Ibone Bengoetxea**, First Deputy Lehendakari and Minister of Culture and Language Policy.

We are grateful that the meeting, which the platform requested, was granted.

Our objectives were clear:

- First, to give a **brief introduction of the platform**, clearly stating our goal: to **definitively abandon the Guggenheim Urdaibai project**.
- Secondly, to **put all our concerns and questions about the project on the table**.
- And finally, to **learn what information and opinions Ms. Bengoetxea has about the project**, both as Deputy Lehendakari and as Minister of Culture.

Our concerns can be summarized as follows:

- An **impositional governance style**
- Actions **contrary to the aims of Biosphere Reserves**
- A project that is **not the result of any diagnostic assessment**
- A project that, as such, **does not even exist**
- Planning within a **Special Protection Zone of the Natura 2000 network**, the most vulnerable area
- **Clear evidence of saturation** in the estuary
- **Disregard for the limits of the planet**
- **Waste of public money for private purposes**
- A museum that **does not respond to the needs of the region**

- **Manipulation of the public** by linking the healthy future of the Biosphere Reserve with this project
- The **launch of whitewashed participatory processes**
- **Encouragement of the loss of local culture**

To these general concerns, we added our **discomfort with recent statements** made by Ibone Bengoetxea herself, which have been firm in supporting the project.

She also raised the concept of **Nature and Art** as a pairing, comparing it favorably to the previous **Industry-Nature** model. At the same time, she publicly admitted that the communication and sharing of information around the project **have not been handled well**, and acknowledged the need for **dialogue**, although she made it clear that the **government intends to move forward** with the project regardless.

Thus, compared to the previous legislative period, the Basque Government is showing a **more proactive attitude** toward the project, which is also part of the current **government agreement**.

In light of this, **all public administrations appear to be aligned**.

However, we must stress that **this is not a public project**.

The Minister believes the project **could be a good opportunity for the region**, and emphasized that, as the party that won the elections, **they have the legitimacy and right to implement it**.

The government wants to move forward with the project—but **not alone**. She told us that **dialogue is necessary**, and that the **region deserves it**.

The platform agrees on the **need for dialogue**, but we believe that all the **administrative steps currently being taken to make this project viable** must be **halted**, and that a **genuine reflection process** should begin. **Without imposition**.

Let's conduct a **thorough diagnosis** of the region's situation, and seek solutions through a **participatory project**.

Let's **start from scratch**, and **remove a private museum that will only intensify tourism** in the heart of the Biosphere Reserve.

However, the current situation is different.

**While we are being offered dialogue**, the **Dalia building in Gernika has been demolished**, Murueta's **municipal urban plan (HAPO)** and the **Gernika-Markina Sub-Regional Plan** are being modified.

Even more concerning, the **project for the wooden walkway (palafito)**—which would be part of the green route connecting the museums to be built in Gernika and Murueta—has already been **approved and put out to tender**, with public announcements stating that **construction is to begin in the autumn**.

Given this situation, our concerns are clear, and **reaching a shared position on this project is difficult.**

In order to **respect citizens' rights**, we demanded that the project be **made public**, along with its **environmental impact report**.

The **absence of such critical documentation** leaves us **unprotected**, especially given the **many small steps being taken in a very clear direction**.

This project requires a **complete evaluation**.

Taking into account all the **substantial reasons** we laid on the table, we **hope and expect** that this at least **sparked some basic reflection**.

Nevertheless, **this meeting has not changed our view of the project**.

Today, we are **more convinced than ever** that the project is just a **random idea proposed without any diagnostic backing**, and while they try to make it viable step by step by **twisting and bending laws and regulations, misinformation dominates**—or at least, that's what **they want us to believe**.

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**Guggenheim Urdaibai Stop  
Busturialdea, October 9, 2024**