



From tomorrow, 17 March, the Formentera Council's office of environment will begin removing mounds of posidonia seagrass that have accumulated along the Es Ca Marí shoreline. The announcement was made by environment councillor Daisee Aguilera, who noted "the process will take between two and three days if weather is fair". The Formentera Council will foot the bill for transport, and any residents interested in using the washed up plant matter for farming or livestock purposes should contact the office of environment. Requests can be made in person at the department (open from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.), by email at mediambient@conselldeformentera.cat or by calling 971321210.

The removal process itself will be similar to in 2014, and is being repeated at the behest of the Es Ca Marí neighbourhood association. As Aguilera explained, "in winter the area is hit by both westerly and south-westerly winds, which leads to a tightly packed build-up of seaweed that can reach three metres in height". Studies indicate that sporadic removals are more appropriate than systematic ones, she said.

Formentera's head of environmental affairs noted the crucial role posidonia seagrass plays in the health of Formentera beaches, pointing out it prevents shoreline erosion. Local beaches are especially susceptible, which explains why complete removal of the seagrass is undesirable. According to Aguilera, the practise – which involves hauling off a portion of the accumulated plant matter – serves a dual function: allowing beach cleaning crews to do their work and preventing further spread of the washed up weeds across the coastline. She also highlighted the fact that, in the process, the tradition of reusing the material has been revived.

Posidonia for composting

The councillor noted the suitability of the dried seagrass in composting. She encouraged Formentera residents to contact the office of environment and give new use to the seagrass, whose nearby prairies have been named a World Heritage site. Aguilera also referred to a recent repurposing of the material that has long been favoured by locals: use in building. "This method has been rehashed and is being employed in the low-income housing currently under construction in Sant Ferran".

Push to clear washed up seagrass from Es Ca Marí shoreline

Wednesday, 16 March 2016 18:25
