



Nearly a year has gone by since the administration of the project for the regulation of environmentally-safe anchors – presented by the Formentera Island Council for implementation in the northwest section of the Illetes beach – was transferred to the authority of the Balearic Government, and remains without any updates as of today.

The Formentera Council has taken firm steps towards executing a project that guarantees the protection of the island's natural patrimony and represents the wishes of the majority of Formentera residents and of the businesses implicated. This was made manifest last year through various agreements made at the Formentera Council's plenary session.

May of last year saw the initial approval for the creation of a public planning and regulation service for watercraft anchoring using ecological buoys in the northwest area of the Ses Salines Natural Park. This service's direct management and the accord's remission, together with the application for temporary occupation and administrative concession, were handled by the Balearic Islands Coastal Demarcations.

These proceedings were met with approval by the General Direction of the Merchant Marina

(DGMM), dependent on both the Ministry of Development and the Marine Reserve, a firm advance towards definitive authorisation. Forward motion of the process, however, still required the positive assessment of two new reports: one from the natural park's managing entity and one from Xarxa Natura 2000. This accord was reflected in the action taken by the Balearic Environmental Commission of 27 September 2012, which established that no ruling be issued until the aforementioned reports had been received, within a maximum period of three months.

Noting the Govern's inaction on the issue, the 30 November plenary meeting of the Formentera Council concluded with the decision to implore the Balearic government's Counsellor of the Environment to begin formalities and approval of the special modification of the PRUG (Pla rector d'ús i gestió, or Governing plan of use and management) and this message was transmitted in December. It is important to remember that the Council's requested modification of the Ses Salines PRUG sought to establish the sand-bottom area to receive the new ecological buoys as a special regulated anchoring zone.

As of today, the Department of Environment of the Balearic government has yet to come to any agreement with regard to these petitions, and, as a consequence, the established deadline has been exceeded, this affecting not only the file's transfer to the different affected entities but also the creation of the mandatory reports. The Formentera Council recognises this delay as exclusively-motivated by the Govern's interest in the failure of this project, which is not only promoted by the island Council but also supported by a great majority of the local population.

This situation has serious repercussions on the preservation of the seabed, and in particular on the areas of posidonia prairies. This explains the need for an urgent solution and a reclassification of the area as a regulated anchorage zone, planned for in the Council's project. This would prevent further major damage to the prairies of posidonia and to the surrounding ecosystem.

To this effect, the Formentera Office of Environment once again published a letter to both the Counsellor of Environment of the Govern Balear, Gabriel Bauzà, and the Ses Salines Natural Park Director, Neus Illiteres, requesting urgent attention for the proceedings in order to move the project towards approval by the Balearic Environmental Commission, and requesting information regarding the start of proceedings in passing the special, urgent modification of the PRUG.