



The Formentera Council has made its presentations to the Govern Balear in Palma regarding that institution's draft management plan for the 'community interest site' located at Ses Salines d'Eivissa i Formentera. The final draft of the document will set out the specific actions to be adopted in assuring the conservation of this Formentera site.

Commonly referred to as LIC -or *llocs d'interès comú*-, the Ses Salines park is one of eleven protected spaces declared in the Balearics. Ses Salines received this designation -and the additional distinction of ZEC, or 'special conservation area'- in July 2007 following a decision by the Balearic Islands Regional Ministry of the Environment.

Formentera's councillor of the environment, Silvia Tur, judged the draft of the Govern's plan to be "incongruent," saying "it paints a picture of the park's current state of conservation that is too idyllic. Under the wording of the text, conservation efforts at eighteen priority habitats and for two protected species have a rating of 'excellent'. It completely ignores the threats in existence."

As an example, Tur cited the fact that "the draft qualifies conservation in 2014 of the Ses Salines posidònia prairies as excellent. This contradicts the most recent scientific studies performed by Oceansnell, a third-party environmental auditing group. The Oceansnell studies found that in 2012, between the areas of Es Caló de s'Oli and Espalmador, the volume of posidònia praries shrank between 16 and 44%."

This idealisation of facts exhibited in the draft plan is worrying because, in the words of councillor Tur, "it could be detrimental later on, when decisions are being made regarding what resources should be dedicated toward the issue." The draft also fails to note "the pressure created by 'party boats', unauthorised disembarkations, the current state of disrepair of area sewage pipes, replacement of underwater cables or hypothetical petroleum exploration activity."

According to Tur, the management plan is "a great opportunity to funnel resources and improve the site, but for it to be effective there must be a proper diagnosis and recognition of the threats that exist. Otherwise, we'll be forced to deal with these problems without resources or funding."

