



The Formentera Council's departments of environment and education have teamed up on Plàstic 0, an initiative launched by Observadores del Mar, a “science platform for the people” overseen by the ecological group Gen-Gob in Eivissa and Formentera.

### **Problematic plastic**

Plastics have become one of the most widespread human-made materials today. It is relatively cheap to produce and extremely resistant, which explains its abundance in oceans and seas and across the coastlines of the world. Plastics make up 97% of the materials found in these places, and that's touching off a gathering environmental crisis in practically all underwater ecosystems.

Plastics break down into smaller and smaller particles known as “microplastics” (a distinction reserved for particles no greater than 5 mm large) and typically enter the lower rungs of the food chain when certain marine organisms mistake them for food.

### **Plàstic 0**

Plàstic 0 is about getting the engagement and commitment of a wide base of people, from early childhood, to deliver real answers and solutions to complex issues like the microplastics littering our shoreline.

Since 2017 Gen-Gob, together with a number of schools, has been responsible for collecting samples at Eivissa beaches. This year Formentera's three primary schools have joined in too, adopting local beaches Cavall d'en Borràs, Migjorn and Es Pujols.

In the words of environment secretary Daisee Aguilera, “it's crucial that we reach our children about the importance of caring for the environment. The data we'll obtain are vital because it will be part of a nationwide effort. Our children, meanwhile, will be acting as scientists in training and learning the significance of taking care of our surrounding ecosystems”.

Cavall d'en Borràs beach, chosen by the pupils of Mestre Lluís Andreu school, will see action this Friday. Operations will be overseen by Agnès Vidal, head of Gen-Gob Eivissa's environmental outreach division, who explained: "The children will be in charge of this beach during the entire term. A new group will come each month and collect samples to be analysed for microplastics".

The samples will be placed into categories and shipped to Blanes, where final results will be compiled and a plan of action to tackle the problem will be developed.