The environment department of the Formentera Council announces that from Tuesday October 9, weather permitting, a new phase of operations will be introduced by the healthy forests service as part of an eco-friendly effort by the Council and Govern balear to stem the spread of the pine processionary in the Es Cap de Barbaria area of the island.

Treatment

Aerial dusting is performed with a helicopter that is equipped with on-board DGPS technology which gives an operator precise control over which areas are treated and how much pesticide is administered. The insecticide, a “phytosanitary” product, is a natural, *kurstaki* variety of *Bacillus thuringiensis*
found naturally on the ground and plants, and typically breaks down with exposure to UV rays in a number of days. It also does not affect bees and is fit for use in organic farming.

For optimal results, it is recommended that *Bacillus thuringiensis* be applied annually for a period of four years.

Scheduling

Dusting generally takes place between October 1 and November 15, although scheduling depends on the pest's stage of development as well as weather conditions. Two applications are staggered several days apart to assure the naturally degrading pesticide eliminates larvae born after the first run.

Area to be treated

Engineers of the effort plan to treat 1,600 hectares of “pure” and “mixed” pines affected by the pine processionary. The area of treatment was chosen based on two factors: captures recorded in traps installed as part of a 2014 effort and nests found over past winters.

Other steps

A whole series of actions in addition to the aerial spraying include traps to capture the insect in its moth form, a push to destroy nests in winter, structures to house predators of the pest, such

as bats, and an outreach effort to educate people about the problem.