



This Tuesday morning in Palma representatives of the Comissió Balear de Medi Ambient (Balearic Environmental Commission) will meet to discuss the inclusion of Formentera in the directive that lays out aerial fumigations among other solutions to combat the spread of the pine processionary caterpillar.

Staff of Formentera's environmental office acknowledged that the meeting – for its agenda items as well as the manner in which it was convened – came as a surprise. “This comes on the heels of two gatherings,” explained Councillor Silvia Tur, “– the special one-off Consell d'Entitats meeting, 6 October 2014, to discuss land-use and territorial issues and the 16 February 2015 meeting at which the Formentera Council made presentations with respect to the fumigation plans – the conclusion of which was a clear 'no'. We thought the measure had been nixed.”

Its timing was also peculiar, says Councillor Tur, “considering the announcement was made at 4:30pm on a Friday afternoon. This does not make it easy on those of us travelling to Mallorca from the other islands of the community.”

Tur confirmed the Council would vote against any measure to fumigate “for the three reasons we laid out [on 16 February]: the majority of Formentera's local population opposes it, as was made clear at the special meeting of the Consell d'Entitats, there is no data that allows us to objectively determine the spread of the pine processionary caterpillar and, lastly, Formentera as an island has shown its support for other solutions apart aerial fumigations.”

The councillor of the environment voiced her hope that “the representatives from the other island councils [would be] sensitive to the critique of the measure that we have given. In the same way that Formentera would not vote to force an island to accept application of something that their local population had rejected, we hope that our neighbours in the Balearics do not vote to impose a decision that politicians, specialists and residents of Formentera have all opposed.”

Tur recalled the outcome of the most recent presidential conference of the heads of the different

Balearic island councils, agreed upon by all four island presidents as well the chief executive of the Govern Balear, "to respect each island's decision as the final word on projects affecting the local territory."