



The Formentera Environment Department reports that a 2020 tally of local waste came in at approximately 7,538 metric tonnes (t) — a 26.6% drop relative to the 10,223 t generated one year earlier.

Figures for urban solid waste collection waned as well, falling from 6,236 t in 2019 to 5,057 t in 2020 (-19%). Paper and cardboard collection diminished in kind, going from 959 t to 678 t (-29%), while plastics slipped from 680 t to 551 t (-19%) and glass from 977 t to 658 t (-33%).

Environment chief Antonio J Sanz said the pandemic's mark on last year's figures was understandable and "plain to see", pointing up pronounced dips in paper and glass collection ("both materials are more common to the hospitality industry", added Sanz, "sadly where most closures and activity level hits have occurred"). "On the bright side, upswings came in plastic, paper and cardboard recycling in the two pre-pandemic months of 2020, meaning islanders are getting better at recycling, particularly when it comes to glass, paper and cardboard, and that we have a clearer sense of good practices in general".

Collection of food scraps and other organic waste was placed on hold last year for reasons related to public health. "Our local process for treating organic waste is very labour intensive", Sanz asserted, adding that, given the public health risk the procedure represented, a decision was made to prioritise worker safety. As to whether organic waste collection would resume in 2021 and what such a resumption might look like, Sanz insisted the answer would depend on the unfolding pandemic. Without counting organic collections, overall recycling slipped to 25.04% in 2020 (down from 32.48% a year earlier).

First Zero Waste Municipality

The island's most recent plenary assembly brought backing for Formentera's membership in 'Zero Waste Municipalities', a certification programme of the European Union in which Formentera is now Spain's first participating municipality. Eligibility requires staying the course on recycling policies, including the Consell's pallet reuse initiative, which currently runs a tally of nearly 700 repurposed pallets, and a two-month-old recycled cycles programme which has already secured new homes for nearly one hundred used bicycles. But, Councillor Sanz insists, work is far from over. "Our two-part mission is to cut waste and use our resources more

efficiently, and it's one we've yet to fully accomplish today".

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Communications Department

Consell de Formentera