



The Formentera Island Council remitted a letter, accompanied by a legal report, for the director of the Environmental Commission of the Balearic Islands, Jose Carlos Caballero, in regard to the current convening of the Xarxa Natura 2000 subcommittee, whose agenda points included the 3 projects to regulate seafloor use in the zones to the northwest of Formentera, promoted by the Council of Formentera, the Pitiüsa-based company Ecology S.L. and the Govern Balear.

As outlined in the legal report, by failing to announce the convening of the subcommittee within 48 hours of its scheduled occurrence, the minimum legal period of notification was not upheld. As such, our island institution proceeded by requesting that this committee summons be challenged, and in this way, that any decision adopted with respect to Formentera be considered null and void.

The legal basis for this measure is detailed in article 12.1 of Decree 29/2009 (8 May) on the organisation, functions and legal regime of the Environmental Commission of the Balearic Islands, in which it is written that upon convention of the committee, notification – preferably electronic – must be given a minimum of 48 hours in advance.

In compliance with these regulations, the accords that result from this convention of the subcommittee will be null and void. Since the period of notification was not upheld, the Formentera Council – as member of the Technical Committee and interested party in the the projects' repercussions on tourism and on the Formentera coastline – was not given adequate opportunity to inform itself of all the necessary features nor to study the projects sufficiently to make an informed vote. Likewise, the Council denounces the fact that complete documentation was not provided regarding the Balearic Government's seafloor regulation project, for the purposes of studying its components with due time.

This behaviour reflects the political will of the Govern to make the Formentera Council's participation in its seafloor regulation more difficult. This impedes our local administration's ability to defend the general interests of the Formentera population and of the island territory itself. It also impedes measures of preservation and protection of posidònia oceànica, whose habitat – classified as 'priority' – is protected by the Spanish state and by the regional autonomous communities.

Stemming from the Council's issuance of this report, the Environmental Commission has decided to cancel the convention of both the Xarxa Natura 2000 subcommittee and the subcommittee for the evaluation of environmental impact, due to convene tomorrow, April 26.

The Formentera Council has taken firm steps towards the realisation of a project that would guarantee the protection of our natural patrimony and represent the will of a majority of business sectors and of the resident population. Such was made manifest in the project advanced by the Council, which, nearly one year ago, was referred to the Balearic Government, where it has remained without changes to this day.

The regional autonomous government has seen to it that proposals coming from Formentera are delayed, and demonstrated an evident interest in the failure of this project that the vast majority of the island supports. This situation denotes a political interest that runs in detriment to the preservation of the ocean floor, a fact deeply regretted by the Council of Formentera.