

Presidential cabinet councillor Bartomeu Escandell and environment councillor Daisee Aguilera met today with the directors general of two Balearic offices —Joan Mercant of the fish and marine environment office Pesca i Medi Marí and Caterina Amengual of Espais Naturals i Biodiversitat (the regional natural spaces and biodiversity office)— to talk about conserving sea life and protected spaces around Formentera.

Before a joint meeting took place, the chiefs of Pesca i Medi Marí and the Formentera Council took a trip to the Es Freus marine reserve at the same time the Espais Naturals i Biodiversitat chief of staff joined CiF Councillor Aguilera for a visit to different zones within the Parc Natural de Ses Salines. “We wanted our visitors to get a firsthand look at the situation our island's natural spaces are facing,” explained Councillor Escandell.

Traditional fishing

After meeting with the president of the local fishermen's guild (la Confraria de Pescadors), Escandell highlighted one issue on which he and his interlocutor saw eye to eye: “Conserving our waters and protecting the local marine life while still promoting what, for us, is a vocation steeped in tradition”. Escandell also spoke about “the added value of local restaurant fare if it is made from local products”. Mercant declared the Confraria “an example to follow” for its conservation work and pledged to try and satisfy the requests made throughout the day—namely with regard to increased funding and improvements to the guild's facilities. In addition, Councillor Escandell took the opportunity to articulate the need for improved coordination between CiF and Govern Balear coast guard officers.

Monitoring activity at the national park

For her part, Formentera's councillor of environment implored Director General Amengual to ensure that all activity within the Ses Salines park —in addition to boats dropping anchor at any point around the island— received sufficient monitoring, a change that would “lighten the load currently borne by the Formentera coastline”. Assuring the concerns would be taken into account, Amengual indicated her intention to work with the Formentera Council to “preserve habitats and further develop the protectionist part of Xarxa Natura 2000”.

Aguilera and Amengual also visited the interpretive centre at Can Marroig, a facility that —if the

CiF has its way— will benefit from renewed assistance from the regional government in Palma. Director General Amengual asserted that for the natural spaces and biodiversity office, “promoting awareness and education is a priority”. She indicated that her office would do its best to satisfy requests from the local group la Cooperativa del Camp (Farmers' Cooperative) that the surrounding area be turned over for cultivation.