



In a one-off plenary session held this morning in the FiC plenary hall, participants voted unanimously to challenge a recently-approved farming bill before Spain's constitutional court. The Council's proposed case challenges the legality of specific portions of the Llei agrària de les Illes Balears ('the agrarian bill of the Balearic Islands'), a measure ratified 16 December of last year, on the grounds that it challenges the autonomy guaranteed to Formentera.

These claims “were already put forth in August and September during the draft (avantprojecte and projecte de Llei) phases of the law, in respect of the official channels,” explained Santi Juan, councillor of agriculture, livestock and fishing of the Formentera Council. Before adding, “at that time they were not heeded”.

During the morning plenary, FiC secretary Àngel Navarro detailed what he said were the two principal legal arguments behind the rejection of the farming bill.

The first of these concerns local civil law on Eivissa and Formentera. According to Navarro: “[The bill] fails to recognise Formentera's traditional system of stewarded farming as the traditional farming contract”. As chance would have it, Navarro says, the bill does recognise the system traditionally in use in Menorca – known as *societat rural menorquina*.

According the secretary, the Llei agrària also fails to take into account the role of *tornalls* – “a unit of measurement which exists on farms in Eivissa and Formentera that is altogether unique to the particular territorial and psychological reality in the Pitiüses”. Instead, the bill uses the unit of measurement known as the *quarterada* – “a standard in Mallorcan agrarian law”.

The bill also would appear to encroach upon the authority of the FiC as established by the sections on urbanism, tourism and town planning of the Statute of Autonomy the Balearic Islands. As Secretary Navarro explained: “The Llei agrària permits and even promotes unrestricted camping on certain farming plots, completely ignoring the fact Formentera has not only prohibited the activity, it has in place a system of penalties against it.”

