

Consell de Formentera president and tourism councillor Alejandra Ferrer, environment councillor Antonio J Sanz, and tourism promotions chief Carlos Bernús gathered in the government's Sala d'Actes to unveil the slate of programming to accompany Save Posidonia Project in 2019. In Ferrer's words, the three-day event, which kicks off 10 October, was conceived as a way to "turn the island into a place where ideas are exchanged—and that's recognised as an eco-friendly destination, leading the charge towards sustainability".

Ferrer pointed out that Save Posidonia Project launched in 2017—Year of Sustainable Tourism—and that its two founding pillars haven't changed: "educating people about the importance of protecting posidonia and our surroundings, and raising money through square-metre sponsorship to fund conservation".

The president hailed the generosity of islanders and businesses in 2017, when 132,656 square metres of seagrass meadows were "adopted" and funding was raised for two protection-tuned projects: one with the Mediterranean Institute of Advanced Studies (Imedea) and another with the Nature Study Group and Balearic Ornithology Group (GEN-GOB). To date, €222,319 has been raised under the initiative.

The project continues this year, first with celebrations around the 20-year anniversary of nearby *Posidonia oceanica* meadows' classing as a Unesco World Heritage Site, and culminating on 11 October with the III Fòrum Posidonia Project. Plus, new this year, panel discussions with the local business community have been organised with the help of a range of organisations and NGOs.

New call for projects

Councillor Sanz offered that conservation projects would remain the focus of fundraising. This year is the forum's third, although it's only the second year that organisers have solicited project proposals. Funding from adopted square metres of posidonia currently stands at roughly ninety thousand—"a figure we hope will increase after the Fòrum", said Sanz.

“Hopefully, with this new call for projects will translate into real protections for posidonia, and for the environment in general”, the councillor said. He pointed out that proposals in the first edition focused on direct change, but said attendees could expect to see indirect change—think individuals’ day-to-day carbon footprint—come up at this year’s gathering.

Some fifty journalists from six different countries will be covering the event, which chief of tourism promotions Carlos Bernús cast as about “making sustainability a pillar of our appeal to visitors”. The Fòrum runs parallel to other Discover Formentera events, which will appear chronicled in the outlets of visiting Spanish and international journalists—“who will see that now’s a good time to visit the island”.

Fòrum Save Posidonia

Thursday 10 October:
Work tables will be held with staff from the local and regional governments, Formentera businesses, civil society and NGOs, to explore areas like water, waste, plastics, land and maritime mobility, the energy transition and posidonia. The debate and reflections that emanating from the first day will serve to articulate an overview of new challenges and a commitment to make improvements moving forwards.

Friday 11 October:
The second day of programming is open to the public, and attendees will get a look at their companions’ efforts from the day before, not to mention a refresher of some of the projects which received funding in 2017. There will also be talks, documentary screenings and round-table discussions. The Fòrum on this day will take place at plaça de la Constitució

The programme can be found online at www.saveposidoniaproject.org/forum-posidonia-2019/ .

Saturday 12 October:
The final day will include a boat ride to visit posidonia meadows and children’s workshops. Activities will unfold in the centre of Sant Francesc.

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