The Formentera Council's surveillance services are announcing the rollout of coastal drone patrols to complement fishing checks. The goal, says Bartomeu Escandell, chief of the president's office and secretary of rural affairs, “is to leverage low-cost surveillance technology to take aim at illegal fishing on our coasts”. The new service will complement the conventional patrols already carried out by the Council's fleet.

An outside specialist firm is being brought in to oversee the inspections, which will include 15 monthly flights. The checks, conducted by Drones Mallorca for €11,205 before tax, began July 15 and will continue through December 31.

Each patrol will require a report including photo evidence and write-ups of possible offending actions. Any legal action to follow—and the specific authorities to be concerned—will be determined according to where illegal activity took place. The new technology can be harnessed to guarantee that both professional and recreational fishermen abide by existing rules. Next week will see the start of a push to monitor raor fishing.