

The environment office of the Formentera Council reports that nautical maps put out by the Cádiz-based Instituto Hidrográfico de la Marina and featuring information about the island's neighbouring posidonia meadows are now available for purchase in paper and digital formats.

The measure will enable ship capitans to spot meadows and steer clear of them when anchoring. Environment secretary Daisee Aguilera hailed the news, saying “knowing where the sea grass meadows are is crucial to protecting them” and applauding the collaboration between the Formentera Council, the Govern balear and IHM.

While not the sole factor pertinent to explaining recession of the sea grass, boats dropping anchor on meadows is one the causes. Posidonia is a deciduous underwater plant responsible for the clearness of Formentera's waters, which Aguilera cited when asserting the new maps were “groundbreaking for Formentera and for the Mediterranean as a whole”.

April start

A tool to help highlight the presence of posidonia, the acronym “SG” for “sea grass” has incorporated the nomenclature since April, marking the first time an underwater plant is included on nautical maps. The new term makes it possible to differentiate between the plant and seaweed (unlike the former, the latter has previously figured on similar maps).

For reference in the initiative, IHM used maps from Project Life Posidonia as well as eco-mapping from MAPAMA, which contained information about posidonia meadows across the Balearics.