

The Formentera Council has backed a draft proposition presented earlier today by Sílvia Tur, the island's representative in the parliamentary group Mixt, which advocates the declaration of the exclusive economic zone of the Mediterranean watershed as a “maritime space free of prospecting, exploration and extraction of hydrocarbons”.

An ongoing threat

Formentera's councillor of environment, Daisee Aguilera, joined Ms Tur for a presentation of the proposal in a press conference held at the CiF plenary hall. Aguilera stressed the environmental and economic threat that such activity would pose. She also went further to say that, despite the fortunate stalling of a drilling project by Cairn Energy, “there exist other threats, such as petroleum exploration by Spectrum, which that company envisions could stretch from Cap de Creus to just nine nautical miles from Es Cap de Barbaria”. If those plans move forward, the Formentera administration will raise objections and—in the words of Councillor Aguilera—“another grassroots counter movement” would again be necessary.

Environmental protection

For her part, Tur—whose title is *diputada*—explained that the proposal was aimed at having the regional Balearic parliament urge the state government to pass “a specific law prohibiting prospecting, extractions and mining of hydrocarbons in the Spanish portion of the Mediterranean coast”. Moreover, whilst such a law is debated Ms Tur is requesting that a moratorium be placed on any new or existing plans. Tur also explained that, in cases where hydrocarbon drilling or prospecting permission has already been granted, the petition includes a request that companies be required to both “hermetically seal drilling platforms” and “completely dismount them when activity has concluded”. According to Tur, the approval of her proposal would “put in place specific environmental protections” and “see to it that the Spanish Mediterranean remain free of seismic activity, achieving real change for current energy and hydrocarbon policies”.