



The Formentera Department of Patrimony reports that Formentera has added its name to an initiative promoting efforts to locate, document and safeguard underwater artefacts of archaeological heritage. Accordingly, informational material has been printed in a bid to spotlight features of such fragile cultural legacy, the pillaging it has long been subject to, and the need for local collaboration in enhancing what we know about these repositories of our shared history and steps to protect them.

Patrimony consellera Raquel Guasch noted that the campaign, known as SOS Patrimoni, was mainly intended for dive centres, fishermen and other groups whose connection to the sea means they are more likely to know where submerged archaeological artefacts lie or to stumble upon them over the course of their work.

“Leave items where you find them”

The patrimony chief emphasised the importance of leaving artefacts where they are found: “For archaeologists, crucial historical insight is lost when objects are taken out of their context. Preservation is moreover rendered extremely difficult when objects are removed from the water”.

Because questions of cultural heritage fall within the remit of local island authorities, individuals who come across underwater archaeological artefacts are asked to contact the Consell de Formentera by calling 971 32 12 75 or by emailing patrimoni@conselldeformentera.cat.

Architects of the current campaign have kept the look and objectives of previous SOS Patrimoni iterations that were overseen by other government institutions and centres such as the Catalonia Centre for Subaquatic Archaeology, the National Museum of Subaquatic Archaeology and the Consell Insular de Mallorca.

The island’s adhesion to the campaign is linked to the plan to prepare a map of undersea archaeological features, a project that was launched in 2015 by the Balearic Institute of Studies in Maritime Archaeology and one which is due to conclude after its most recent initiative.

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