

Patrimony and environment department officials in the Formentera Council report that this week operations are under way in the third phase of a project to map Formentera's surrounding waters from below. The effort entails sidescan sonar-powered prospections of the stretch of seaboard from cala Saona to es Cap de Barbaria lighthouse.

Statutory report requirements meant a prolonged permit process and the start date, initially planned for December 2017, was pushed back to April. The Council's governing committee OK'd the campaign and the accompanying “archaeological prospection” after

The campaign and accompanying archaeological probe were rubber-stamped January 22 by the Council's governing committee after having received a favourable ruling, last November 17, of the archaeological committee reviewing the case.

Formentera's underwater archaeological map, or *Carta arqueològica subaquàtica*, is a project of the Balearic institute for the study of marine archaeology (IBEAM) and the Formentera Council. The document is considered a key part of Formentera's 2017-2019 strategy for sensible management of the island's cultural patrimony.

IBEAM project director Javier Rodríguez Pandozi highlighted fifteen areas of interest the current push had turned up some fifteen areas of interest and said a fourth effort, forecasted for October, is aimed at a more in-depth study of nearby ruins.

In the words of patrimony secretary Susana Labrador, once the five parts of the campaign are complete, the resulting map will be a “valuable tool” for the Council, providing “location information and descriptions of the heritage sites at sea around Formentera”. Most important, however, are the Council's plans for how that information will be used—“to guarantee sound management and ensure the sites are protected”.

Help pinpointing heritage sites

The completed map will be owned by the Formentera Council. However, to safeguard sites against plundering, its consultation will be limited to specialists.

The heads of the research effort asked Formentera residents in general and fishermen in particular to cooperate in protecting sunken archaeological ruins by reporting any found objects to the Council's patrimony office or the GEAS arm of the Guardia Civil.