Formentera's conseller for the environment, Antonio J. Sanz, petitioned the Balearic chief of natural spaces and biodiversity, Llorenç Mas, to move forward with spraying aimed at stemming local spread of the pine processionary — a measure that won cross-party support in the July plenary assembly of the Consell de Formentera.

Sanz was on hand at a gathering hosted today by the regional ministry of environment and land to appraise islanders of this year's projected resumption of aerial dusting and to take stock of efforts to control the species' growth on the island.

Sanz applauded "Herculean efforts by the ministry in recent years to combat the pest" and held up findings indicating the pine processionary's numbers were up: not only have municipal crews captured ever increasing moths in the summer, they have also logged growing numbers of the caterpillar's nests in wintertime, registering colonies beyond the initial concentration in Es Cap de Barbaria.

The pine processionary has expanded into Porto-salè, Sant Ferran de ses Roques, Cala en Baster, Es Mal Pas, Migjorn and Tramuntana — "likely due to restrictions on aerial dustings in protected natural spaces, areas dedicated to beekeeping and organic farming, marshes and other land near the coast where 100-metre buffer zones have been necessary", said Formentera's environment chief.

Noting that the contract on the pine processionary control strategy is set to expire this year if no extension is awarded, Sanz called for funding to the tune of €200,000 to ensure the effort could continue in 2021 and beyond.

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Department of Communications
Consell de Formentera