



PRESS RELEASE

Research and innovation key to developing alternative solutions to disposable plastics in the tourism industry of the Balearics

Balearic Islands, 27 April 2022 - The University of the Balearic Islands (UIB) came together with the Plastic Free Balearics certification this week to hold a joint seminar promoting the research and development of innovative solutions to single-use plastics in the tourism sector, the first step in a new collaboration between the two entities.

Loren Carrasco, vice-rector of innovation and digital transformation at UIB, took part in the seminar and underlined the university's commitment to promoting this type of action: "We will do everything possible to seek synergies with foundations such as Save The Med and other sectors to try to identify interesting initiatives and projects that help us to improve or resolve the situation we currently have," she said.

On behalf of Save the Med, Brad Robertson, president and co-founder, said: "Collaboration is crucial to reach real and honest solutions. There is no one organisation, public or private, that holds the key to the problems we face; we need to build new cross-sectoral relationships based on respect, honesty and transparency."

Among those attending the workshop were representatives of research teams from UIB, companies from the environmental and industrial sector, and NGOs. The event revealed a significant interest among the participants in forming synergies between civil society, the private sector and academia in order to promote the development of alternatives to single-use plastics in the tourism industry. The meeting represents a further step in joining forces in the fight against the high consumption of disposable plastics in the Balearics and against so-called "false" solutions to the issue.

The seminar focused on controversial cases for which there is currently no alternative on the market, including plastic takeaway cups, single-serve sachets or hotel toiletries, as well as drinks cartons, cling film and especially bioplastics, due to the confusion they generate among the general population.

In order to find a real alternative to these products, the organisations leading the event believe it is essential to find feasible solutions through R&D and innovation to move from the linear model, which has a high environmental impact, to a circular model.





State of play

The Balearic Islands is the autonomous community that generates the most waste per capita in the whole of Spain, despite having passed Law 8/2019 on Waste and Contaminated Soils and, more recently, Decree Law 3/2022 on urgent measures for sustainable and circular tourism.

The plastic consumption of companies operating in the hospitality sector throughout the Balearic archipelago has been assessed by Plastic Free Balearics. During the seminar, some of the environmental challenges currently facing the region in terms of plastic pollution were presented.

The event resulted in a joint declaration of intent to promote research and development of innovative local solutions and alternatives to disposable plastics in the tourism industry. Through this agreement in principle, various forms of collaboration were established in order to enhance the work previously undertaken by both entities relating to the development of the Plastic Free Balearics certification. Additionally, the two institutions agreed to continue to work closely together to help implement the certification.

Plastic Free Balearics is a joint initiative of the Save the Med Foundation and IbizaPreservation, with the participation of Plastic Free Ibiza and Formentera and Plastic Free Menorca. The project's pilot phase has been co-financed by the association Beyond Plastic Med (BeMed) and aims to rid the Balearic Islands of the scourge of single-use plastic.

ABOUT US

Save the Med Foundation

The [Save The Med](#) Foundation is a non-profit organisation that works for the regeneration of the Mediterranean Sea, one of the most fragile seas on the planet. Through cutting-edge marine research, community projects and education, Save The Med communicates science to local communities.

IbizaPreservation

[IbizaPreservation](#) is a non-profit foundation that works to preserve, protect and restore the land and sea of Ibiza and Formentera and foster sustainable initiatives. Since 2018, it has promoted Plastic Free Ibiza and Formentera, a movement made up of 14 local organisations, which raise awareness and advocate for more sustainable practices in order to make the islands free from single-use plastics by 2023.

Beyond Plastic Med

[Beyond Plastic Med](#) (BeMed) was created in 2015 at the initiative of the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation. Today, the Monaco-based association BeMed brings together the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation, the Tara Ocean Foundation, Surfrider Foundation Europe, the Mava Foundation and IUCN. Its mission is to develop and support a network of stakeholders in the Mediterranean committed to curbing plastic pollution through innovative and sustainable solutions.

