IUCN Conservation Outlook Assessment 2017 **(archived)**
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Please note: this is an archived Conservation Outlook Assessment for Ibiza: Biodiversity and Culture. To access the most up-to-date Conservation Outlook Assessment for this site, please visit https://www.worldheritageoutlook.iucn.org.

Ibiza: Biodiversity and Culture

SITE INFORMATION

Country:
Spain
Inscribed in: 1999
Criteria:
(ii) (iii) (iv) (ix) (x)

Site description:

Ibiza provides an excellent example of the interaction between the marine and coastal ecosystems. The dense prairies of oceanic Posidonia (seagrass), an important endemic species found only in the Mediterranean basin, contain and support a diversity of marine life. Ibiza preserves considerable evidence of its long history. The archaeological sites at Sa Caleta (settlement) and Puig des Molins (necropolis) testify to the important role played by the island in the Mediterranean economy in protohistory, particularly during the Phoenician-Carthaginian period. The fortified Upper Town (Alta Vila) is an outstanding example of Renaissance military architecture; it had a profound influence on the development of fortifications in the Spanish settlements of the New World. © UNESCO

SUMMARY

2017 Conservation Outlook

Significant concern

High existing and potential threats have been growing during the last years and several cumulative impacts seem to be approaching a critical point. At the same time the management has so far been insufficient to properly address these pressures on the site’s values. Some decline in the site’s values has already been observed and its conservation outlook is of significant concern. Significant additional conservation measures to address identified threats and to reverse the main impacts are urgently needed.

Current state and trend of VALUES

High Concern
Trend: Deteriorating

The state of key ecosystem and biodiversity values of the site including its Posidonia oceanica meadows with their associated biodiversity, and the population of the Balearic Shearwater Puffinus mauretanicus is of High Concern, and deteriorating. If this negative trend continues, these values may soon enter a critical conservation state.

Overall THREATS

High Threat

The natural values of the site are currently under high threat from uncontrolled tourism use (physical damage as a consequence of uncontrolled anchoring and sewage pollution form thousands of tourist boats and yachts), invasive alien species, and disposal of an increasing quantity of poorly treated sewage from the land. Additional threats include visitation pressure on the terrestrial parts of the site, and disposal of dredged material nearby. The values of the site are also under high threat from additional tourism infrastructure developments and potential shipping accidents, and are additionally threatened, to an unclear

degree, by climate change and particularly the increase of water temperatures in the Mediterranean. Other potential threats are the future works to set up the third submarine electric cable between Ibiza and Formentera and the oil exploration and drilling project in the Ibiza channel.

Overall PROTECTION and MANAGEMENT

Some Concern

The site is under considerable pressure, mainly from poorly controlled tourism. The threats have been growing during the last years and several cumulative impacts are approaching a critical point. At the same time the management (including management system and effectiveness, identification and enforcement of borders and the legal framework, visitor management, monitoring of key threats) has so far been clearly insufficient, has decreased during the last years, and has not been effective to properly address these pressures on the site’s values. There has always been a clear lack of financial resources and staff which have further decreased over the last six years.

FULL ASSESSMENT

Description of values

Values

World Heritage values

► Marine ecosystems sustained by Posidonia oceanica

Criterion:(x)

Exceptionally dense and well-preserved Posidonia oceanica meadows in coastal waters of the marine counterpart of the site between Ibiza and Formentera (IUCN, 1999) provide important spawning and nursery habitats to Mediterranean fauna (Boudouresque, 2004), including fauna with many endemic, threatened and economically important species (Reñones et al. 1995; Duarte, 2000). The Posidonia meadows and coastal reefs also support formation of coastal ecosystems in their vicinity and protect sandy beaches (Chessa et al., 2000, UNEP-WCMC, 2011). There are also exceptionally well-preserved Cladocora caetospitosa communities, an ecosystem that is declining in the Mediterranean sea, which support 220 species (IUCN, 1999). The marine part of the property overlaps with the WWF Global 200 marine priority ecoregion “Mediterranean Sea” (WWF, 2012).Moreover it is important to highlight that Posidonia oceanica beds and Cladocora caespitosa reefs are considered as priority habitat type under the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC.

► Coastal (including lagoon) and small island ecosystems

Criterion:(ix)

Las Salinas de Ibiza y Formentera, as well as the islands of Penjats, Espardell and Espalmador, include important coastal lagoon and wetland ecosystems as well as halophyte communities, with 40 vegetation types having been mapped for Formentera alone. These areas also support important water bird

populations (UNEP-WCMC; 2011). The saltpans have been designated as Wetlands of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention in 1993 (Wetlands International, 2012). The area is part of Conservation International's (terrestrial) global biodiversity hotspot "Mediterranean Basin" (CI, 2012).

► Marine biodiversity

Criterion:(x)

The seagrass meadows of the area support a diverse fauna of invertebrates and fish (36 species in 15 families), and may be visited by Mediterranean Monk Seal Monachus monachus (CR), Loggerhead Turtle Caretta caretta (EN) and Bottlenose Dolphin Tursiops truncatus (LC), all of them are also considered under Habitat Directive and Monachus monachus and Caretta caretta are priority species . Noteworthy marine invertebrate species of particular importance for the ecosystem of the area are the zooxanthellate scleractinian coral Cladocora caespitosa, and the colonial sea squirt Ecteinascidia turbinata (IUCN, 2012, UNEP-WCMC, 2011).

► Diversity of coastal and terrestrial flora

Criterion:(x)

The coastal and terrestrial parts of the site have at least 11 endemic plant species, 7 rare species and 8 considered vulnerable by IUCN in 1996 (IUCN, 1999). The area belongs to a global Centre of Plant Diversity (UNEP-WCMC, 2011).

► Diversity of coastal and terrestrial fauna

Criterion:(x)

The site supports 205 species of birds (including 171 migratory species), 5 species of mammals, 11 of terrestrial reptiles, and at least 56 species of invertebrates. The salt-pans of Ibiza and Formentera and Freus Isles are an internationally important Important Bird Area, particularly because of their seabird and shorebird fauna (BirdLife International, 2012a). This includes the (globally) critically endangered Balearic Shearwater Puffinus mauretanicus. Seven species of ducks frequently winter there, including the near-threatened Ferrugineous Duck Aythya nyroca (UNEP-WCMC, 2011).

Other important biodiversity values

► Posidonia barrier reefs

The site hosts well preserved posidonia barrier reefs covering 0.8 has of marine surface. This ecosystem, almost disappeared in Northwestern Mediterranean, has high ecological importance and is highly vulnerable to human impacts (Ballesteros and Cebrián, 2004). Scientifics have dated a posidonia barrier reef located between Ibiza and Formentera as the oldest organism in the biosphere with at least 100,000 years old (Arnaud-Haond et al., 2012).

Assessment information

Threats

Current Threats

High Threat

The natural values of the site currently are under high threat from uncontrolled tourism use (principally physical damage and sewage pollution form thousands of tourist boats and yachts and untreated effluents from nearby urban areas) and invasive alien species. Additionally threat, to an unclear degree, comes from the visitation pressure on its terrestrial parts, and disposal of dredged material nearby.

► Water Pollution

Data Deficient
Inside site, extent of threat not known
Outside site

The disposal of dredged material from nearby Ibiza Harbor extension near the site finished in 2012. According to the data collected during the works,

there are limited probabilities that could have a negative impact on the seagrass meadows of the site. However, the cumulative impacts of water pollution could be reaching the saturation of the buffering effect of seagrass meadows.

► Tourism/ visitors/ recreation

High Threat
Inside site, extent of threat not known
Outside site

Several thousands boats and yachts visit the site daily during the tourism season, many anchoring inside the site and including inside seagrass beds for more than one day. Although extensive Posidonia areas were found by a 2007 survey (Government of the Balearic Islands, 2007), density decreases of seagrass beds due to the presence and anchoring of boats and yachts between 21% and 70% over 10 years have been reported from various locations near or inside the site (Convalia, 2011).

► Invasive Non-Native/ Alien Species

High Threat
Inside site, extent of threat not known
Outside site

The most threatening invasive macrophytes around the site are the green algae Caulerpa racemosa, the red algae Lophocladia lallemandii, Acrothamnion preissii and Womersleyella setacea (Piazzi et al., 2001; Cebrian and Ballesteros, 2010; Ballesteros and Cebrián, 2004). Particularly Lophocladia lallemandii has reportedly spread considerably in the site in recent years, causing a direct negative impact on Posidonia oceanica habitats, causing a direct negative impact on Posidonia oceanica habitats.

► Water Pollution

High Threat
Inside site, extent of threat not known
Outside site

The peak season sewage input from recreational boats in the area of the property has been compared to that of a city with a 10,000 population. Wastewater may lead to increased eutrophication of coastal waters, enhanced phytoplankton growth, and macrophyte (including seagrass)

suppression. This may contribute to the direct effect of anchoring inside the site.

► Tourism/ visitors/ recreation

High Threat
Inside site, extent of threat not known
Outside site

In 2016 Ibiza was visited by ca. 3 million visitors, many of which frequent the beaches and terrestrial and coastal parts of the site (Turisme Illes Balears, 2016). The last counting for the terrestrial part of Ibiza, between May and October, was ca. 900,000 visitors. However, no exact visitor numbers to the terrestrial part of Formentera and small islands) are available, and the same is true for the impact of this visitation on the values of the site.

► Tourism/ Recreation Areas

High Threat
Outside site

Marinas and other tourism infrastructure near the site (e.g. at Ibiza town) are adding to seagrass destruction, eutrophication and related disturbances.

► Household Sewage/ Urban Waste Water

Very High Threat
Inside site, extent of threat not known
Outside site

Eutrophication caused by release of poorly treated sewage of about 300,000 people during peak tourism season (from Ibiza and Platja d’en Bossa treatment plants – IUCN, 2011), is leading to increased turbidity and enhanced phytoplankton growth, and macrophyte (including seagrass) suppression. The exact extent and impact of this release needs to be studied more closely. The same is true for the effects of brine from the Ibiza desalination plant on the Posidonia barrier reef near the site at Talamanca.

Potential Threats

High Threat

The values of the site are also under high threat from potential oil and gas

exploration and drilling, shipping accidents and additional tourism infrastructure developments, and additionally threatened, to an unclear degree, by climate change and particularly the increase of water temperatures in the Mediterranean.

▶ Habitat Shifting/ Alteration

Data Deficient
Inside site
Outside site

Although various effects of climate change on seagrass stands and ecosystems have been documented (e.g. Marba and Duarte, 2010), and increased water temperature has been listed as one of the factors favoring invasive alien macrophytes such as Caulerpa racemosa and Lophocladia lallemandii, the exact extent and impact of climate change on the site needs to be studied into more detail, also considering potential mitigation measures.

▶ Shipping Lanes

High Threat
Inside site
Outside site

There are reportedly several smaller ship accidents at and near the site each year, as a consequence of the intensive visitation by tourist boats and yachts. A notable larger accident was that of the MS Don Pedro in 2007 (Rössler et al. 2009). Although this accident happened outside the site and had reportedly no major effects on its integrity, it illustrates the high potential threat from shipping accidents to the marine and coastal natural values of the site.

▶ Tourism/ Recreation Areas

Very High Threat
Inside site, extent of threat not known
Outside site

Additional developments of tourism infrastructure near the site would aggravate the already severe pressure on its values in the same way as the already existing infrastructure. Reports in early 2012 about a new marina project near Ibiza with space for 700 yachts are of high significance in this regard, and need to be clarified as a matter of priority. There is also a new

golf project near Salinas de Ibiza.

▶ Oil/ Gas exploration/development

Very High Threat
Outside site

Oil and gas exploration activities would have negative impacts on the Balearic shearwater (Puffinus mauritanicus) a (globally) critically endangered species, as well as Bottlenose dolphin (Tursiops truncates) and Loggerhead turtle (Caretta caretta), and many others and would impact on the integrity of seagrass meadows.

Protection and management

Assessing Protection and Management

▶ Relationships with local people

Some Concern

There is a “participation programme” of the Nature Park which constitutes the natural part of the World Heritage site, and there is a stakeholder advisory board that met once in 2010, but has not met again, although it was stated that should meet once per year in the future (Parque Natural de Ses Salines d’Eivissa i Formentera, 2011). Specific participatory processes were developed in relation with the inclusion into the Natura 2000 network, as well as in the preparation of the last management plan (WHS Conservation report 1999-2014). However, it is unclear to what extent the current stakeholder participation setup contributes to the effective conservation of the site and how effective it is in representing the interests of all stakeholders.

▶ Legal framework

Some Concern

The conservation of the natural part of the site is based on at least 12 different local, regional, national and international laws and legal provisions (Rössler et al., 2009). However, the stakeholders consulted for this assessment almost unequivocally highlighted the lack of enforcement of the legal protection regime at the site (mainly due to a lack of political will as

well as staff, financial and other resources). Therefore, the legal framework for the protection of the site and particularly its enforcement is of concern.

► Enforcement

Data Deficient

Data deficient.

► Integration into regional and national planning systems

Some Concern

Important regional planning frameworks relevant to the management of the site are the Infrastructure Master Plan and the Insular Regional Plan. These plans have so far not been effective in preventing such key threats to the values of the site, as the intensive visitation and anchoring of recreational boats and yachts inside the site. Spain’s National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2011-2017 mentions its natural World Heritage properties, but does not contain any specific objectives related neither to them in general, nor to the Ibiza World Heritage site in particular (Ministry of the Environment, Rural Issues and the Seas, 2011). Moreover, the Government of the Balearic Islands has not approved yet its own regional Biodiversity Conservation Strategy. Therefore, the integration of conservation objectives into regional and national planning systems remains of concern.

► Management system

Some Concern

The site is managed as part of a Natural Park (UICN Category V) and includes a low proportion of Marine Reserves (UICN Category III) divided in small patches. However, in the 2014 Spanish Report, the name of the entire protected area is inadequately translated as Nature Reserve. A management plan has been in place since 2005 (Decree 132/2005) but it has been considered insufficient as an integral management planning framework for the site. In 2014 the site was included in the European Natura 2000 Network, as Special Preservation Zone, part as a Site of Community Interest and part as a Special Bird Preservation Zone, and the corresponding management plans were approved (BOIB no. 131) In parallel a new management plan related to the management of the saline activities was prepared, which has not been approved yet, for unclear reasons, perhaps related to the lack of

means and ability to enforce it. The fact is that the protected area management has not improved yet. Legal responsibility is in the hands of the Government of the Balearic Islands, located on the island of Mallorca, which has not been able to establish an effective management. Sharing or devolving this responsibility to the Councils of Ibiza and Formentera could improve management effectiveness.

► Management effectiveness

Some Concern

The management effectiveness for the natural part of the site has never been formally assessed. However, the stakeholders consulted for this assessment almost unequivocally highlighted their concern for the low management effectiveness of the site, mainly due to the lack of political will to address the drivers of the main threats and negative impacts, poor administrative cooperation, as well as lack of funding, technical staff and other key resources for the management of the protected area.

► Implementation of Committee decisions and recommendations

Some Concern

Decision 33 COM 7B.41 requested the State Party to invite a joint monitoring mission to the site, to report about its state of conservation, and to delay the start of construction of the proposed extension of the port facility until after this mission (WHC, 2009). The first two requests were met by the State Party, while the third request was not met. Decision 34 COM 7B.41 urged the State Party to immediately inform the World Heritage Centre of any unexpected or adverse impacts that occur during the dredging and to undertake and report on appropriate mitigation and monitoring measures. This decision also requested the State Party to report to the World Heritage Centre, on the state of conservation of the property (WHC, 2010). The last two requests were met by the State Party while it is unclear if the first request was met. Reporting on activities aimed at meeting the requests of Decision 35 COM 7B.37 is only due in 2015 (WHC, 2011). Overall, and particularly because of the failure to meet the key request of Decision 33 COM 7B.41 regarding the port facility extension, the implementation of Committee decisions and recommendations by the State Party regarding the natural part of this site is

of concern.

► Boundaries

Some Concern

The boundaries and buffer zone of the natural part of the site were considered adequate at the time of inscription (IUCN, 1999) but it appears that they are not clearly marked on site (e.g. by buoys) and that they are not fully understood by all local stakeholders (Rössler et al., 2009) not to mention tourists. There is also a mismatch between the World Heritage site and the Nature Park, the latter being larger. It has been recommended to extend the property to include the Posidonia reef at Talamanca, as well as other Posidonia areas and the Archipelago de Cabrera National Park, as well as the unique wetland of Les Feixes del Prat de ses Monges (WHC, 2011). Since the current boundaries are not effective in including some of the most valuable areas and excluding key threats from the site, they remain of some concern. Little progress has been made in this respect.

► Sustainable finance

Serious Concern

The State Party informed in 2010 that the financial resources of the Natural Park are obtained through the General Budget of the government of the Balearic Islands, with additional contributions of private companies such as “la Caixa” bank. However, no numbers were provided. The 2010 annual report of the Nature Park does contain some budget information, but no conclusive budget overview (Parque Natural de Ses Salines d’Eivissa i Formentera, 2011). Partially due to the economic crisis that Spain is going through, budgets have been severely reduced for a number of years and now they are clearly insufficient to deal with the management needs. No public information has been available from the last six years.

► Staff training and development

Some Concern

The State Party informed in 2010 that the Natural Park has a staff consisting of technical, education, informer, conservation, surveillance and naturalists teams, plus environmental agents from the Ministry of Environment. 2010 staff numbers of the Nature Park were about 15, although most of the staff

shared with other protected areas in the area (Parque Natural de Ses Salines d'Eivissa i Formentera, 2011). However, from 2012-16 only one staff person was exclusively devoted to the protected area, and the remaining staff were shared with other protected areas. In 2016 a second staff was appointed as director. The State Party has stated that the staff of the Nature Park and particularly its technicians and educators are highly trained. However, no information about staff training or development programmes was provided. No budget for research tasks or wildlife monitoring is available.

► Sustainable use

Serious Concern

The site is mainly used for mass tourism. However, there is concern regarding unsustainable visitation and anchoring by recreational boats and yachts within the site (WHC, 2011) as well as unsustainable growing tourism pressures in coastal areas with fragile ecosystems, like dunes.

► Education and interpretation programs

Some Concern

The Ses Salines d'Eivissa i Formentera Nature Park implements a broad education and interpretation programme, including visitor education and awareness raising activities, a dedicated education programme for school children (ca. 900 participating children in 2010), and produces various publications (Parque Natural de Ses Salines d'Eivissa i Formentera, 2011). The World Heritage status of the Nature Park could be emphasized more clearly in the context of these activities (IUCN, 2009). During the last summers (2015, 2016), groups of volunteers have been developing some successful educational activities aimed towards boats and yachts. However, these educational programs are insufficient to address the growing negative impacts related to mass tourism.

► Tourism and visitation management

Serious Concern

Although the opening of the Visitor Interpretation Centre at Ses Salines Nature Park was scheduled for 2011, opened to the public in 2014, but due to the lack of staff is receiving few visitors. Some visitor interpretation activities were implemented at Ses Feixes (IUCN, 2011). There have also been

activities aimed at visitor management at both Ibiza and Formentera, and at signposting. Some progress has been made near Formetera Island, at the expenses of the Ibiza sector of the site. Visitor services are offered by licensed local businesses. Management of visitation by cars as well as boats and yachts, and of the use of beach areas by tourists, remains a challenge (Parque Natural de Ses Salines d'Eivissa i Formentera, 2011).

► Monitoring

Serious Concern

Limited monitoring of key populations of seabirds and water quality which used to take place at the reserve protected area (Parque Natural de Ses Salines d'Eivissa i Formentera, 2011) was stopped due to a lack of budget and staff. An integrated monitoring system addressing key threats to the integrity of the outstanding universal values of the site is still missing (WHC, 2011).

► Research

Mostly Effective

Some research is conducted in and around the site by the Parque Natural de Ses Salines d'Eivissa i Formentera, by the Mediterranean Institute for Advanced Studies (IMEDEA) and Center for Advanced Studies of Blanes (CEAB), and by other institutions including the universities of Madrid, Barcelona and Valencia. Research areas include seagrass ecology, invasive alien macrophytes, and ornithology.

Overall assessment of protection and management

Some Concern

The site is under considerable pressure, mainly from poorly controlled tourism. The threats have been growing during the last years and several cumulative impacts are approaching a critical point. At the same time the management (including management system and effectiveness, identification and enforcement of borders and the legal framework, visitor management, monitoring of key threats) has so far been clearly insufficient, has decreased during the last years, and has not been effective to properly address these pressures on the site's values. There has always been a clear lack of financial

resources and staff which have further decreased over the last six years.

▶ **Assessment of the effectiveness of protection and management in addressing threats outside the site**

Some Concern

The main external threats to the site's values have been disposal of poorly treated sewage from Ibiza and Platja d'en Bossa sewage treatment plants during the peak tourism season, introduction of invasive species, and offshore disposal of dredged material ca. 15 km distant from the site. While clear efforts were made by the State Party to reduce threats from IAS and dredging disposal, the sewage threat has not been effectively addressed yet, and remains of serious concern, because of the negative impacts that have been accumulating.
Regarding the threats of submarine oil seismic exploration and drilling, in 2014 a joint campaign of local governments of the Balearic islands and private sector and NGOs succeeded in stopping the threat of a seismic exploration project, promoted by Cairn Energy, at about 50 km from the site. At this moment there is a project of seismic exploration promoted by Spectrum, which has been opposed by the local governments in the environmental impact assessment procedure. Given that the authorisation is in the hand of the Spanish government, there remain some uncertainties about the outcome.

State and trend of values

Assessing the current state and trend of values

World Heritage values

▶ **Marine ecosystems sustained by Posidonia oceanica**

High Concern
Trend:Deteriorating

Although extensive Posidonia areas were found by the 2007 survey (Government of the Balearic Islands, 2007), this survey did not include long-term monitoring. Density decreases of seagrass beds between 21% and 70% over 10 years have been reported from various locations near and/or inside

the site (Convalia, 2011). Even if additional research may be needed to determine if this loss of coverage is typical of the seagrass beds of the site as a whole, it is of high concern in relation to the site's values.

▶ Coastal (including lagoon) and small island ecosystems

High Concern
Trend:Data Deficient

Degradation of the dune habitats of the Migiorn and Cavallet beaches (Ibiza) has been observed. The strong tourism pressure on the terrestrial/coastal part of the Nature Park (see Parque Natural de Ses Salines d'Eivissa i Formentera, 2011) means there is a growing concern for the integrity of these ecosystems.

▶ Marine biodiversity

High Concern
Trend:Deteriorating

The conservation status of marine biodiversity of the site, although apparently not monitored in detail currently, is inferred to be of high concern because it largely depends on the conservation status of the Posidonia oceanica meadows, the principal marine ecosystem of the site.

▶ Diversity of coastal and terrestrial flora

Data Deficient
Trend:Data Deficient

No information about the current conservation status of the terrestrial and coastal flora, or its trend, is available.

▶ Diversity of coastal and terrestrial fauna

High Concern
Trend:Deteriorating

Colonies of the critically endangered Balearic Shearwater Puffinus mauretanicus on Formentera, which overlap with the property, have experienced a strong decline in recent years, from more than 1,500 breeding pairs in the early 1990s to less than 1000 pairs in 2001, and 692 pairs in 2003-2006 (IUCN, 2012). The same may be true for the Ibiza population (747 pairs) and potentially for other seabird populations on site. No significant

deteriorations of the conservation status of other coastal and terrestrial fauna of the site have been reported by the State Party or other stakeholders.

Summary of the Values

► **Assessment of the current state and trend of World Heritage values**

High Concern

Trend: Deteriorating

The state of key ecosystem and biodiversity values of the site including its Posidonia oceanica meadows with their associated biodiversity, and the population of the Balearic Shearwater Puffinus mauretanicus is of High Concern, and deteriorating. If this negative trend continues, these values may soon enter a critical conservation state.

Additional information

Benefits

Understanding Benefits

► **Outdoor recreation and tourism**

In 2016, ca. 3 million tourists arrived in Ibiza & Formentera, an increase of 10.5% from 2015 (Agència Turisme Illes Balears, 2016). Current estimations forecast ca. 30% increase in 2017, with a high contribution of international visitors, and tourism at land and sea is practiced at a high intensity (Parque Natural de Ses Salines d’Eivissa i Formentera, 2011). If managed sustainably, the site will continue to offer a unique opportunity to experience an extraordinary coastal landscape and seascape with its associated biodiversity. This will contribute significantly to income generation and the socio-economic development in the property’s vicinity.

► **Importance for research**

The site has contributed to the scientific understanding of coastal Mediterranean waters and seagrass meadows, and continues to support extensive scientific research and publications (UNEP-WCMC, 2011).

► Contribution to education

Based on the site's significant importance for knowledge generation and its visitor and educational programmes and facilities, it also functions as a living museum, which gives people a direct impression of the coastal Mediterranean landscape and seascape (Parque Natural de Ses Salines d'Eivissa i Formentera, 2011).

► Fishing areas and conservation of fish stocks

The seagrass meadows of the site are important spawning and nursing areas for a wide range of fish species, including commercially important species that support fisheries throughout the Balearic Islands (IUCN, 1999). Although this support function to sustainable fisheries has not been quantified in financial terms, these benefits are likely to be significant.

► Carbon sequestration

Posidonia oceanica seagrass meadows are considered as "blue carbon" store: coastal vegetation that sequesters CO2 and store carbon more effectively than terrestrial forests (Fourqurean et al., 2012). Thus, posidonia meadows contribute to climate regulation being estimated that it stores 420 103 gC m-2 (Pergent et al., 2012). In the Heritage site was estimated to exist 4,580 ha of posidonia meadows (Ballesteros and Cebrián, 2004), so according on previous estimation for all the posidonia meadows in the Balearic Islands (MacCord and Mateo, 2010; Pergent et al., 2012), the carbon stock of the site may be estimated around 270 million € on the global carbon market.

► Provision of jobs

The property provides ca. 15 jobs for its management alone (Parque Natural de Ses Salines d'Eivissa i Formentera, 2011). In addition, a significant number of jobs (hundreds to thousands of jobs in tourism) indirectly benefit

from.

▶ History and tradition

The considerable nature conservation values of the site are reflected by its designation as a mixed World Heritate site, as Natural Park, as Marine Reserve, as Site of Community Importance (SCI) and partly as a Ramsar site (Wetlands International, 2012). The seagrass habitat is also protected under the EU Habitats Directive (Rössler et al., 2009) and the Spanish National Catalogue of Endangered Species.

Summary of benefits

The most obvious benefits provided by the property are connected to tourism and the industry that is based on it, as a major pillar of the local and national economy. However, the site and particularly its seagrass meadows have other equally important benefits, such as contribution to sustainable fisheries, climate change mitigation and simply to the conservation of an endemic and uniquely well-represented ecosystem type and a number of globally threatened species.

Projects

Compilation of active conservation projects

№	Organization/ individuals	Project duration	Brief description of Active Projects
1	Mediterranean Institute of Advanced Studies		Various research projects related to marine conservation, seagrass ecosystem ecology and global change.
2	GEN-GOB Eivissa		Various projects on ecological education and campaigning on Ibiza
3	Oceana Europe		Campaign to enforce the preservation and conservation of posidonia meadows in Ibiza and Formentera

Compilation of potential site needs

№	Site need title	Brief description of potential site needs	Support needed for following years
1	n.a.	A monitoring program on posidonia meadows needs to be developed in order to assess anchoring and sewage impacts and thus implement appropriate measures.	
2	n.a.	Extension of the property (see WHC, 2011).	
3	n.a.	Establishment of an integrated monitoring system for the property that particularly focuses on key threats to the integrity of its OUV (see WHC, 2011).	
4	n.a.	Upgrade of the sewage treatment plants of Ibiza and Platja d’en Bossa (see WHC, 2011).	
5	n.a.	Finalization, approval and effective implementation of an integrated management plan for the property (see WHC, 2011).	
6	n.a.	Reestablishment /extension of seagrass friendly anchoring devices in appropriate zones of the property, accompanied by upgrade of communication and enforcement activities aimed at boat/yacht owners.	
7	n.a.	Establishment of an effective control mechanism against damage to seagrass meadows by anchoring and sewage release of recreational boats and yachts (see WHC, 2011).	

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