



The island's 88,000-cubic-metre irrigation pond—linked to a grid that uses 24 kilometres of pipes to provide 69 individuals with enough water to irrigate 114 hectares of land—is now operational.

Regional minister of environment, agriculture and fishing Vicenç Vidal was joined at a gathering marking the pond's activation by CiF president Jaume Ferrer, Balearic agriculture and livestock chief Mateu Ginard, and CiF president's office secretary Bartomeu Escandell.

On a visit to one of the local properties that can now tap water from the pond for crops, Vidal spoke about the pond's significance. Vidal called the final product—a mixture of desalinated and repurposed purified water—“one of the best tertiary treatments in the Balearics”.

President Ferrer applauded a rollout he described as “eight years in the making” (construction of the structure finished in 2009) and said the administration would dedicate resources to training people on how to use and administer “something that will put Formentera's countryside, and its revival, in the forefront”.

Joan Ferrer, who is chairman of an irrigation workers' collective, hailed the culmination of the project as he declared: “We've got land, water and a reason to be hopeful. Now the focus is on getting production to where it needs to be”.

The local agrarian sector's requests for the €8.2-million structure date back to 2003. The pond was finally completed in 2009, though the inactivity that followed made necessary an additional investment of €294,116 to get the pond operational once and for all during this legislative session.

Unlike with other irrigation ponds, which have a high chlorine content, the water in Formentera's irrigation pond filters through a desalination plant first to ensure it is apt for local fields.

Thirteen similar structures in the Balearic Islands use purified water to irrigate 3,600 hectares—3,600 on Mallorca, 691 on Menorca, 114 on Formentera and 85 on Eivissa.