

STATEMENT FROM THE PLATFORM OF NEIGHBORS OF ALCÚDIA AFFECTED BY THE CABLE (VAAC)

Hello everyone. After reading the concern expressed by some of you in this chat (and in others) regarding the route agreed upon by the working group, we believe it is appropriate to summarize the long journey that has brought our platform to the completion of the protocol.

But first, we would like to point out that, although most members of this chat are not members of VAAC and some disagree with the decisions and actions undertaken by the platform, we have always considered it appropriate to keep you informed of the steps taken, without discriminating against anyone. The only exception was at the last general assembly of the association, where members voted democratically (as only they had the right to vote) on the route agreed upon by the working group. This route was approved by a large majority (94% of those present). We have continually listened to your proposals, and the platform has always remained open and participatory.

As you know, from the beginning of our association, we raised two important demands:

1. That the cable not arrive at all (hence the name of this chat, “No to the cable”).
2. That if the cable did arrive, it should enter through Alcúdia Bay, up to the Son Sant Martí substation.

Regarding the first demand—the cable not arriving—the platform carried out an alternative renewable energy study, locating power generation centers in disused or inactive quarries, with megawatt production similar to that expected from the second link. No one showed any interest in it. We soon had to abandon this fight, since all political groups (government and opposition) and other public institutions agreed on the arrival of the cable, and we did not receive support from any of them. The cable is an infrastructure included in a National Plan approved by the Council of Ministers, and historically, no legal challenge to an agreement of this level has ever succeeded.

Our second demand—the cable entering through Alcúdia Bay—was our main battle for two long years, without any success. Many and varied actions were carried out during this time: we tried to push for a vote on the famous non-legislative proposal (PNL); we collected signatures; we designed badges and T-shirts, posters and information leaflets; we organized assemblies and demonstrations; we held meetings with politicians, lawyers, engineers, university professors, environmental associations, ecologists, journalists (appearing in the press and regional TV)...; we carried out studies on the electromagnetic fields of the Santa Ponça cable and the seagrass (posidonia) in both bays; and we even considered appealing to Europe. But we always ran into insurmountable barriers, and the authorities remained firm on the cable entering through Sa Ferradura. (As we explained in earlier statements,

obtaining European funding for the cable's construction was conditioned on protecting the seagrass, and only by entering through Sa Ferradura could the plant avoid being affected by this infrastructure, thanks to the use of the Horizontal Directional Drilling system—which can only be carried out at that location).

Only the Balearic Government and the Department of Energy in the current legislature opened a small window of dialogue with us this past year to modify the land route and propose special health protection measures for those affected by the cable's proximity. After the failed attempts to change the marine route, we believe it would have been irresponsible on our part not to accept negotiations through the working group established under last summer's protocol. The rejection of all objections to the published cable project—both ours and those of other colleagues (very well argued, including the request for the cable to enter through Alcúdia Bay)—proved us right in persisting with the negotiations laid out in the Protocol.

Obviously, the solution agreed upon by the working group is not optimal for anyone, but we consider it satisfactory for all. We had already had to give up changing the marine route in order to take part in defining the land route; the Roads Department (under the Consell de Mallorca) had to modify regulations so that the cable could run along the road; the Department of Environment allowed it to run along the Son Sant Martí forest track; REE had to concede in modifying the route and adopting protection measures for homes near the cable path; the Department of Energy coordinated meetings and will file objections to include the working group's agreements in the cable project through an addendum; the Balearic Government and the Ministry of Ecology and Demographic Challenge, despite being of different political colors, supported the Protocol... In any case, the agreed-upon route, with health protection measures included, is infinitely better than the originally published route, as the latter affected many more homes and had no protective measures. The shortening of the cable's route and the significant reduction in the number of homes near its path allowed the implementation of a health protection system that guarantees safe magnetic field levels.

Unfortunately, citizens are the most vulnerable and disadvantaged in this kind of agreement, having had to give up many of our demands. Still, we must acknowledge that the other parties (REE and public administrations of different political levels) agreed to negotiate with the people, as the law was on their side and they were under no obligation to do so. Ultimately, the voice of citizens should be present in all infrastructure projects that affect us, and we hope politicians will become aware of this.

Lastly, to all those who disagree with the work carried out by this Platform and/or to those who joined this fight late, we want to express that we are open to meeting with you if you consider it appropriate, in order to provide you with information about the solution agreed upon by the working group, as well as about the long journey of actions and steps that brought us to this point.

Our most sincere thanks go to all who have supported and helped us (even anonymously, completely selflessly, or simply by “being there” for the Platform), or who have taken their own actions in this common cause.

The VAAC Platform