

## **Changemakers Project students act against single-use plastics together with Save the Med Foundation and Fundació Jesús Serra**

**This year, 22 teams from Menorca and Mallorca have participated in the project, presenting high-quality proposals to promote a wave of positive impact by eliminating single-use plastics within their schools and communities**

The fourth edition of the **Changemakers at sea** educational programme promoted by Save the Med Foundation, in collaboration with Fundació Jesús Serra Grupo Catalana Occidente, has consolidated this project as a solution in which students are the driving force and the lever for change in the Balearic Islands to generate a positive impact within the community with proposals that are highly focused on immediate implementation.

Of the 22 projects presented and after the jury's deliberation, two chosen teams had the unique experience of sailing aboard the incredible wooden sailboat from 1841, Rafael Verdera, in turn learning about the marine ecosystems and the biodiversity of the Mediterranean Sea.

One of the teams chosen from the 4th edition of Changemakers at sea was the “Ecolog” team comprising 4 girls from the Lycée Français of Palma de Mallorca. The project presented consists of the idea of an *app* as an eco-catalogue with a clear objective, to stop the environmental crisis by reducing plastic waste. This catalogue will include all businesses, shops and stores in Mallorca committed to reducing the use of plastic, whether packaging, bags, etc., providing solutions such as sale in bulk.

The other team chosen was “Es Salobrar” consisting of three girls and one boy from the Fra Joan Ballester school. After significant research and surveys carried out at local businesses, they concluded that the use of plastic bags was still too prevalent, and suggested the solution of replacing these with reusable fabric bags. With all the data collected in the surveys, they have carried out significant awareness-raising work both within their school and their local community.

As a prize, both teams embarked on Rafael Verdera for a week dedicated to sailing and marine science. In addition, the classes from each project selected will receive cash prizes to help them promote their environmental education goals and objectives during the academic year. Three other participating teams joined Save The Med in one-day expeditions at sea, having a unique experience onboard the Stensella boat powered by solar energy.

During this voyage, the students watched and learned how to identify sea turtles, dolphins, moonfish, jumping tunas, manta rays and a variety of sea birds. They also analyzed the presence of microplastics on the surface of the water and helped to remove plastic waste and fishing gear abandoned at sea.

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### **About Fundació Jesús Serra**

Fundación Jesús Serra is a non-profit organization created in memory of Jesús Serra Santamans, a well-known businessman and sponsor and founder of Grupo Catalana Occidente. The foundation develops and supports projects in the areas of research, education, business, social action, sports, and promotion of the arts, with a common goal: a responsible commitment to society.

If you require any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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In addition to monitoring marine ecosystems and collecting scientific data for protected marine areas, they learned navigation skills and participated in all tasks and work onboard, including cooking, cleaning and handling the vessel.

You can see the 22 projects presented at [www.changemakersatsea.com](http://www.changemakersatsea.com)

“The expedition proved to be a vital experience, not only for the Changemakers, but also for the STM team and the crew of Rafael Verdera. It was incredible to experience the students' growth and development in just one week and see how we become one big family in such a short time! The trip is a truly unique opportunity for students to connect with the sea and nature first-hand and to acquire outdoor skills that cannot be learned in a classroom,” says marine biologist and educator of the Save The Med Foundation, Sergio Halpern Ruiz.

“For Fundación Jesús Serra, this project perfectly combines two of our main objectives, promoting training and education, in this case in habits to protect the biosphere and the environment, and have a positive impact on the local community, preserving the humanist values of our founder”, stated the Managing Director of Fundación Jesús Serra, Ignacio Gallardo-Bravo.

“Participating in the Changemakers project was an unforgettable experience. Being part of this helped to strengthen coexistence, respect, friendship and awareness of caring for our planet and the Mediterranean Sea,” says, Joana Maria Ferrer Bonet, a teacher at Fra Joan Ballester School.

But the project does not end here, as each team is encouraged to continue their efforts in reducing plastic. For those who want to participate next year, the project will be open again to all students between 15 and 18 years of age from the Balearic Islands. In addition, the Junior version of the project will allow students between 8 and 14 years of age to join the movement towards a future without single-use plastic.

### Save The Med Foundation

The Save The Med Foundation is a non-profit organization that works to regenerate 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, inspires action, invites collaboration and helps to form a generation of changemakers.

[www.savethemed.org](http://www.savethemed.org) @savethemed #GenerationSaveTheMed

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