

## Those affected by the Ley de Costas Appeal to Brussels

The Plataforma Nacional de Afectados por la Ley de Costas (National Platform of People Affected by the Coastal Act) has reported the Spanish Government to the EU Committee on Petitions for improperly applying the Law of Coasts. Also they have complained in Alicante about officials who refused to show the relevant documents to owners affected by the most recent boundary delineation exercise in Xàbia.



Thousands of people will be without of part or all of their homes or businesses, despite owning them since before the Act. The helplessness of these people is absolute when they find that their properties (which have all the necessary permits) are suddenly affected by a boundary that the Ministry of Rural and Marine Environment has no shame in applying retroactively. And this despite the fact that the European Parliament has warned the Spanish Government in the now famous Auken report.

One Xàbia resident, RP, who had a house built in 1982 in Balcon al Mar on the front line overlooking a cliff, comments that even though the Coastal Act was in 1988 and his property has all permits, the latest boundary line cuts his house in half. Worse still, he was never formally notified, but learned about it from the press on July 1st, about the visit of officials of the Dirección General de Sostenibilidad (Directorate General of Sustainability). He hired a lawyer, but when the lawyer went to the "Costas" office in Alicante, he was denied the public records requested. His case is not unique, but only one of hundreds of Xàbia residents affected, many of them Germans, and thousands across the country.

According to the Plataforma Nacional de Afectados por la Ley de Costas, there have been numerous complaints from people affected by the latest coastal boundary in the municipality. These complaints have been included in an expansion of the protest against the improper application of this legislation submitted to the EU Parliament . At the same time, complaints have been lodged in the Court of Alicante about the officials of the Dirección General de Sostenibilidad (Department of Sustainability) who denied access to public records with excuses such as "preserving the privacy of those affected." Absurd excuses, when you consider that the ones concerned are the owners, and that they know where their homes are.

For her part, according to the Councillor for Urban development. Pepa Chorro, the Xàbia Office for Urban development has done everything possible to help those affected. Her department gave priority to providing all necessary documentation to the owners so that they could make their claims before the deadline. And for two weeks the map marked with the new boundaries was displayed publicly in her department. However, Chorro explained that those seeking advice from the Costas can only get it in Alicante.

For the president of the National Platform for Affected: "This new strategy of the Ministry should cease as soon as possible. It only leads to the dismay of thousands of citizens, who are helpless before a machinery of government which is trampling on their rights."

For his part, RC, after recounting his "sad history," said that "if this boundary were imposed, Spain would become one of those countries in which the government bypasses the law and without any compensation, appropriates property which had been legally acquired and paid for. "