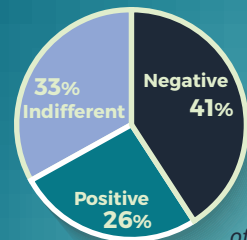


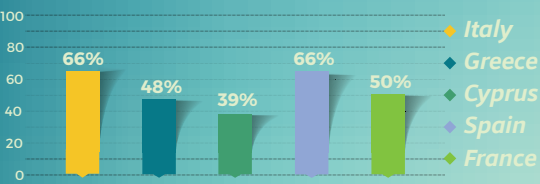
PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF POSIDONIA BANQUETTES



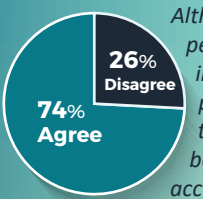
Posidonia Banquettes acceptance appears to increase with the educational level and age of respondents.

Among mediterranean countries surveyed, beach users in Greece, France and Cyprus ranked as the least accepting of banquettes.

PUBLIC AWARENESS OF THE ECOLOGICAL ROLE OF BANQUETTES



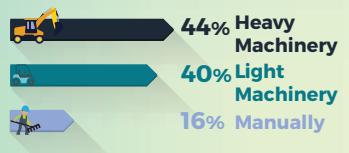
GREEN LABEL FOR NATURAL BEACHES



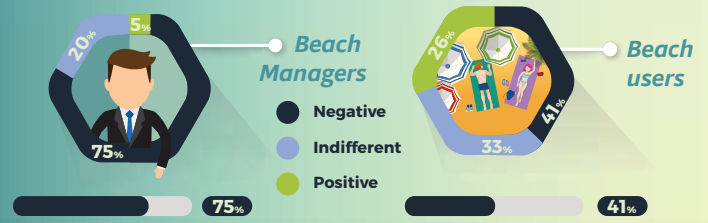
Although the public largely expressed negative perception and low awareness of their ecological importance, the strong majority agreed that proper information and motivation (i.e. through the establishment of a green label for natural beaches) could help increase their willingness to accept banquettes on the beach.

BANQUETTES REMOVAL

As much as 83% of coastal municipalities remove banquettes from beaches. In most cases, removal operations involve heavy (44%) or light (40%) machinery.



DIVERGENT PERCEPTIONS



a key issue Beach managers and operators overestimate beach users' negativity toward banquettes, when considering that 88% of decision makers claim to design beach maintenance practices in response to tourist demands.

POSBEMED is a modular Interreg MED project that focuses on the sustainable management of the Mediterranean coasts, and specifically on the conflicts and opportunities in coastal areas where interdependence between seagrass meadows, dunes and beaches occurs.

A SOCIOECONOMIC APPROACH

A socioeconomic evaluation study was performed with a view to examining beach users' and managers perceptions and expectations. Existing management practices on Posidonia oceanica banquettes were also surveyed.



The study was conducted in five Mediterranean countries, namely Spain, France, Italy, Greece & Cyprus

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Project co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund

POSBEMED

SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF POSIDONIA BEACH SYSTEMS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION



www.posbemed.interreg-med.eu



“MEDITERRANEAN COASTS: BEAUTIFUL, IMPORTANT & FRAGILE”

Posidonia oceanica is an endemic Mediterranean seagrass, protected under the EU laws. It shelters and nourishes a rich biodiversity, while offering a wide range of marine and coastal ecosystem services.

Mediterranean beaches are worldwide unique because of the presence of stranded *Posidonia* leaves, often deposited in thick accumulations known as

Posidonia banquettes

Banquettes, although often perceived as a nuisance, are actually key contributors to the health and sustainability of coastal ecosystems:

➤ BEACH EROSION PREVENTION

They cushion and protect coasts, and particularly sandy beaches and dunes.

➤ BEACH & DUNE FORMATION & STABILIZATION

They contribute to sand dune and beach formation, thus stabilizing coastal systems.

➤ BEACH NOURISHMENT

They are an important source of nutrients and a natural fertilizer for beach and dune vegetation.

➤ BIODIVERSITY

They provide a unique habitat for a rich, often rare and endemic fauna.

RECOMMENDATIONS for Beach Managers

Posidonia banquettes should remain intact, particularly in natural beaches and dunes of high conservation value.

Awareness raises acceptance:
Inform local beach visitors on the ecological meaning and importance of banquettes.

Avoid heavy machinery or any machinery that scrapes, gouges or scours the beach.

Man-made litter must be removed from banquettes manually or by the use of hand tools.

For highly frequented non-eroding beaches, consider clearing only small sections of banquettes to allow easier access for summertime activities.

For minor accumulations, consider burying banquettes under the sand, or returning them to the sea under favourable wind or tide conditions.

If needed, only use vehicles with rubber tires; no operations <5m seaward of dunes; prevent destruction or alteration of beach biota and profile.

When banquette removal is deemed necessary, consider using the resource to reconstruct eroded dunes, or promote for other re-use purposes.