

Summary: presentation costs and benefits Mareclean

In the framework of the MARECLEAN project, the costs and benefits of the Mareclean approach in the project area have been assessed. The project area is subdivided in two regions: a region with mainly urban characteristics “Syndicate Mixte de Bassins versants des Cotiers Granvillais” (SMBCG) and a rural region “Syndicate Mixte de Pays Coutance” (SMPC).

The benefits of the Mareclean approach are linked with tourism and shellfish breeding. Benefits for tourism are estimated as avoided losses of income from tourism. This income is estimated at about € 60 million per year in the project area (apart from an estimated € 45 million as spin-off in the construction sector). The Mareclean approach addresses the potential negative impact of closed beaches on tourist visits and thus expenditures.

Benefits for the shellfish sector are linked with avoiding that harvested oysters and mussels cannot be sold on the market. This involves both the implementation of Mareclean actions to reduce microbiological pollution of coastal waters and treatment of the shellfish. Total present income of shellfish breeding is estimated at € 50 million annually.

The potential benefits are estimated at € 23 million per year, of which € 9 mln is linked with tourism, and € 14 mln is linked with shellfish breeding. The long term benefits are estimated at € 400 million (period 2010-2035, Net Present Value).

The costs of implementation of the Mareclean approach are based on investments and operations needed for the implementation. These can be divided in: “software” (i.e. early warning system; modelling); sewerage infrastructure costs; costs to reduce run-off from agriculture and treatment of shellfish. The annual costs are estimated at € 1.5 million, of which € 1 mln for shellfish treatment. In the long term, these costs would be about € 25 million (Net Present Value). As the Mareclean approach is currently under implementation, the cost estimates are preliminary, especially for agricultural measures.

Compared to the costs, the benefits of Mareclean outweigh costs by a factor 16. In the rural SMPC region, the benefit-costs ratio is 25, in the urban SMBCG region, this ratio is 13.

As the results are partly based on assumptions which cannot be tested in reality, the sensitivity of the results is assessed. It appears that even under most unfavourable conditions, the benefits outweigh costs by a factor 2.

The overall conclusion on Mareclean is that the approach is economically feasible. The financing of Mareclean may cause some problems, as the sectors that implement measures (sewerage companies, farmers/landowners) are often not the (main) beneficiaries (the tourist sector) of these measures.