

“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.