



Funded by  
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UK Research  
and Innovation



INN WATER

Promoting social innovation to renew  
multi-level and cross sector water governance

February 2026

# Result Factsheet

## INCLUSION OF ENVIRONMENTAL COSTS WITHIN WATER TARIFF AND PRICING

Application of ERC in water tariff  
Middle Brenta

RESULT Type:  
**Policy-related result**

[Link to the pilot site](#)



Owners:



E | T | I | F | O | R  
valuing nature



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6<sub>a</sub>

## Description

The Environmental and Resource Costs (ERC) have been included in the drinking water tariff as foreseen by Art. 9 of the Water Framework Directive. The process to define and apply the ERC costs, initiated with the previous LIFE Brenta 2030 project, successfully came to an end in March 2024 with the approval of the new local planning of the drinking water service, which includes interventions for environmental mitigation and compensation (such as nature-based solutions, green and blue infrastructures) financially supported by those specific tariff headings. This intervention approach can have multiple benefits if compared to grey infrastructures: in the Middle Brenta context a NbS can improve the quality and quantity of water that infiltrates in the ground, as well as provide benefits on biodiversity conservation, climate mitigation, etc. At national scale it represents a pilot experience towards a full circularity of the drinking water service.

## TARGET AUDIENCES

### EU and Member State Policy-making institutions

To raise awareness and possibly influence policy

### International Organizations (OECD, FAO, UN)

To sharing knowledge

### Other actors who can help us fulfil our market potential

To expanding to more markets – finding new customers

### Others

To business plan development

## We specially need

**1** **Water managers** willing to define and apply the ERC costs, giving birth to others application labs. We can bring support at 360°: from the preliminary analysis to the strategy definition, identification of intervention for impacts mitigation and compensation, and proper communication to spread the results and facilitate the replication of this mechanism.

**2** **Water regulators** and **research partnerships** to make this mechanism more 'systemic' through innovating projects, building on the LIFE Brenta 2030 and InnWater results.



SDG's

## Unique value proposition

The application of the Environmental and Resource Costs in the Middle Brenta river basin represents a pilot experience in Italy.

## Use beyond the project life

The ERC will continue to be applied in the water tariff to finance environmental interventions.

## Impacts

- **Scientific:** Understood impacts and threats of related to the water service, as well as priority interventions for the territory
- **Economic:** 1M € of funding ensured in the next 9 years for the realisation of NbS and green/ blue infrastructures
- **Societal:** Application of the “polluter/user pays principle”
- **Environmental:** 27 ha of habitat requalification

## Key benefits



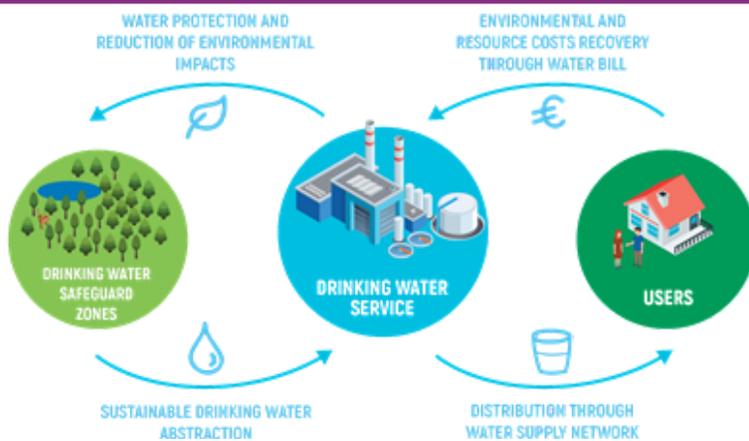
For water regulators:  
complying with the  
WFD



For water utilities/  
managers: communication  
to the users served



For water utilities/ managers: results  
can also be used for the  
sustainability reporting (eg. CSRD)



## Replicability

- Other water utilities
- Managers of other water services (eg. Irrigation, hydroelectric, etc.)

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### Legal requirements - IPR

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