

Abstract

Changes, adaptations and resilience: the case of French oyster farming

Catherine MARIOJOULS and Jean PROU***

**AgroParisTech, 16 rue Claude Bernard, 75231 Paris cedex 05, France*

*catherine.mariojouis@agroparistech.fr ** IFREMER, Ronce-les-Bains, 17390 La*

Tremblade France

jean.prou@ifremer.fr

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The French oyster farming sector since its inception in the nineteenth century has regularly had to evolve for adapting to new situations. So there has been significant changes in the oyster practices, the economic operation of enterprises, the place of oyster farming in coastal areas, whereas the persistence of the oyster farming sector facing significant threats has periodically been questioned. Environmental changes have played an important role in this activity closely related to the environment: pollution from various sources, increasing episodes of contamination by phycotoxins, extreme weather events, and climate change. Recently, the high mortality syndrome questions the issue of the conditions for the sustainability of the activity. Taking into account the conflicting uses in the coastal zone and the importance of relationships with watersheds activities, the development policies must also analyze the adaptation capacity of oyster farming socio-ecosystems, in these environments highly dynamic, spatially and temporally. Can we talk about resilience about oyster culture and the associated coastal socio-ecosystems? Can we speak of a reference state, a concept discussed today in the policies of environmental protection? This communication attempts, using examples, to discuss the answers that can be given to these questions, for different aspects: ecological, technical, socio-economic.