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Editorial

by Rob Steijn,
Project
Manager
(Arcadis NL)



As a focal point of human activities, coastal areas are being used for a variety of activities. High population growth, over-exploitation of the resources and disruption of environmental processes through degradation of the quality of the environment, has led to multiple use conflicts. These in turn, adversely affect the socio-economic welfare of coastal inhabitants. Environmental constraints sometimes frustrate spatial development and spatial development sometimes harms the environment. I have personally seen coastal projects that have had serious side-effects (often on the longer term) that could have been avoided if a less sectoral approach had been followed. I've also spoken to coastal developers that became very frustrated as they could not get things done for a variety of reasons. It seems to me that the only rational way to "get things done" is by following a truly integrated approach which basically considers everything and involves everybody. Since this is not yet a common approach, there is still a lot to gain.

In Europe, the European Commission (DG Environment) is intensively working to remedy deterioration and to improve the overall situation in the European coastal zone by promoting Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM). However, as Europe is so diverse there is different progress of implementing the EU ICZM Recommendations in EU coastal Member States. However, we can learn - from each other. We can support each other to avoid mistakes and to make our coasts even better places. That's why the project OURCOAST has been implemented, to ensure that lessons learned from the ICZM experiences and practices will be shared and made widely available.

Through the ICZM experiences gathered from different European Member States, OURCOAST will support the exchange of best practices in coastal management in Europe from which all of us can learn, policy-makers, coastal managers and stakeholders. It will eventually lead to the development of guidance for sustainable use of the coastal zone in Europe as well as to the encouragement of the coastal Member States to implement ICZM policy. The official start of the OURCOAST project took place in January 2009. In June, the Inception Report was approved by the Commission and is now available on the [OURCOAST website](#).

In this first newsletter, some of the OURCOAST team will introduce various activities of the project in the next pages. We will be issuing a newsletter every three months to keep you informed about the progress and hopefully to get you enthusiastic about our mission: to support ICZM in Europe.

Inside OURCOAST

This section introduces the activities inside of OURCOAST presented by the team members.

Getting started..

OURCOAST has started working intensively to make sure that experiences and practices gathered in Europe will be shared and made accessible for everybody. Throughout the project we have a number of important milestones which are described in detail in the [Inception Report](#). At the moment our team is focused on collecting the case studies presenting past and existing ICZM experiences from the EU. In this process a number of people from all Coastal member States is involved because all case studies, after being collected, are also being verified by others to ensure the best quality of the cases. Meanwhile, we are intensively involved in developing the database and the website, which will be made available to all of you in its best form to ensure accessibility of the case studies in the nearer future, and analyses and guidance later on. One of our dissemination activities is to present and to promote this initiative to a wide audience. For example, OURCOAST will be presented during the Ninth International Conference on The Mediterranean Coastal Environment (MEDCOAST 09), to be held in Sochi, Russia.

*by Patrycja Czerniak,
project assistant (Arcadis NL)*



Quick look into the European Portal ICZM database website

One of the main products of OURCOAST will be to set up the multi-lingual searchable database and website. This portal will be the main source of information about the OURCOAST project and presented in a simple, user-friendly manner to access relevant material of the project, the ICZM practices and case studies and a feedback form. More importantly it will facilitate navigation and project information in 10 European languages: English (the official language), Finnish, French, German, Greek, Italian, Latvian, Polish, Romanian and Spanish. The ICZM case studies, as described above, will be provided only in English, while background and source materials will be made available in the national languages, as well.

This portal, currently under development, will be accessible through the EUROPA, European Commission, Directorate-General Environment website. It is expected to be launched during Spring 2010.

*by Bernd Heinichen,
Coordination of database and website development
(Arcadis DE)*



portal prototype

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ICZM case studies - the collection process

Case studies are now being collected involving different aspects of ICZM. They will show that there is a continuing need (and proven benefit) to apply ICZM to coastal management strategies. The case studies will be summarized as an example of Good Experience, one which may be applicable (by direct transfer or adaptation) either to another country or another ICZM issue. They will support the Commission in its drive to have ICZM implemented within the Union.

Each case study will be addressed from the main question of key approaches or tools that were used and will be grouped under one of eight Themes that have been defined:-

ADAPTATION TO RISK:

1. Managing impacts of climate change and safeguarding resilience of coasts/coastal systems;
2. Preparing for, preventing and managing natural hazards and technological (human made) hazards;
3. Integrating coherent strategies covering the risk-dimension (prevention to response) into planning and investment

SUSTAINABLE USE OF RESOURCES:

4. Preserving the coastal and marine environment (its functioning and integrity) to share space;
5. Sound use of resources and promotion of less resource intensive processes/products.

SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH:

6. Developing the coastal zone of Europe's regional seas sustainably;
7. Balancing economic, social, and cultural development whilst enhancing environment and managing impacts from coastal activities;
8. Improving competitiveness.

Some cases can fall under more than one Theme so the summation of the total number of case summaries will be more than the total number of 350 case summaries to be collected. In order for a meaningful analysis to be conducted and appropriate lessons teased out, a number of Key Approaches will be specifically examined within the selected eight themes. These "processes" are Integration; Participation; Knowledge-based; Ecosystems based; Socio-economic; and Technical. Each Key Approach can contain different, specific tools e.g. Planning, Strategies, Coordination mechanisms; Innovation. The case studies will be presented in such a way as to present the reasons why the approaches taken / tools used were effective and what were the success and fail factors.

Each case study upon completion will be assessed within the Consortium by at least 2 persons. The cases will also be assessed by four external assessors who are all working at regional/national government level. Each case will also be verified for being correct and up-to-date by someone who was close to the original work.

The Consortium would appreciate any persons reading this newsletter who feel they know of good material to contact the Project manager. Already, a presentation at the inter-governmental meeting of HELCOM Habitat in May led to several cases being suggested which will be added to the database.

*by Alan Pickaver,
Coordination of ICZM case study collection
(Coastal & Marine Union – EUCC)*



Topical Issues

This section presents topical ICZM initiatives, policies, instruments and tools throughout Europe.

GET INVOLVED!

We kindly invite you to mail m.ferreira@eucc.net about new topics, publications, project announcements and any relevant information to share with OURCOAST readers!

UK : South West Regional coastal monitoring programme.

Following the EU recommendation, England has been working intensively on producing an ICZM strategy for its coastal areas. The principles of ICZM have been included in the Marine and Coastal Access Bill enhancing, among the other objectives, protection of the marine environment and biodiversity and at the same time preserving the socio-economic features of the coastal areas. The Marine and Coastal Access Bill calls for an ICZM approach for the coastal areas relating also to marine planning. In order to verify the progress of improving integration at sea, a monitoring process must be in place. Among the 5 regions in which England is divided for the monitoring processes, the South West region programme provides a good example. The South West Regional Coastal Monitoring Programme is fully financed by DEFRA (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) with the aim of creating a long-term monitoring and analysis programme covering a wide range of variables on a risk-based approach for the coastal areas within the region. Data collected are and will be freely accessible for multiple purposes and be useful to local authorities in the region, the Environment Agency, consultants in coastal defence, conservation management, academic research and for educational use.

Sources:
DEFRA
Channel Coastal Observatory

EU approach to Climate Change

Climate change consequences are already effecting many sectors and activities both inland and at sea. Mitigation policies are therefore needed to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions (the EU aims to reduce emissions to 20% below 1990 levels by 2020) but at the same time adaptation measures need to be put in place in order to avoid the unavoidable impacts. In order to face the ongoing effects of climate change the EU Commission released, last April, the white paper Adapting to climate change: Towards a European framework of action. The document presents a framework for policies and actions that Member State should implement to enhance their resilience toward the effect of climate change. Regarding the coastal and marine areas the European Union calls for an integration of climate change issue in the implementation of Marine Strategy Framework Directive and of the Common Fisheries Policy and enlightens the role of Integrated Coastal Zone Management in facing it. A first phase from 2009 to 2012 will produce an adaptation strategy for the EU based on a solid knowledge base on the impact of climate change, on the integration of adaptation in EU key policy areas, on using and creating proper policy instruments and on the international cooperation on adaptation. The second phase, beginning in 2013, will focus on the implementation of the strategy on adaptation. Adaptation to climate change is foreseen as a long and continuous process, considering also the results of future research and acquired knowledge, and will involve stakeholders at all levels both nationally and trans-nationally to reduce the vulnerability and enhance resilience toward climate change in Europe.

Sources:
EC DG Environment Climate Change
EC DG Environment Living with climate change in Europe
Adapting to climate change : towards a European framework for action, White Paper. European Commission 1 April 2009

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BALTIC SEA news: BaltCICA & BaltSeaPlan recent project initiatives

BaltCICA - Climate Change: Impacts, Costs and Adaptation in the Baltic Sea Region and BaltPlanSea - Introducing Maritime Spatial Planning in the Baltic Sea are among the 29 projects that have been approved under the Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007-2013.

The BaltCICA project is designed to focus on the most imminent problems that climate change is likely to cause in the Baltic Sea Region. The concentration of large parts of the population and many larger cities in coastal areas make it especially sensitive to climate change. Changes in precipitation and flood patterns (river floods and storm surges) as well as sea level rise can be expected. To address these issues 24 partners including municipalities, regional authorities and research institutes have joined forces. With a total budget of €5,3 million, the project is expected to deliver its results by January 2012.

The same deadline applies to the BaltSeaPlan for which €3,7 million have been made available. BaltSeaPlan aims to introduce maritime spatial planning in the Baltic region thanks to a 14 member partnership from seven Baltic countries which will take into account the EU Maritime Policy, the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan and the VASAB Gdańsk Declaration. Marine Spatial Planning is a key factor in managing potential conflicting and competing activities in the Baltic Sea and to reach a sustainable management of the area. It shares common principles with ICZM such as intensive stakeholders involvement, ecosystem approach and the use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS). The objectives of BaltPlanSea are, among others, to develop common principles among the Baltic countries for the proposal of coherent national integrated maritime strategies. Maritime Spatial plans, involving also a stocktake of maritime uses, will be tested in seven areas of the region to understand how maritime spatial planning should be used; such process will be strongly linked to and support the developing of national maritime strategies.

Sources:

BaltCICA project : www.baltcica.org

BaltSeaPlan project: www.baltseaplan.eu ; <http://eu.baltic.net>

http://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/spatial_planning_en.html

Roadmap for Maritime Spatial Planning: Achieving Common Principles in the EU. European Commission 25 November 2008



Events

&

Announcements

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Upcoming Events

1st European Coastline Fair / Salon Européen du Littoral (SEL) October 6th – 8th, 2009, Parc Expo in Lorient, South Brittany, France

The European Coastline Fair is the only fair of its kind devoted to coastline economics and development, and is targeting decision makers and professionals working in development, equipment, technology and services relating to the economy of the coastline. An event devoted to business, exchange and decision-making, SEL will be revealing a new multi-sector range of services for European decision-makers and managers working in this field.

Information about the planned programme of conferences, round tables, meetings and exhibitions at www.sel-expo.com/english/home.html

9th International Conference on the Mediterranean Coastal Environment – MEDCOAST'09

November 10th-14th, 2009, Sochi, Russia

The conference moves for the first time in the history of the series to the shores of the Black Sea, to a very attractive town located at the foot of the Caucasus Mountains.

Topics of MEDCOAST 2009:

- Coastal Systems, Ecosystems, Conservation Issues
- Integrated Coastal Management
- Coastal Management Issues
- Sustainable Development of Coastal Areas
- Coastal Engineering, Modelling, Decision
- Support Systems and Data Management

More information on the conference at www.medcoast.org.tr

ICCCM'10 International Conference on Coastal Conservation and Management in the Atlantic and Mediterranean

April 11th – 17th, 2010, Estoril, Cascais, Portugal

The New University of Lisbon, the Cascais Municipality, the Cascais Energy Agency, the Cascais Atlantic Agency and the Organizing Committee, are pleased to announce the International Conference on Coastal Conservation and Management in the Atlantic and Mediterranean (ICCCM 2010). The Coastal & Marine Union (EUCM) supports the organization of the conference.

Please find more information at <http://icccm.dcea.fct.unl.pt>

OURCOAST NEWS is a newsletter produced by the OURCOAST consortium for coastal authorities, managers, decision-makers and other coastal stakeholders. It will be published every three months during the project duration.

For comments or contributions to OURCOAST, please contact Maria Ferreira (m.ferreira@eucc.net), the Coastal Union & Marine Union (EUCM), P.O.Box 11232, 2301 Leiden, the Netherlands, tel.+31-71-5122900.

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Members of the Editorial Team: Maria Ferreira, Rob Steijn, Alan Pickaver, Erik Devilee and Patrycja Czerniak

