



WG ICZM

Second Meeting

Wilhelmshaven, 17 January 2007

Agenda Item: 4

Subject: ICZM evaluation

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Submitted by: EU Commission

Proposal: **The meeting is invited to discuss the document and to formulate comments, as appropriate**

**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**

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ICZM EVALUATION – INFORMAL DISCUSSION PAPER.**I. Main conclusions to be drawn from the EU ICZM Evaluation:**

For the future direction of Integrated Coastal Zone Management, we draw the following conclusions from the evaluation and available reports:

(1) The assessment of the state of Europe's coasts shows still a bleak picture of a negative spiral of increasing human encroachment on the coast and subsequent depletion of resources and loss of natural and semi-natural areas. Yet, the maritime and coastal areas have a major role in fostering the Union's economic growth and competitiveness. To safeguard the attractiveness of coastal zones for living, leisure and working, increased efforts will be needed to curb unsustainable development trends. Innovation has an important role to play in finding novel solutions to make the various concurrent uses in the coastal zone more compatible and less resource and space demanding.

(2) While the diversity of coasts in Europe implies that issues at stake and their intensity will diverge, a challenge common to all coastal zones in Europe is the increasing exposure to risks and the impacts of climate change. To tackle these challenges well, a coherent, cross-sectoral territorial approach is required.

(3) The implementation of integrated coastal zone management is a slow and long term process. Most national strategies that were developed following the EU ICZM Recommendation were adopted in 2006 and their implementation is only starting. In the majority of member states, the response to the EU ICZM Recommendation is

part of a slow, but on-going process towards more integrated coastal planning and management. The EU ICZM Recommendation supported these processes and has had a clear effect in stimulating awareness and increased action towards sustainable coastal planning and management. While the prevailing approach is still sectoral, the national strategies should provide a more strategic and integrated framework. In this context the Commission notes however that the national reports provided only limited indications of effective implementation mechanisms. Turning the strategies into reality and significantly advancing ICZM in Europe will require continued and effective implementation efforts.

(4) When launching the EU ICZM Recommendation¹, the Commission indicated that coastal areas are particularly in need of an integrated territorial approach, but that in essence such good territorial governance is relevant for other areas facing multiple pressures and conflicting interests. This is increasingly the case for the seas and oceans². Further emphasis will therefore need to be placed on implementation of ICZM across the land-sea boundary and in a regional seas context. To that effect, the goal orientated and problem-led character of ICZM is a distinct added-value compared to the often rigid spatial planning systems. Moreover, ICZM should ensure coherence between policies, plans and programmes, and the effective nesting and implementation of plans and programmes at different scales of intervention. Working at different scales and across administrative and sectoral boundaries remains a formidable challenge, but is central to achieving integration.

(5) A key achievement of the EU ICZM Recommendation has been to codify a common set of principles that should underlie sound coastal planning and management. While the evaluation confirms the relevance of these ICZM principles, the implementation of the EU ICZM Recommendation also shows varying interpretations and understanding of ICZM across Europe. To foster a more coherent and effective implementation of ICZM, the principles need to be made more operational and better communicated. The diversity of coasts, as well as administrative systems, implies though that there are no one-size-fits-all solutions, rather there is a need for a more systematic comparative analysis and increased exchange of experiences in Europe.

(6) Although progress has been achieved towards a common assessment frame for ICZM³, only a few countries and regions have effectively engaged in the collection

¹ COM(2000)547 final, 27.09.2000.

² Green Paper Towards a future Maritime Policy for the Union, COM(2006)275 final, 7.6.2006.

³ Working Group on Indicators and Data WG-ID <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/iczm/home.htm#zone6>, DEDUCE project (Interreg) <http://www.gencat.net/mediamb/sosten/deduca/deduca.htm> .

and analysis of coastal zone specific indicators. A methodology to link the efforts in ICZM to trends in sustainability is still lacking. While the methodology to assess the spatial impacts of EU policies has progressed⁴, the gaps in data still are a barrier to a more widespread and pro-active use in decision making processes. To support implementation of ICZM more investment will be needed in the capability to gather information, analyse it and inform the relevant decision making processes and the public at large.

QUESTION 1:

Do you agree with these key conclusions? Are other strategic conclusions to be drawn? [If yes, please detail.]

II. Orientations for further action

Based on the conclusions outlined above, we consider that continued efforts to support ICZM are needed at the EU level, as follows:

- Coastal Member States and candidate countries are encouraged to implement their national ICZM strategies or to develop ones where the EU ICZM Recommendation has not yet been implemented;
- Given the high vulnerability of coastal zones to risks and the impacts of climate change, strategies to adapt to these risks should be developed and implemented as integral part of ICZM strategies;
- More emphasis needs to be placed on cooperation at regional sea level, including the coherence between plans, programmes and management covering the terrestrial and the sea parts of the coastal zones;
- To achieve a more coherent understanding and implementation of ICZM across Member States, guidance needs to be developed to clarify the principles underlying sound coastal zone planning and management and ways to operationalise them;
- More efforts are needed for comparative analyses and promotion of good practices regarding ICZM. The development of common indicators and a framework to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of ICZM will need to be continued.

⁴ The changing faces of Europe's coastal areas, EEA Report No. 6/2006, ISSN 1725-9177; European Spatial Planning Observatory Network <http://www.espon.eu/>

These orientations will need to be refined and verified against the outcome of the public consultation of the Green Paper “Towards a Maritime Policy for Europe”⁵, by the end of 2007. In the medium term, the EU ICZM Recommendation will need to be updated and strengthened.

As regards direct support for the further implementation of ICZM and as off 2007, the European Cohesion policy will be a major contributor, mainly through the Cooperation objective and in particular the Regions for Economic Change Initiative⁶ which includes coastal management among its themes. Moreover for fisheries dependant areas, the European Fisheries Fund⁷ includes a dedicated ICZM axis. The EU supported coordination action ENCORA⁸ launched in 2006 will be structuring the fragmented coastal zone research and education in Europe.

QUESTION 2:

Do you agree with these orientations for future action? Are other strategic orientations to be included? [If yes, please detail.]

⁵ Green Paper Towards a future Maritime Policy for the Union, COM(2006)275 final, 7.6.2006.

⁶ Regions for Economic Change, COM(2006)675 and SEC(2006)1432, 8.11.2006.

⁷ European Fisheries Fund, Council Regulation (EC) No 1198/2006, L223, 15.08.2006, p.1.
http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp/structural_measures/arrangements_2007_2013_en.htm.

⁸ ENCORA <http://www.encora.eu/>.