SUSCOD
Project results and Lessons Learned

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SUS
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sustainable coastal development

Shaping the Future: our project results

Who knows what the future brings? The future is exactly what we were thinking about when running the SUSCOD project and working with the 8 Integrated Coastal Zone Management principles. During the SUSCOD project, we gathered valuable information, insights and knowledge on how to implement the ICZM principles into practice.

As lead partner of the SUSCOD project, it is an honour to offer you our project results, on behalf of the participating partners: Essex County Council (England), Fife Coast and Countryside Trust (Scotland), Region Zealand (Denmark), North Bohuslän (Sweden), Flanders Hydraulics Research (Belgium), Province of Noord-Holland (The Netherlands), Coastal Division, Agency for Maritime and Coastal Services (Belgium).

Read, enjoy and hopefully learn. Please, do register on www.iczmassistant.eu.

By sharing knowledge we can shape our future!

Joanna Geldhof
Vice governor Water and Wadden Sea, Province of Noord-Holland, Chair of the CPMR working group on Integrated Coastal Zone Management and Maritime Spatial Planning and Ambassador of the SUSCOD project

SUSCOD: the project

The Sustainable COastal Development project (SUSCOD) is part of the European Union's Interreg IVB North Sea Region Programme. SUSCOD unites people that pursue a climate resistant, vital North Sea coastline where economics, environment and safety go together. Organisations from Belgium, Denmark, the United Kingdom, Sweden and the Netherlands joined forces to pursue this.

Goal of the project

The aim of the project is bringing the 8 ICZM principles, adopted by the EU in 2002, into practice. We applied the principles to the partners' pilot projects, discussed them, learned from the experiences and shared our knowledge in conferences and in the ICZM Assistant, the web based SUSCOD tool. We successfully worked with inhabitants, authorities, coastal professionals, project leaders and policy officers, to fully utilize the opportunities for coastal development.

Work packages and case studies

The project consists of 9 work packages, working groups where specific ICZM themes related to the partners' pilot projects are studied. Work packages 1, 2 and 9 respectively focus on project management, communications and dissemination of the project. The other work packages represent the policy and project cycle: concepts and strategies, plans and measures, a state of art inventory, stakeholder management, taking climate change and sea level rise into account and also the development of a tool: the ICZM Assistant.
All partner regions practiced and tested the 8 ICZM principles within their own coastal pilot projects, locations that are at risk due to climate change. They shared the results and experiences amongst each other, following the work packages.

Results and dissemination

An integrated approach is mainly a matter of doing and trying. Participating in a project such as SUSCOD helps you to look at your own projects in a different way. Evidently face to face contact is very important in setting common goals and to bridge any cultural differences. Networking and exchange of knowledge and inspiration at its best!
Three international meetings in the partner regions and a final conference were organized. In this way regional problems and solutions were presented to the national, regional and local politicians, authorities, experts and interested public. The final conference summed up the results and offered the findings of the SUSCOD project to coastal professionals and representatives of the European Commission. Also, the ICZM assistant, a new interactive tool for the coastal practitioner, was presented. This tool was welcomed by the EU Directorate General Environment and adopted to their website OURCOAST.

Show cases and pilot activities

	WP 5 Climate impact and risk awareness	WP 6 Integrated concepts and strategies	WP 7 Integrated development and implementation of local coastal plans
FLANDERS *Combining sea defence measures with other functions in coastal towns (weak links)*	*Wenduine, Zeebrugge*	*Wenduine, Zeebrugge*	*Wenduine, Zeebrugge*
A New communication tools	Simulation and visualization of storm and wave effects a. computer programme b. physical simulation		
B Integrated development of coastal towns		Combining coastal defence measures with enhancement recreation/tourism a. evaluation tourism friendlyness coastal defense measure b. new designs for integration of functions	Pilot action plans for 2 coastal towns a. literature review integrated development b. action programmes (2)
FIFE *Long term conservation of natural coastal (dune) defence system*	*St. Andrews*	*St. Andrews*	*St. Andrews*
A Long term development	Assesment current situation a. report on user functions and tendencies	Long term vision a. Vision	Long term management plan a. developing recommendations b. developing work programme c. monitoring programme
B Guiding public use			Recreation and education b. Test implementation of guiding measures
SEALAND *Anticipating climate change in coastal areas*	*Slagelse*	*Odsherred*	*Lolland*
A Regional analysis	Regional analysis of challenges a. Regional analysis Sealevel rise and coastal town development:	Sea level rise and tourism: a. Scenarios with socio-economic evaluations of various coastal defence measures	Sea level rise and infrastructural development: a. Case study report
B Local integrated solutions	a. Development and testing of instruments for inner-city development and seal level rise		
NOORD-HOLLAND *Regional development concepts for coastal areas*	*ID seaside towns*		
A Quality concepts and cultural dimension	Coastal defence and identity of coastal towns a. identification of identities and vitality b. define and execute community actions c. road map for decion making		
B Spatial planning concepts		Zoning of coastal area a. mapping development options and spatial restrictions b. study sand nourishment zoning	
STRÖMSTAD			*North Bohuslän*
A. Action Plan			Action plans for North Bohuslän
B. Fair			
ESSEX Sustaining coastal community		*Harwich* Harwich masterplan and Marina study	
Safeguarding and protecting area of historic value			Management Strategy Crag Walk Naze Tower

Stakeholder involvementt
a.Organised visits to FHR
lab to show simulation and
vizualization tools

St. Andrews

Stakeholder involvementt

Recreation and education
a.Communication strategy

c.Development educational
material

Odsherred, Slagelse, Lolland

Stakeholder involvementt

ID seaside towns

Coastal defence and identity
of coastal
towns
a. identification of identities
and vitality
b. define and execute
community actions
c. road map for decion
making

North Bohuslän

Recreation and all year living
Fair each year / dialogue with
tourists
and inhabitants

Essex Coastal Forum

Project results: Bringing ICZM into practice with tips and tricks

The 4 main results of the SUSCOD project are the ICZM Assistant; the lessons learned from the work packages and the case studies in coastal locations actually at risk due to climate change; the project evaluation results; and the 10 golden tips on implementing ICZM from the conferences. These you will find below.

ICZM Assistant: the new tool for the coastal professional

One of the SUSCOD goals was to create a practical tool for implementing integrated and sustainable development strategies following the 8 ICZM principles. This goal was converted into the most visible result of the SUSCOD project: www.iczmassistant.eu. Within the easily accessible and user-friendly ICZM Assistant you can share and gain knowledge and experiences from other (similar) coastal projects around Europe.

For whom?

The tool aims especially at (supporting) project leaders, policy makers and water professionals to integrate the ICZM principles in developing projects and plans, and therefore to achieve practical solutions that ensure integrated and sustainable social, economic and environmental development. Using the ICZM Assistant is also recommended to NGO's, engineering or consulting companies and interested citizens.

Knowledge exchange

The website www.iczmassistant.eu offers a database filled with information about vital coasts and an online community with relevant 'colleagues'. A registered member of the Assistant has access to all functionalities, which links them

to relevant information and relevant people. Besides that, every member can upload documents, websites and case studies from their own practice into the Assistant too. In this way we can learn from each other.

ICZM proof?
The database is also linked to the ICZM Quick scan and the ICZM Assessment. Two different questionnaires, that can be filled out to see where you or your project stand on integrated coastal zone management.

ICZM Quick Scan
The quick scan is a brief questionnaire to get the goals of ICZM across in a way that is fun and easy. After answering ten illustrated questions, the tool shows you what kind of ICZM type you are and what you might need to improve to get even more ICZM experienced.

ICZM Assessment
This extensive test gives you customised information on how to improve your project or policy and how to apply the eight principles of ICZM. With a list of questions, the ICZM Assessment identifies the strengths and weaknesses of your initiative and guides you in showing helpful case studies, documents, web links and people that will help your project become even more ICZM proof.

Lessons learned from the Work packages and case studies

In several meetings, studies and site visits, the project partners discussed, researched and tested the major SUSCOD theme: "How to bring the 8 ICZM principles into practice?"
This resulted in general recommendations for the effective use of each of the 8 principles in policy making, project definition and project management.

1. **Overall perspective.** When the starting position of a case is single sector based, a strategic Environmental Impact Assessment is a good existing instrument to analyse the interdependence of issues and to study the impact of the project on other aspects such as environment, nature, landscape, social environment, etc. Another well-known instrument in support of taking an overall perspective is spatial planning, although ICZM is still often not mentioned in that context. Solutions can be found in actively applying the principles 'natural processes', 'involving all parties' and 'support and involvement of all relevant administrative bodies'. This can strengthen the cooperation, and perhaps show the different parties that there are cross benefits to using an integrated approach when planning for those issues they are obliged to handle.

2. **Long-term perspective.** Guarantees for a long-term prospects for ICZM can take different forms: signed agreements, action plans, a follow-up through risk analysis or indicators. solution could be to work with plans on different scales: one long term plan (200 years) and several more adaptive 'short' term plans (i.e. maximum of 30 to 50 years, 'a lifetime'). In that way it is clear to everyone how the short term plans feed into the long term plan, and what that long term plan and goals should be.

3. **Sound-scientific basis.** It is important to take into account the social effects of a project, an aspect often forgotten and not easy to grab. A social-cost benefit analysis is a useful tool, and can help making the right choices.

4. **Local specificity.** Although the cases are already specifically linked to a certain location, even within the case further specific characteristic such as target audience, visual impact and opportunities for multifunctional use can be identified. This will deliver targeted solutions for local problems on a small scale.

5. **Working with natural processes.** There is obviously a need for further clarification on this principle, as the natural processes are all considered from a sectoral viewpoint. When working with embedding natural processes in a non-natural process it seems having legal obligations was paramount in the ability to work with these processes. Often it is understood as 'a given fact': either you suffer from coastal erosion or you don't, either the waves will flood your coast or they won't. How to actually apply this principle remains a challenge.

6. **Involving all parties.** To reach a successful involvement of all parties, it is advised to use a combination of communication instruments (e.g. brochures, information and consultations meetings, exhibitions, press) in order to reach the different target groups. For a long-term involvement, parties could be given a specific role (eg in monitoring, communicating) and responsibility in the process. It helps when you have a high profile;

a senior and/or very engaged person to keep non-professional stakeholders going. The stakeholders should feel appreciated and useful. The project should be visibly backed-up by the responsible organisations.

7. **Involvement of relevant administrative bodies.** This can take different forms, and it will often depend on the culture in a country or region how this is structured. In Scotland where stakeholder participation is strong, coastal & estuary partnerships are useful structures. In the Netherlands and Flanders collaboration between administrations has been established (Provincial coastal deliberative body and the Coordination centre on ICZM, respectively). Besides involving administrations and stakeholders, politicians are an important group to have on-board. This was recognised in the Swedish case. A very useful suggestion is to always include the political opposition. As you never know who is in charge after the next election.

8. **A combination of instruments.** Where some instruments are rather obvious or compulsory for the activity envisaged (eg permits, public consultation, EIA/ Environmental Impact Assessment), some instruments are specific for the coast and can help monitoring and support ICZM. Examples applied by some partners are: sustainability indicators for the coast, marine spatial plan and shoreline management plans. Coastal policies can become very complicated, the initiative of Noord-Holland to establish a one-stop-shop for all questions concerning water and coastal policy is a good example in supporting the stakeholders to find their way in the complexity of coastal policies and projects.

Successful integrated coastal project implementation

Next to conclusions on applying the 8 ICZM principles, the work packages also provided insight on generating conditions for successful project implementation:

▶ Writing of a brief: any brief written should be detailed and highlight the stages for discussion/liaison between the partners and also between hired consultants and the tenderer throughout.

▶ Clarity is required around expected outcomes of the project at concept stage, agreed by all partners.

▶ Identification of desired outcomes: at concept stage, commitment from management should be secured that they will take forward the outcomes of the studies completed. Project strategies must be well integrated with existing administrative strategies in order to reduce duplication and encourage commitment from management.

▶ Communications: a clear communication strategy has to be agreed with the key stakeholders as early as at concept stage.

▶ Consultation regarding the proposed outcomes and process needs to be held with the relevant bodies from concept to completion.

▶ Project completion: following delivery of the strategy, or at the end of the project, a comparison should be made between the work delivered and the original brief. Any discrepancy should be tackled.

How to improve future international coastal projects?
SUSCOD project evaluation results.

On November 6 in the afternoon an informal SUSCOD evaluation took place with all project partners. Goal of the project evaluation was to provide tips and insights to help other Interreg and EU subsidised initiatives. Useful for the SUSCOD partners themselves and for other coastal project managers. The most important and relevant findings of the project partners are:

Project setup and project management
▶ Be specific about the roles and responsibilities of all partners from the beginning, starting in the concept phase of the project, and when, what products are to be delivered by whom. Project partners need to agree on goals, results and budgets. And also have to be clear about the form in which they want to realize their deliverables and products. For example: how is an 'end report' defined? A magazine? A brochure? A web-link?
▶ Play a role game at the start of your project that makes clear what interests there are besides that from your own position in the project. Roles are a.o.: lead partner, partner, sub-partner, hired expert/ consultant, hired finance/ administrative consultant and also the role of the JTS. Add other roles that influence the project definition, management and execution.
▶ Have a clear structure (who is in charge of what, and what are everyone's responsibilities).
▶ Have a Steering Group (SG, upper management level) and Project Management Group (PMG) in place. The SG is responsible for the strategic management of the project. A PMG is a decision making group on practical/activity level consisting of the project leaders of the project partners. In this way, strategic decisions and political debates are kept out of the working group.
▶ Internal communication needs to be clear and open, timely and specific.

Process management and commitment
▶ Manage expectations: Be sure everyone has the same expectations about the project (aims and outcome) from the start.
▶ Invest in solid relationships through informal contacts, to build trust, mutual respect and

understanding. Be aware of the positive impact this can have on your partnership.

▶ Plan a sufficient amount of project time and costs for visits. Visit each partner with the whole partnership, prepare site visits and discuss local pilot projects and cases together. This enhances commitment.

▶ Besides showing interest in each other's projects (content driven), one also needs to invest time in understanding and learning about each other's customs and habits and be aware of possible (cultural) differences (people driven). Informal contacts can also be of major importance and enhances commitment and appreciation of each other. This should not be underestimated and should start from the beginning of the project.

Interaction and learning

▶ Reserve more time in the project to actually learn, exchange knowledge; e.g. via short internships with other partner(s). Exchanging e-mails and reading reports is not always enough to understand what the other is doing, in what organisational setting they operate and what contextual restraints might exist.

Manage involved third parties

▶ Hired experts/ and consultants need clear assignments. In your external application/ tender, be very clear and specific about conditions, deadlines, costs, and product quality.

▶ Have an evidence based contract management in place, and document decisions, actions etc. professionally.

Ten golden tips

The pilot projects and also the presentations, workshops and discussions held at the 3 International meetings in the regions of the partners resulted in the following 10 golden tips on successfully implementing the ICZM principles into practice.

1. **Create a solid knowledge base as starting point**
   Commonly shared evidence and scientific knowledge base of the working of natural processes and understanding the impact and consequences of measures on the economic, social and ecologic systems, is the starting point and a solid ground for developing shared visions and plans with all parties involved. This base should be elaborated by multi-disciplinary research.

2. **Use the power of hands- on local communities (volunteers)**
   Make, as a public agent/ authority use of volunteer networks because they can help to maximize the involvement of local communities in managing and restoration of the coastline.

3. **Set up a Taskforce to connect different governmental levels**
   A Taskforce, supported by a secretariat and maybe initiated nationally, creates an informal connection between governmental levels, to work together on an unofficially with closed meetings, anonymity and freedom to explore other, out-of-the-box, points of view that can be included in the process.

4. **Focus immediately on long-term financing structures**
   Next to developing a long-term plan, also develop long-term financing options. Allocate budgets for the following 15 to 25 years today. Without finance there is nothing.

5. **Use appealing visual means to explain your message to the public**
   Use appealing methods like visualisations, games, films and simple models to translate and spread (scientific) knowledge to a wider audience.

6. **Understand cultural differences to assure your solutions will be tailor made**
   Transcend cultural differences to understand the rationale, attitude, behaviour and statements made by the partners. In this way, you will benefit from solutions that already were applied elsewhere, while tailoring these for your own specific coastal context.

7. **Welcome and invite the opposition to participate**
   Involve the opposition: include all political parties at an early stage in your planning process, because, in due time they might be the political majority. Incorporate other existing initiatives or vision-groups on the same issue in the process for the same reasons.

8. **Make use of local knowledge, experiences and gain their insights.**
   Learn from implemented solutions elsewhere and knowledge and insights of local communities. Engage with local stakeholders and experts into dialogue about situations, characteristics, cause and effect, approaches, methods and techniques used elsewhere. See the implementation live on a site visit. In this way, you can gain insight in the particularities and details of the implemented solutions and processes to improve your measures and solutions.

9. **Involve statutory partners as early as possible**
   Engage with statutory partners as early as possible in the thinking and planning process - this will ensure that problem areas will come out sooner rather than later.

10. **Embrace unusual and new working methods if necessary.**
    Be open to unusual working structures, methods and combinations that are not yet thought of, e.g. via a think-tank. This can help you to facilitate or speed up the process.

www.ICZMassistant.eu