

1st European ICZM High Level Forum

on Community Strategies for Integrated Coastal Zone Management

La Vila Joiosa (Alicante, Spain) 18th, 19th and 20th April 2002

The Spanish Ministry of Environment in the context of the Presidency of the Council of the European Union and the European Commission as well as representatives of EU Member States and Candidate Countries, with the value support of representatives of European Parliament, meeting in La Vila Joiosa, Alicante, España, from 18 to 20 April 2002, reflecting a true political will to implement ICZM in Europe, recommend to:

1. Make advances towards achieving an integrated and ecosystem approach of the coast, considering the interrelation of physical, biological and geomorphological processes, relevant aspects such as biodiversity, social progress, degree of satisfaction, and particularly advances towards devising objective economic valuation techniques for externalities of main impacting activities.
2. Emphasise the need to propose and agree upon a common understanding of the "coastal zone" in functional terms, a sense of vision of how we wish the coast to meet the needs of current and future generations as well as the interpretation of ICZM as a pro-active tool to facilitate appropriate development of coastal areas and resources.
3. Consider the urgent need to define precise scenarios and their probable consequences, in co-ordination with the relevant International Bodies, such as UNEP MAP, concerning the three most patent issues that affect to European coasts: the possible rising sea level due to global warming, the gradual depletion of fishing stocks and the increasing population growth registered in coastal areas. At this respect, short-term financial profits should not prevail over broader, long-term economic, social and environmental costs.
4. Promote the general use of existing comparable indicators i.e. for sustainable development, and if appropriate to develop indicators on a national basis to provide standardised descriptions of the status of the coast and possible impacts of human activities, throughout the European Union, as well as of the progress made towards ICZM in Europe.
5. Make advances in the management and development of knowledge, specifically, in knowledge organisation, in light of the opportunities provided by new technologies, and supported by common, systematic and standard formats, capable of producing standardised data bases that facilitate the flow of information on a European scale with the use of standardised G.I.S. too.
6. Underscore the need to compile a Guide to Good Practices with particular reference to main impacting activities (i.e. tourism, fishery, aquaculture, harbours management urban planning in coastal zone) so as to integrate horizontal decision making processes, and also provide a foundation for communicating the benefits brought by ICZM implementation.
7. Promote ICZM on a local scale, in the conviction that local governmental bodies and stake-holders play an essential role in the success of ICZM. Furthermore emphasising the possibility to use spatial planning integrated with sea-use planning and marine resources management, at national, regional and local level as a way to apply a holistic and dynamic perspective in ICZM in order to create a common vision of the sustainable development in the coastal zone and to ensure dialogue and participation of local and regional stakeholders.
8. Continue with the ICZM Demonstration Projects Programme undertaken by the European Commission, giving priority to those that can serve as good examples for the implementation of the Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on ICZM and to those that aim to optimise the use of public resources, administrative processes and decision making, as well as to transnational and co-operation projects with non-European Union neighbouring countries.
9. Take advantage of the synergies arising in the application of numerous Community instruments affecting coastal zones, such as Water Framework Directive, EIA and SEA, and particularly those emerging from the new Environmental Action Programme: *Environment 2010: Our Future, Our Choice*, and from the Community Strategy on Sustainable Development. Ensure compatibility between Community large-scale financing/investment instruments and national/regional/local co-ordination of initiatives and subsequent strategies on ICZM.
10. Ensure the continuity of the *La Vila Joiosa Forum*, with the aim of facilitating progress towards a common ICZM understanding, and to improve the sharing of information on future national developments in the implementation of the European Recommendation on ICZM.

Finally, in support of the high level forum, the Commission could facilitate an expert group, recognising the enormous complex challenges coastal zones face and the need to develop common understanding and methodologies to adapt to the challenges. This expert group will follow the principles of transparency and stakeholder involvement.

