



Report from the Baltic Sea Region ICZM Platform meeting, Helsinki, 26th September 2003 of 20.11.2003

Chair: Ms Ulla Koski, the Ministry of the Environment, Finland

Special Guest: Mr Jan-Erik Enestam, Minister of Environment, Finland

Participants: Mr Jüri Lass (EST), Ms Penina Blankett (FI), Ms Tiina Tihlman (FI), Ms Helena Korhonen (FI), Mr Jussi Rautsi (FI), Ms Dzintra Upmace (LV), Ms Rasa Sukeviciute (LT), Ms Monika Stankiewicz (PL), Ms Anna Stelmaszyk –Swierczynska (PL), Mr Andrzej Cieslak (PL), Mr Juliusz Gajewski (PL), Mr Sten Jerdenius (S), Mr Sven Arvidsson (S), Ms Birgit Snoeren (EU DG Env), Mr. Marek Maciejewski (BALTIC 21), Ms Anne Christine Brusendorff (HELCOM), Mr Jan Ekebom (HELCOM), Mr Bernhard Heinrichs (VASAB 2010), Mr Jacek Zaucha (VASAB 2010).

The meeting was opened by *Mr Jan-Erik Enestam*, Minister of the Environment, who pointed out the importance, both for BSR and for Finland, of the proper management of the coastal areas. He presented the existing legal instruments in Finland suitable for that purpose and listed the most important coastal issues requiring common transnational actions. He also recommended starting ICZM work in the BSR from inventory of different activities and interests and preparation of strategy, taking into consideration all existing functions and instruments.

Ms Ulla Koski (FIN) presented the main ideas behind convening the meeting. She stressed the need for exchange of experience among BSR countries with regard to preparation of their national ICZM strategies and pointed out usefulness of the dialogue with pan-Baltic international organisations on that subject.

Ms Birgit Snoeren, (European Commission) presented some thoughts on added value of the international co-operation on implementation of the EU's ICZM Recommendation. In particular she stressed:

- a) cross-border nature of coastal problems,
- b) specificity of the Baltic Sea as a regional sea with numerous cross-border impacts, and resulting from that
- c) commonality of issues (existence of some common issues, specific for the region, to be addressed in ICZM national strategies),
- d) inadequacy of administrative borders for addressing some coastal problems in a comprehensive way,
- e) a need for regional operationalization of more general (EU recommendations) guidelines on ICZM,
- f) complexity of coastal problems requiring actions of different stakeholders and different levels of government under very flexible mechanism of co-operation,
- g) benefits of sharing, among different countries, expertise, data, information and knowledge with regard to coastal problems,
- h) importance of awareness raising on coastal problems and ICZM as such,
- i) importance to attract Russia to the common ICZM work through existing networks of collaborating three pan-Baltic organisations,
- j) possibility to test the common ICZM approach in the BSR as a pilot region in Europe - "Region of Excellence".

She welcomed the idea of establishing the BSR ICZM platform, pointing out that it might focus on analysing and addressing common BSR coastal issues (objectives) and sharing (pooling) relevant knowledge.

Responding to these concerns *Mr Sten Jerdenius* (SWE) pointed out the need of networking, while working on ICZM issues, with the existing conventions (e.g. ESPOO), regional organisations, legal requirements (e.g. SEA).

Mr Marek Maciejowski (Baltic 21 Secretariat) pointed out the following benefits of having the BSR ICZM platform: exchange of experience and dialogue on common BSR coastal problems, pooling information, expertise and facilitating access to relevant indicators, more efficient awareness raising, and possibility to attract Russia to common Baltic work. He also proposed that in the future the platform might serve as a forum initiating some common actions and producing common messages. He underlined that establishment of the platform was also in line with the Rio process (UNCED,

encouraged for more regional-based actions) and ICZM should be included into national strategies of sustainable development to be developed by 2005. He also offered the B21 contribution to strengthen the platform thanks to B1 multistakeholder status facilitating dialogue with different sectors, NGOs and financial institutions. He distributed information about the ICZM conference in Rostock in April 2004.

Ms *Anne Christine Brusendorff* (Helsinki Commission) presented ICZM as an important tool for integration of different approaches to nature conservation. She informed that the HELCOM Ministerial Meeting had recently adopted *HELCOM recommendation on implementation of ICZM*. She also pointed out the need for regional ICZM actions covering BSR and tailored to the specificity of the Baltic Sea (e.g. taking into consideration existence of the Baltic Sea Protected Areas). She proposed to consider a common pilot project on sustainable use of sea and land areas integrating marine and coastal (land part) management for protection of the ecosystems, testing dissemination of the information through the web and examining the willingness of EU to support (with some funding) such common Baltic approach.

Mr *Bernhard Heinrichs*, (GER) former chair and current member of the Committee on Spatial Development in the Baltic Sea Region (VASAB 2010), presented the VASAB approach to ICZM, highlighting:

- a) VASAB interest in coastal zone, present and well described in all important VASAB documents (Vision and Strategy from 1994; Common Recommendations For Spatial Planning of the Coastal Zone in the Baltic Sea Region, 1996; VASAB 2010 Plus Spatial Development Action Programme, 2001 - key theme no. 6),
- b) VASAB clearly defined priorities with regard to content and structure of ICZM concept: (a) integrating the needs for development with those for protection, (b) inclusion of all types of coastal areas, e.g. areas of intensive tourism, urban expansion areas, infrastructure development areas etc., (d) integration of off-shore and land-side coastal areas, (d) linking the project-oriented approach with the process of statutory spatial planning in widening the participation,
- c) Useful experience in ICZM (in particular integration of off-shore and land based planning) already accumulated in the VASAB-initiated project "Baltcoast".

He invited participants to more active involvement in work package 5 of the Baltcoast dealing with recommendation on necessary changes in national legislation enabling more efficient ICZM process in each country.

Mr *Andrzej Cieślak* (PL) presented the Polish system of managing the sea and coast (with a leading role of Maritime Administration). He pointed out that ICZM should be considered as an important part of the concept of sustainable development where the key issue was a durable and better satisfaction of human needs instead of the limited nature conservation approach. He considered spatial planning as an important ICZM tool. He underlined the long-term perspective of ICZM and listed three dynamic factors causing the need for integrative approach in the coastal zone: pressure on coast caused by people, pressure on sea due to new concepts of sea-use, pressure due to climate change (e.g. sea level rise). Finally, he supported the idea of creation of the platform pointing out its possible tasks, including the following: awareness raising, exchange of data, information and experience, reaching broader partnership than that possible under EU expert group, giving important signals to high level politicians about importance of the ICZM work. He also informed that in Poland the work on preparation of the ICZM national strategy had not been started yet in a more formal way.

Mr *Jüri Lass* (EST) informed that Estonia had not started any preparations for implementation of EU recommendations on ICZM yet. ICZM should not be considered as a working method but rather as an issue of e.g. putting more stress on coastal problems under statutory spatial planning. He stressed that ICZM should never replace spatial planning. In Estonia the only proper instrument of development of Estonian territory is spatial planning. Municipalities have a right to plan their land and sea areas equally. He also considered VASAB recommendations on planning in the coastal zone presented by Mr Heinrichs as still valid. He welcomed the initiative of the platform pointing out its possible tasks: information sharing, providing inspiration for solving coastal problems, examining different approaches to the issue of wind energy, elaboration of general Baltic principles as regards planning on the sea (but common rules which cannot be applied to different coast should be avoided). He considered electronic exchange of information as hardly efficient and opted for face to face meeting of the platform in the future.

Ms *Dzintra Upmace* (LAT) described Latvian law on spatial planning and pointed out the importance of the coastal problems in Latvia (existing pressure on coast). She also stressed the necessity of better integration of various instruments used by different governmental agencies to manage the coastal area with statutory spatial planning. She also raised a question of dominance of sectoral approach in EU planning work which might lead to replacement of genuine spatial planning by some formal technical procedures like EIA.

Ms *Rasa Sukeviciute* (LIT) described Lithuanian law on coastal zone and territorial planning (both of them covering ICZM) and she informed that as the result of Ministerial order of September, a paper on ICZM recommended measures had been recently adopted in Lithuania. She expressed interest in further co-operation within the platform framework.

Mr *Bernhard Heinrichs* (GER) described responsibilities concurring with off-shore planning in Germany (up to 12 miles responsibility of *Länder*, further on in exclusive economic zone responsibility of Federal administration). He also informed that in Germany bottom-up approach was taken (with regard to EU recommendations on ICZM implementa-

tion), focusing on making use of existing instruments and programmes. At the Federal level, a pilot research project will be implemented and at the level of *Länder* the key issue is integration of ICZM approach into statutory spatial planning, which already has covered the whole coastal zone.

Mr *Sten Jerdenius* (SWE) welcomed the initiative of the platform and stressed the importance of the Baltic point of view in the ICZM work in the region (resulting e.g. from environmental sensitivity of the sea, not satisfactory quality of oil transport). Sweden has well developed legislation on coastal issues (e.g. environmental code) and has clearly assigned responsibilities of off-shore planning (up to the border of economic exclusive zone) to municipality level. Since Sweden does not have any regional planning level, Swedish national strategy on ICZM must involve all coastal municipalities. The work on ICZM strategy has not started yet, but one of the activities in the first stage will probably be to examine the results of INTERREG projects. The lead agencies for work on the inventory and the strategy will probably be the Swedish Environmental Protection Board and the National Board for Housing, Building and Planning but all relevant authorities will surely be involved.

Ms *Tiina Tihlman* (FIN) informed that Finland started preparations to elaborate a National ICZM strategy in 2003. The work is based on broad cooperation. The following stages are envisaged: assessment of the present situation, preparation of the vision of the Finnish coast, elaboration of strategic goals and strategic choices, followed by implementation phase. The first activity was conducted in February 2003 by inviting the most important coastal actors to present their problems and interests. She considered the Finnish legal system, in particular the newly adopted law on spatial planning, to be a good basis for handling coastal problems in a proper way. She pointed out that cooperation between authorities and also an issue of interaction between sea and land as crucial one for Finnish work on ICZM national strategy. She also agreed with the others to continue work on the Platform with focus on the following issues: differences in national management systems, specificity of the Baltic Sea as a regional sea, use of pan-Baltic networks for ICZM, information exchange.

Ms *Ulla Koski* (FIN) presented the following conclusions of the discussion which took place after national presentations:

- 1) **Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) should not be treated as a new instrument or procedure (similar to EIA) but rather as an efficient combination of different existing instruments (legal, financial, indicative etc.) which need proper co-ordination and calibration.**
- 2) The ICZM platform is to continue with the task of supporting the work done in separate countries. The main purpose of the platform should be exchange of information about ICZM work among BSR countries and pan-Baltic organisations. However this focus does not exclude such issues like awareness raising, expertise pooling and thus supporting ICZM work at regional level, attracting Russia to the Baltic work on ICZM, deepening common understanding of the ICZM concept.
- 3) The continuation should be based on outline proposals prepared by B21, HELCOM, VASAB and the different Baltic countries and delivered to the participants before the meeting (*Concept of the BSR Platform for co-operation and communication in the field of ICZM*). The collaboration of those three organizations in the field of ICZM should be welcomed also in the future.
- 4) The issues proposed at the meeting (like (a) elaborating general principles of ICZM for the BSR (b) trying to introduce ICZM as part of international agenda on sustainable development, (c) attracting Russia to the common Baltic work on ICZM, (d) examining the need to prepare a common Baltic strategy on off-shore wind energy infrastructure planning, (e) preparing pilot project as described by HELCOM and (f) continuing exchange of experience on national and regional ICZM work, best practices etc.) might be considered as possible topics of next meetings.
- 5) The next meeting of the platform will be prepared according to the needs. The meeting will be prepared in close collaboration between B21, HELCOM and VASAB. The platform members are welcome to contact VASAB Secretariat to point out possible needs of the meeting, possible topics, date of the meeting and to offer suitable venue. The next meeting is expected to take place in 2004.
- 6) VASAB Secretariat is asked to start preparation of the BSR ICZM platform web-sites according to the proposals of B21 ("A concept for managing information flow within the ICZM Platform established by Baltic 21, HELCOM and VASAB"), slightly revised to make it more flexible and less resource-demanding. The web-sites should be based on the principle of voluntary contributions of the platform participants according to their willingness and possibility to contribute. All participants are asked to send to VASAB Secretariat their e-mail addresses and addresses of the web-sites of their organizations. All participants are also asked to inform the VASAB Secretariat about their capacity to furnish it with relevant documents (in English, in electronic format) and links to national documents (in English) which they consider useful to be displayed at the portal.

The above listed conclusions were commented on by following participants:

Mr *Jüri Lass* (EST) stressed the importance to have platform focus on exchange of experience.

Ms *Monika Stankiewicz* (PL) opted for focus on exchange of information on practical solutions instead of lengthy discussions on legislation framework. She also pointed out a need to invite to the platform meetings people from different sectoral Ministries.

Mr *Bernhard Heinrichs* (GER), without neglecting the importance of information exchange (with focus on concrete issues) strongly supported an idea of producing some messages which, in the end, should influence/start real changes in the Baltic coastal zone. He offered Baltcoast framework for discussing off-shore issues. He proposed to elaborate a common Baltic concept of ICZM for off-shore areas (so that BSR can be a model region in that respect). He also proposed to use a platform for discussing the most efficient use of different nature conservation directives of the EU to promote alleviation of unnecessary conflicts in coastal areas (the question is how to include those directives into ICZM national strategies according to the principle of sustainable development).

Mr *Sten Jerdenius* (SWE) pointed out the need to have politicians' approval for the platform and proposed starting the work of the platform with electronic exchange of information and experience (using existing web-sites, linking to Commission electronic sources of information) and to consider face to face meeting only when needed.

Mr *Jan Ekeboom* (HELCOM Habitat) proposed to have next platform meeting back to back with the LITTORAL 2004 Conference in Scotland on 20-22 Sept. 2004.

Ms *Anne Christine Brusendorff* (Helsinki Commission) pointed out a need to invite also sectoral Ministries to the electronic network on ICZM information exchange.

Ms *Ulla Koski* (FIN) thanked participants for their presence and very fruitful discussion and closed the meeting.