



COAST LINE

2002 - 3



Big Bang | MedOpen | 10 for Nature | ICZM in Eastern Germany

ICZM in Eastern Germany

by Gerald Schernewski, Henning Schmidt, Karin Gärtner & Marie-Louise Heger

German spatial planning covers many aspects of Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM), but there are shortcomings. A demonstration project aims at the improvement of ICZM in the region Warnemünde-Kühlungsborn.

Tourism, Coastal Protection and Nature Conservation. Apart from several larger coastal cities, harbours and industries, the overwhelming part of the German Baltic coastal zone can be regarded as rural. The Baltic coastal zones cover a large variety of ecotopes and are attractive, ecologically valuable landscapes. Therefore nature conservation traditionally plays an important role along the Baltic coast. Despite the fact that the tidal range in the Baltic Sea is below 0.2 meters, long sandy beaches, cliffs, and islands are exposed to intensive physical dynamics. 70 % of the coast is subject to erosion (Umweltministerium M-V 2000), which is why coastal protection measures cover large parts of the coastline. Such measures maintain sandy beaches and ensure one basic element for tourism. Regarding these special settings and interdependence of nature, physical dynamics and socio-economy along the coastline, coastal management issues include nature conservation, coastal protection and tourism. Its natural landscape, beaches and water temperatures around 20° C during summer, make the coast attractive for beach and bathing

tourism. Millions of vacationers spend their holidays in a very narrow strip along the coast. The development of tourism along the western German Baltic coast in Schleswig-Holstein and along the eastern German Baltic Coast in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, has been quite different. After the reunification in 1989, a sharp decline in tourism and a transformation of the entire tourist industry in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern took place. State-run holiday hostels were rebuilt or closed down, camping sites reduced, and commercial private hotels, hostels and sanatoriums gained in importance. With annual growth rates of overnight stays above 10% , the tourism industry recovered fast, and ongoing growth is expected. In 1998, the number of beds in official accommodations along the eastern German Baltic coast already exceeded 110,000 with more than 11 million overnight stays (Statistisches Bundesamt 1999). In this respect the eastern German Baltic coast overtook the western Baltic coast of Schleswig-Holstein. On the other hand, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern still suffers from serious economical problems. The unemployment rate is still above 18 % and great expectations are linked to the growing tourism industry. Nowadays tourism constitutes more than 15 % of the federal state income and 12 % of all jobs are in the tourism industry. In most coastal resorts, tourism contributes to more than 50 % of



Seaside resort Warnemünde, July 2002 (Photo: M. Kammler)



Figure 1: Cutting from the regional spatial plan 'Central Mecklenburg and Rostock' showing the project region and main uses in this coastal zone: Tourism and nature conservation. The plan was prepared by the regional planning agency and is the basis for regional integrated coastal zone management.

the income and has to be regarded as the exclusive economic factor. Growing tourism bears chances for the region, but also creates several problems for nature conservation as well as coastal protection. A sustainable development and a balance between these three issues are the main task of an integrated coastal zone management.

The Region Warnemünde-Kühlungsborn

The 30 km long coastal strip between the seaside resorts Warnemünde and Kühlungsborn can be regarded as a typical and representative region for the eastern German Baltic coast. The strip belongs to the spatial planning region 'Central Mecklenburg Rostock' where nature conservation has a high priority. The entire coastal area is under landscape protection, which includes a nature protection area as well. Since the coast is subject to intensive erosion, except for Warnemünde where it is not a major problem, about 15 million Euro will be spent on several coastal protection measures during the next years such as broadening of dunes, mending of concrete coast walls, and the enlargement of groin rows (wooden pillars lined up perpendicular to the beach to reduce sand erosion and stimulate beach accretion). Sandy beaches in the region can

only be preserved with series of groins. Tourists have always appreciated this landscape and especially these sandy beaches. As early as 1938, the resorts Kühlungsborn and Warnemünde registered 45.900 and 29.400 holiday guests respectively. In 1998 the spatial planning region had 860.000 holiday guests with nearly 3 million overnight stays. In 2001, Kühlungsborn exceeded the 1 million mark of overnight stays and strengthened its position as Mecklenburg's largest resort.

Situation of Coastal Zone Management

Germany has no defined national law or policy for coastal zone management. Spatial planning already covers many aspects of Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM), but severe shortcomings are obvious: competences are overlapping, responsibilities scattered and the legislation is sectoral and complex. At the moment, spatial planning does not take the coastal waters into account and a pronounced division between coastal waters and land still exists. Over 30 national laws, regulations and directives are relevant to the coastal zone. The laws usually meet specific sectoral requirements. In coastal waters alone, more than 10 national and federal state ministries as



Seaside resort Kühlungsborn, July 2002 (Photo: M. Kammler)

well as national, federal state and regional authorities bear responsibility. An additional problem in coastal waters is the varying spatial extension of competences. Further shortcomings are obvious in co-operation, communication and public participation, as well as in the availability of data and with respect to accessing information.

Project 'ICZM Warnemünde-Kühlungsborn'

A pilot project is being carried out since January 2002 to improve ICZM in the exemplary chosen coastal strip Warnemünde and Kühlungsborn. The project is financially supported by the Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt (DBU). During its first pilot year, obstacles and shortcomings for a successful ICZM are analysed and main issues and research tasks are defined in close interaction with main stakeholders. For this purpose all relevant data, facts and maps about the region are being collected and prepared. Furthermore an overview of all uses, competences



White Stork (*Ciconia ciconia*, photo: Frans Buissink)

and legislative aspects is being compiled and possible stakeholders are named. One aim of the project is the foundation of a permanent ICZM forum. For this purpose a close cooperation with the regional spatial planning agency was established and existing local and regional Agenda 21 activities are planned to be integrated into ICZM. Already during the early stages of the project it became obvious that a lot of information about the region is available but not easily accessible. Therefore, an internet-based information centre will be created where information, data and facts are collected and prepared for the public. This information centre shall enable every interested stakeholder or person to be informed about the regional state of the art in ICZM and to participate in the ICZM-process in a constructive manner. Finally a newsletter in German was launched to disseminate ICZM relevant news and to fill the gap between regional and international ICZM aspects. From a practical point of view, three relevant issues, beach management, new marinas, and the ongoing dumping of dredged material in coastal waters were chosen for an detailed study. The first results of the Project will be available at the end of 2002. For further information feel free to contact the authors.

The authors are all members of the project team. Gerald Schernewski is co-ordinator of the project, scientist responsible for ICZM at the Baltic Sea Research Institute, lecturer at Kiel University and German councillor of the EUCC: gerald.schernewski@io-warnemuende.de; Seestrasse 15; 18119 Rostock-Warnemuende