

# Coastal Guide ICZM Information System

## 1. Key data

Project title:	R.I.C.A.M.A.- Rational for Integrated Coastal Area Management
Country:	Italy
Project phase:	completed
Launch:	1997
National funding:	[periods, in euros]
EC-funding:	[periods, in euros]
EC project references:	LIFE-Environment 97/IT/72/PAZ
Lead partner:	Regione Abruzzi
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Project website:	[URL]
Project area:	Abruzzi is a region in the middle of Italy with its coast on the east-side of the country. Pescara is a coastal town and L'Aquila is a town in the middle of the mountains of the Apenninien. It does not have any heavy industry because of its mountainous area.
Area size (land):	[in hectare]
(water):	[in hectare, or yes/no]
Population size:	
Policy background:	The RICAMA Project was inspired by the need to set up and introduce new methodological and organisational tools to solve the erosional problems of coastal zone of Regione Abruzzo. Such erosion is in many situations further exacerbated by inadequate human infrastructures (including those specifically built in the past for "coastal defence purposes") and by an urban and land use development extremely close to the beach areas.
Important sectors in the project set-up:	Coastal defence, Tourism, Transport & Accessibility, Landscapes & Cultural Heritage, Coastal Fishing, Public Access, Second Homes, Pollution, Natural Catastrophes
Main aim:	The initial focus of RICAMA is on management of the river-basin sediment budget, which is seen as the key to stabilising the shoreline. This builds on the existing skills of the lead agency. At the same time, this project demonstrates how environmental concerns must be integrated into the order and management of coastal areas of the Abruzzi, along the tract between the Alento and Saline rivers.
Expected results:	Development of an equilibrium among human activities, economical development and coastal environmental preservation. A sharing of responsibilities, and adapting them to well-defined and clearly expressed procedures, to take into account

environmental impacts of different activities and exploitation of natural resources.

## 2. Collaboration & integration

Objectives re collaboration & integration:

Ministries formally involved\*:

Regions (county, province) formally involved\*:

[names]

Municipalities (towns) formally involved\*:

[names]

Problems encountered: It was decided that full involvement of all stakeholders was not possible at the start. Technical studies conducted in the first phase of the project will be used to provoke local debate with municipal authorities at a later stage.

Main achievements: The project recommended a framework such that those actions of prevailing regional interest are conducted within an environmental framework and by considering their environmental implications.

## 3. Participation

Objectives re participation:

Environment stakeholders formally involved\*: yes

Economic development stakeholders formally involved\*: yes

Public hearings: [number]

Public access to project data: yes, press, tv

Main achievements: The continuous involvement of the local administrative levels and the stakeholders has been, at same time, to give concreteness to the project and objective/result of the project. Such strategy has resulted in a closer co-operation between administrations, stakeholders and population. Today a better attitude (and willingness) exist towards considering problems in their global character and multidisciplinary aspects and towards the definition of more articulated solutions acting on a variety of scales beyond the need to tackle emergencies.

A smaller group of key players have carried out a preliminary issue analysis and basic identification of needs in order to serve as a catalytic function and to improve focus. This group maintains a neutral stance, and has developed a compelling message in order to broaden the coastal management constituency

Problems encountered: Partisan politics have limited the co-operation between neighbouring local authorities. The project is working to gradually overcome distrust and hostility, by bringing new knowledge into the public arena and working to raise public awareness.

The project had to face a certain lack of credibility about institutional capacity to solve coastal problems and a certain tendency to consider natural dynamics as catastrophes. At the end of the project, while still waiting for applications (interventions and projects) on the coastal zone, it is possible to observe improvements in the decisional practice, stakeholders are more open to believe in the capacity of administrations and the natural dynamics of the coastal zone have a highest degree of acceptance.

#### **4. Information**

Objectives re environment: Information dissemination and awareness raising  
Acquiring of new knowledge

Main achievements: Concerning physical and morphological processes, the RICAMA project represented an opportunity to update the available knowledge for the coastal zone and to set up the basis for a continuous and comprehensive update, preservation and management of such knowledge within a geographical framework.  
GIS for coastal protection structures and interventions along the coast.  
Map of administrations and institutions that could provide on a regular basis information useful for managing the coastal zone of Regione Abruzzo  
Experience on the importance of mass media for information dissemination and the importance of interventions on the educational system for knowledge dissemination.  
An action focusing on dissemination of information to local press and to organisations producing tv-programs for scientific dissemination has been conducted

Problems encountered:

#### **5. Policy aspects, relevance and success:**

##### **Legal Jurisdictional issues:**

Project objectives: Good co-ordination between sectoral and national legislation

Main achievements: Concerning legislation, it is important to highlight the fact that changes occurred during the execution of the RICAMA Project. The Institutions of Regione Abruzzo have been part of the process of change. For the project, such "dynamic legislative environment" required a certain attitude toward adaptation and a certain capacity to anticipate legislative and normative changes. As important examples, we refer to the "acting regulation" for the new law for Public Works and to the further transfer to the regional governments of those responsibilities and obligations concerning coastal management. The RICAMA Project has been very timely!

Problems encountered: Italian health regulations preclude beach nourishment with dredged sediment, as movement of anything that is potentially contaminated is prohibited. This eliminates one means of building up natural defences, and as such provides a barrier to better management.

##### **Environment:**

Project objectives:  
Main achievements:  
Problems encountered:

##### **Biodiversity conservation:**

Project objectives:  
Main achievements:  
Problems encountered:

##### **Economic development:**

Project objectives:  
Main achievements: It has been possible to stop the spiral towards continuous and poorly controlled public expenditures, most of the time justified by the need to counteract emergencies. Public investment has

been optimised while value to the private investment have been added.

Problems encountered:

The tendency to favour short-sighted decisions and technical solution that favoured progressive degradation has been stopped. Long-sighted decision should be made.

A threat to tourism is the competition from new and less expensive destinations, and increasingly, to other types of tourist activities

### **Spatial planning & zoning:**

Project objectives:

Main achievements:

Problems encountered:

Improved accessibility historically has driven significant changes in land use, which affect the coastal area of concern to the RICAMA project

### **Coastal defence:**

Project objectives:

Main achievements:

The project represented a opportunity to promote a cultural change within the Regione Abruzzo easing the acceptance of coastal defence solutions alternative to the rigid ones typically adopted in the past.

Problems encountered:

The prevalent, but mistaken, notion is that coastal defence structures can secure protection. (The fact that eminent scientists have previously promoted hard engineering solutions makes it more difficult for those who derive a living from beach concessions to accept that these structures could be adding to the problems of erosion.) Those who derive a living from beach recreation need to understand that beaches are not stable and that without new supplies of sediment some will disappear. The mistaken notion that coastal defence structures can secure protection, is not a lack of understanding, but the failure to use the available understanding to effect a change in policy.

Funding of the Structural Funds has part-financed coastal protection works, which have contributed to beach and dune erosion further along the coast, necessitating further expenditure on yet more coastal protection with similar effects. Special measures adopted by the Commission in relation to the Objective 1 programme of Abruzzo may have had the effect of exempting such measures from an environmental appraisal.

Tourism, and particularly high quality tourism, represents the most important development force for the Regione Abruzzo. Coastal erosion is locally perceived as the most significant threat to maintaining this tourism. However, it is clear from the past experiences, and from the recognised causes of the erosion, that it cannot be sustainably countered just by adopting the traditional hard protection technologies. Soft, more environmentally compatible, approaches are required.

RICAMA is concerned with sediment control in the entire water basin owing the coastal impacts of changes in the sediment regime, which result from changes in land use throughout the water basin. The importance of this impact has been demonstrated by an analysis of historical land-use and coastal changes.

The combined impact of many small coastal defence projects is evident in Pescara where overlapping offshore defences parallel the still eroding beaches. Environmental impact assessments were not required for these offshore projects. (bad sectoral co-operation)

## **6. Progress & Continuity**

Follow-up:

No progress since: 2000

Main reason for lack of progress:

## **7. Sources**

Project Report online: attached in MS word

\*) formally involved means: as a project partner or represented in a project committee.

## Bibliography:

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Thematic Study A, *Legal and Regulatory Bodies: Appropriateness to ICZM*, 1999

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