

Coastal Guide ICZM Information System

1. Key data

Project title:	Implementing alternative strategies in Irish beach and dune management: involvement in sustainable coastal development
Country:	Ireland
Project phase:	prep. / study / planning / implementation / no progress
Launch:	1997
National funding:	[periods, in euros]
EC-funding:	[periods, in euros]
EC project references:	LIFEUK/404/LBL
Lead partner:	Donegal County Council and the University of Ulster (Coleraine)
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Project website:	www.ulst.ac.uk/faculty/science/crg/home.htm
Project area:	Irish Dunes
Area size (land):	[in hectare]
(water):	[in hectare, or yes/no]
Population size:	
Policy background:	In recent years, tourism and rural development have increased pressure on the counties Down and Donegal and the trend could worsen. The authorities have recognised the need for management plans to handle this development in a sustainable way.
Important sectors in the project set-up:	Tourism & recreation, Landscapes & Cultural Heritage, Habitats & Biodiversity, Natural Catastrophes and Coastal Erosion.
Main aim:	The coastal research group responsible for the project will aim to involve local communities in the conception and implementation of coastal management plans and projects.
Expected results:	Changing attitudes and practices to encourage an integrated approach (at planning, political, technical and legislative levels). Introduction of participatory processes; establishment of an advisory forum for each site. Description of each site and development of a management plan for each. Consolidation of the experience (<u>good-practice guide</u>) and dissemination of the results.

2. Collaboration & integration

Objectives re collaboration & integration:

Ministries formally involved*:

University involved: the University of Ulster (Coleraine). Early approaches by the academics undertaking the project needed to be modified to obtain acceptance of their involvement.

Regions (county, province) formally involved*:

Down (UK) and Donegal (IRL)
 Municipalities (towns)(beaches) formally involved*:
 Culdaff, Lisfannon - Fahan , Portsalon (Ballymastocker),
 Downings (Trabeg), Magheraroarty, Narin, Rossnowlagh
 (Belalt Strand)
 Problems encountered: rivalry between economically deprived neighbouring
 communities

3. Participation

Objectives re participation: participation of coastal communities at every stage of the
 process.
 The importance of visible results in generating local support for
 the project initiatives. The participants demanded “action on the
 ground” and “concrete results” rather than “endless studies”.

Environment stakeholders formally involved*: yes / no

Economic development stakeholders formally involved*: yes / no

Public hearings: yes

Public access to project data: yes,
 see information. Awareness-raising at a number of levels (e.g.
 interpretation boards, articles in the news media, scientific
 presentations, inter-governmental meetings). It continues with
 the production of a brochure, newsletters, regular web-site
 updates and public meetings.

Main achievements: Regular public meetings are being held at each site to obtain
 information, and to canvass opinion on proposed strategies
 prior to the implementation of the plans. In addition,
 experiences (both positive and negative) of long-term
 management of Atlantic dune systems by the National Trust in
 Northern Ireland will be used to inform the decision-making
 process.
 Development of a coastal information system (GIS) for the
 Northern Ireland coast that enables interrogation at three,
 spatially variable levels: regional, sub-regional and local. The
 system will incorporate data capable of up- and downscaling to
 provide a measure of sensitivity at each of these levels,
 believed to be important to management.

Problems encountered:

4. Information

Objectives re environment:

Main achievements: An ongoing programme of interdisciplinary scientific
 assessment is being carried out at each site. This can be split
 into three related areas: geomorphology, ecology and human
 utilisation. Coastal landforms and physical processes are being
 studied by historical analysis, mathematical modelling and
 topographic survey. All published maps and aerial photographs
 are being used to trace the development of each system from
 the 1830s to the present. This is performed by overlaying
 images using a computerised rectification system (ARC-INFO).
 Modelling of wave dynamics (HISWA) using bathymetric data
 from Admiralty Charts will simulate the effect of storms on the
 beach and dune systems.
 Topographic and seasonal variations in beach and dune profiles
 are being studied using Global Positioning System (GPS)
 techniques.

The biodiversity of dune plant, beetle and bird communities is also being surveyed along the profiles. The ecology and management of the dune systems will also be described at the macro-scale by habitat mapping (using Natura 2000 categories).

Beach utilisation is being studied by questionnaire and observational surveys in 1997 and 1998 in order to understand the factors that lead people to visit the beaches, and to describe and interpret the ways people behave once they are there. Assessing the distribution of visitors, vehicles and activities is of great importance, both in describing current pressures and in zoning uses in future management plans. This process will be aided by the installation of remote video cameras linked to the Internet

(<http://www.ulst.ac.uk/faculty/science/crg/webcam1.htm>)

Problems encountered:

Traditionally sand has been taken from the sand dunes and beaches to improve the adjacent acidic soils. Over time this has depleted the availability of beach sand and resulted in increased erosion. Academic studies have shown the cause and effect, but the local population has not accepted this. In this case an extensive education campaign was initiated using the mass media. To encourage the acceptance of new understanding and new approaches, The Irish Dunes made use of Web sites, the radio, television and newspapers.

Maps (GIS) have been out of date.

5. Policy aspects, relevance and success:

Legal Jurisdictional issues:

Project objectives:

Resolving the problem of poor definition or uncertainty regarding allocation of management roles and responsibilities

Main achievements:

Ability to amend to legislation in order to restructure a very complex and intricate legislative framework. (Coastal Zone Management ; a Draft Policy for Ireland)

Problems encountered:

Irish dunes would like to see extension of local authority statutory planning powers seaward.

Local authority tried to prevent an illegal and inappropriate marina development by court injunction, only to discover that the development fell under the jurisdiction of the national agency responsible for marine areas. This agency has been slow to respond since the problem came to light and the development has continued.

Environment:

Project objectives:

Main achievements:

Problems encountered:

Biodiversity conservation:

Project objectives:

Main achievements:

Problems encountered:

Economic development:

Project objectives:

Main achievements:

Problems encountered:

Spatial planning & zoning:

Project objectives:

Main achievements: Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) are subject to statutory management plans. This has stimulated co-ordination with national parks and Wild life Service to avoid duplication or divergence of efforts.

Problems encountered:

Coastal defence:

Project objectives:

Main achievements:

Problems encountered:

6. Progress & Continuity

Follow-up:

The management plans will be implemented in 1999 and 2000 using LIFE project resources, and by seeking additional funds at regional, national and international levels. It is envisaged that beach/dune plans will be reviewed within the framework and time-scale of the Donegal Development Plan. The project also plans to produce a good practice guide for community-based sustainable coastal management.

No progress since: [month, year]

Main reason for lack of progress:

7. Sources

Project Report online: [attached in MS word or PDF]

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

Bibliography:

Project Web site, if available

European Commission, *Better management of coastal resources, A European programme for integrated coastal zone management*, 1997

European Commission, *Lessons from the European Commission's demonstration programme on integrated coastal zone management*, 1999

European Commission, *Towards a European Integrated Coastal Zone Management Strategy: General Principles and Policy Options*, 1999

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

Thematic Study B, *Participation in the ICZM Processes: Mechanisms and Procedures Needed*, 1999

Thematic Study C, *Role and use of Technology in Relation to ICZM*, 1999

Thematic Study D, *Planning and Management Processes: Sectoral and Territorial Co-operation*, 1999

Thematic Study F, *Information required for Integrated Coastal Zone Management*, 1999