

# Shoreline management conflict resolution for a long accretion coastline with diverse coastal uses - LV

## 1. Policy Objective & Theme

- SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH: Balancing economic, social, cultural development whilst enhancing environment

## 2. Key Approaches

- Integration
- Participation
- Socio-economic

## 3. Experiences that can be exchanged

A Local Agenda 21 (LA21) approach has been applied to introduce participatory governance for conflict resolution in the coastal region of North Kurzeme (Latvia). A green coastal region sustainable development action programme was elaborated and coastal sustainability governance structures introduced, based on active participation of all main stakeholders.

## 4. Overview of the case

An LA21 planning and developing process in the coastal area was realised with wide public involvement and the establishment of an Agenda 21 Centre as an intermediary actor and a Council for Sustainable Development of North Kurzeme.

## 5. Context and Objectives

### a) Context

The coastal region has three local municipalities (before 2009) with a little more than 10,000 inhabitants and a territory covering about 800 km<sup>2</sup> in NW Latvia situated along both the Baltic Sea coast and the Gulf of Riga. The initiative was to create a participatory governance system in order to take care of the on-going coastal management problems in the North Kurzeme coastal region viz. a lack of joint understanding on coastal development of the long accretion coastline with its diverse uses, as well as a lack of institutional co-operation and public participation.

Innovation for the regional and local development of North-Kurzeme is partly based on well known idea, but still not today widespread in Latvia, including processes of participatory co-operation. The North-Kurzeme Coastal Region was quite well known in Latvia because of the early municipal co-operation on general matters begun in 1997 among several local municipalities, but there was still lacking, first of all, public participation and collaboration among other, different stakeholders in the region. There have also been conducted a number of investigation projects, plans and feasibility studies, but largely sectoral or issue-oriented and the results of of which have been poorly used, particularly not with an integrated and systematic approach.

### b) Objectives

The long term objective was to create a sustainable development understanding and LA21 system for the NW coastal zone of

Latvia and to develop successful co-operation with similar regions around the Baltic Sea. Short term objectives have been the preparation, testing and further elaboration of tools to facilitate integrated and participatory planning and implementation and monitoring of North Kurzeme coastal region management.

## **6. Implementation of the ICZM Approach (i.e. management, tools, resources)**

### **a) Management**

All the main stakeholders in the coastal region were included: the local municipalities of Dundaga, Kolka and Roja; Slitere National Park (SNP) and both local coastal minority culture representations – the Livonian Union (NGO representing Livonian population) and Culture-historical protected territory “Livonian Coast” - as well as the Institute for Environmental Science and Management (IESAM). All participating in the work of the Supervision Council and co-operatively established the North-Kurzeme Agenda – 21 Centre (LA21 centre) as the executive body. This was to continue the work also after the conclusion of the initiative.

### **b) ICZM tools**

The main tools used were coordination and participation mechanisms, comprehensive coastal strategies design and policies planning, and, particularly, coastal collaborative communication. The sustainable coastal development process has been envisaged and implemented through an action program:

- participatory governance via a Round Table Forum for all general public representations from one side and the Regional Council for Sustainable Development for collaborative decision-making from the other side, and, especially, by development and intermediary involvement of the Coastal Region Agenda 21 Centre;
- coastal communication via formal and informal Rural Communication Networking, as well as the application of coastal indicators and the design and implementation of the Regional Sustainable Development Demonstration projects.

All stakeholders agreed on five main work directions assigned as priorities : A green regional development programme; An ecotourism development programme; A public relations and participation programme; A coastal regional education and training programme and a sustainable development demonstration sites programme. There was a key role for the permanent institution of the LA21 in order to facilitate the fulfilment of the long term objectives and the development of LA 21 processes in the North Kurzeme coastal region. It was:

- to ensure the existence of a special intermediary organisation (LA21 centre) that would further develop LA21 as a system, tool and continuous process;
- to develop regularly new projects as the main financial means for further LA21 facilitation;
- to advance public participation via Round-table Forum and its self-assigned work groups, and also to improve co-operation with schools;
- to further develop the work of the Regional Council of the Green Coastal Region

## **7. Cost and resources**

The total costs for the whole initiative (2001-2004) amounted in around €800 000.

## **8. Effectiveness (i.e. were the foreseen goals/objectives of the work reached?)**

The LA21 system and tools was effective in cases of coastal regional stakeholder's conflict resolution and to further practical sustainable development.

## **9. Success and Fail factors**

All specified and foreseen activities were implemented and objectives were reached. Unfortunately ICZM long term implementation cannot be done only on a project-based or municipality initiated and needs governmental support programmes. In the meantime, participatory LA21-type tools when appropriately used are continuously contributing to the local preparedness for IZCM developments. There are difficulties to explain the LA21 planning process and system in an easy, understandable way for the local inhabitants. Municipal leadership and decision-making was of great importance as was the continuity, personal and professional preparedness and dedication of municipal employees and general public and interest groups to participate. In some respects, the first success was already the collaboration agreement itself because, prior to this, all local, regional and national institutions had been used to work independently.

## 10. Unforeseen outcomes

Various spin-off developments and more was achieved than planned.

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## 13. Sources

- Ernšteins R., Local Agenda 21 Process Facilitation : Environmental Communication and Self-Experience Development in Latvia, In Filho L.W., Ubelis.A.,Berzina D(eds.), Sustainable Development in the Baltic and Beyond, Frankfurt, Peter Lang Europaischer Verlag der Wissenschaften, 2006, pp.305-318
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- Layman's report. EU LIFE Project „Livonian Green Coastal Region - 21”, (2004) , Dundaga municipality, Latvia.
- <http://www.ziemelkurzeme.lv/lzp21.pdf>
- LIFE project webpage re-designed for wider post-project applications [www.ziemelkurzeme.lv](http://www.ziemelkurzeme.lv)

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-  Coastal dynamics-Research school-2007 (204.95 KB) 
  -  LA21 process facilitation (69.39 KB) 
  -  LIFE-Leymans\_report (5.05 MB) 