

# ICZM as a conflict resolution tool for building bridges among neighbouring communities - CY

## 1. Policy Objective & Theme

- SUSTAINABLE USE OF RESOURCES: Sound use of resources and promotion of less resource intensive processes/products

## 2. Key Approaches

- Participation
- Knowledge-based
- Socio-economic
- Technical

## 3. Experiences that can be exchanged

ICZM can serve as a peace building process for conflict resolution and rapprochement among neighbouring communities who live in a conflicting situation. The unity of environmental problems and the sharing of common will for a proper and integrated management of a precious natural system such as coastal areas, can have multiple positive impacts: environmental, social and economical.

## 4. Overview of the case

On January 2007, an initiative was launched: the creation of a Network for a Sustainable Future in Cyprus, which would include NGOs, CSOs and local authorities from the entire island, i.e. Greek and Turkish Cypriots. The initiative was initiated by the NGO AKTI and was supported by the Cyprus Environmental Stakeholder Forum, by UNDP and by six Greek and Turkish Cypriots NGOs. The Network had as a core activity the promotion of sustainable coastal development through the implementation of ICZM principles. The Network developed in 2 years from a bi-communal Cypriot Network into a Regional Network that has members from 9 countries of the region.

## 5. Context and Objectives

### a) Context

The history of non-governmental and non-profit organisations (NGOs) in Cyprus is quite recent. NGOs started taking action only during the past ten years, over issues such as the environment, social problems and gender equality. Thus there is no tradition per se in this form of voluntary organisation in Cyprus. The Network was designed to cover the above gaps and at the same time promote the collaboration between Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot NGOs, which needed (and still needs) to be supported.

### b) Objectives

One of the major objectives was the establishment and expansion of inter-communal, island-wide partnerships in Cyprus for sustainable coastal development. i.e to promote common ICZM actions among Greek and Turkish Cypriots. Another was to improve the level of networking and collaboration between Cypriot NGOs with the International Community which is also very low. The extroversion and internationalisation of Cypriot NGOs is a necessity. A third objective was to improve the capacity of

Cypriot NGOs and enhance their capabilities, their networking and support the development of permanent and consistent partnerships.

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

### **a) Project Management**

The Network is co-ordinated and managed by AKTI Project and Research Centre.

### **b) ICZM tools**

The Network involved initially 6 NGOs and 2 Local Authorities from the entire island, i.e. Greek and Turkish Cypriots. It was the first time to have a bi-communal network that based its development on on-the-job applied activities using ICZM tools. The structure of the work done by the Network includes the following:

- Networking: to develop such dynamics that the creation of a network with representation of NGOs from the Mediterranean and the European-international arena on issues related to the environment, sustainable development and the encouragement of the participating actions of civil society, will become a reality.
- Education, capacity building.
- Development of the skills and human resources needed to successfully run an NGO.
- Development of organisational skills.

These purposes are promoted and effected through implemented practice and activities, around the theme: Sustainable Coastal Development. It is around this matter that the planning and realisation of joint activities is developed to address society and social partners by:

- Development of a common strategy for informing the public about Sustainable Coastal Development,
- Implementation of public awareness campaigns,
- Planning interactive educational activities,
- Workshops and stakeholder meetings,
- Study visits (in Cyprus and abroad),
- Creation of online brochures and of joint publications,
- Creation of joint services (e.g. a Help Desk facility and a monthly e-newsletter).

Akdeniz coast in Morfou and Pervolia in Larnaca are the two coastal areas that have been selected as pilot sites for the focalisation of public awareness activities. The areas have been selected using a multi-parameter method: a simple multi-criteria analysis. A Coastal Info Data Base was designed and completed with information in three languages (Turkish, Greek and English) and it is uploaded in AKTI's web portal.

## **7. Cost and resources**

The cost of the first two years of the Network was approximately €100,000. Part of the cost was covered through funding by UNDP-ACT and part by self contribution of the six participant NGOs.

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

The project was structured and implemented in such a way as to provide the Cypriot partners with opportunities for education and training on the issue of sustainable development, to improve their skills on organizing campaigns, on advocacy and participation. These tasks have been achieved through on-the-job work: the planning and implementation of joint and interactive learning activities and study visits (eg study visit abroad, and in Cyprus). The participating organizations worked together on joint actions, planned and implemented common awareness raising campaigns, participated in inter-organisational meetings and thematic workshops and trainings. The Network was in full power within 6 months, according to schedule. It has gradually developed into a Regional Network that now covers 9 Mediterranean countries.

## 9. Success and Fail factors

The active participation of the partners in all the activities, phases and generally the processes of the project were the most critical element that contributed to the success of the project. The bi-communal character of the Network was a challenge: the future of the effort could not be predicted. However, it was successful mainly because of the issue on which it was focused: sustainable coastal development.

## 10. Unforeseen outcomes

The Local Authorities that have been involved during the pilot application of the on-the-job capacity building process, created strong relations with the participant NGOs and continue to co-operate, asking for advice in several aspects. This is not a usual behaviour of Cypriot Local Authorities.

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## 13. Sources

- "Network for a sustainable future", X.I. Loizidou, article was included in the ACTION e-newsletter, UNDP-ACT, Issue no 5, spring 2007
- Good Practices: Accelerate the Achievement of MD/MDGs, Report by UNDP 2009
- [www.akti.org.cy](http://www.akti.org.cy)



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