

Cross-border Coastal Zone Management plan Szczecin Lagoon - DE/PL

1. Policy Objective & Theme

- SUSTAINABLE USE OF RESOURCES: Preserving coastal environment (its functioning and integrity) to share space

2. Key Approaches

- Ecosystems based approach

3. Experiences that can be exchanged

The development of ICZM plans increases the awareness of joint cross-border problems, issues, responsibilities and possible solutions. It promotes basic ideas of ICZM among decision-makers. The development of a cross-border ICZM plan requires a joint understanding of what ICZM is and what the purpose and function of the plan shall be. It requires, in advance, an analysis of the existing national legal and spatial planning systems. Discussions of how an ICZM-plan can supplement or replace existing planning tools have to take place. The options for implementation have to be explored as well. Further, the plan's function with respect to the Water Framework Directive and the Habitat Directive has to be discussed. Only if these pre-conditions are done can the plan or aspects of it have a chance to be implemented in a region.

4. Overview of the case

Between 1995 and 2004 stepwise approaches towards a joint ICZM plan for the Szczecin Lagoon (German/Polish border region) were carried out.

5. Context and Objectives

a) Context

The Helsinki Commission (HELCOM) works to protect the marine environment of the Baltic Sea from all sources of pollution through inter-governmental co-operation. In the early 1990's, the Szczecin Lagoon belonged to the HELCOM priority regions. High biodiversity and ecological value faced ongoing economic pressure and pollution. In 1996, the HELCOM Baltic Programme Implementation Task Force supported a project to develop an ICZM plan. In 1999, a plan for the Polish part of the lagoon was published and one covering the German territory of the Oder delta was published in 2004.

b) Objectives

The general objectives are: a) to carry out a stock-taking, b) to develop a future vision for the Szczecin Lagoon region, b) to provide generally acceptable guidelines for a regional ICZM, c) to define strategic goals for sustainable development and d) to identify possibilities for the implementation of measures.

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

a) Management

A co-operation agreement between the West-Pomeranian Voivodship and the Environmental Ministry of Mecklenburg – Vorpommern was signed in 1995. As a consequence, a Joint Environmental Protection Committee with focus groups on environmental protection, water management, solid waste management, protection against emission and spatial planning has been established and meets annually. On the Polish side, the Department of Strategy and Spatial Planning of the West-Pomeranian Voivodship and the Voivodship Inspectorate of Environmental Protection in Szczecin, Poland, together with an expert team, carried out the work. In Germany, the Regional Authority for Spatial Planning Vorpommern was responsible.

b) ICZM tools

For the German and for the Polish territory of the Szczecin Lagoon two separate ICZM Plans have been developed covering land and water. The plans consist of a report and of maps. The reports include the following aspects; a) a stock-take of the present uses, structures and responsibilities, b) a discussion of future challenges and potential conflicts, and c) lists with priority issues and recommendations. The maps visualize the present environmental setting, protected areas and economic activities. They increase the awareness of present and potential future use conflicts and form a basis for spatial management. Both plans have an advisory character and are not legally binding.

7. Cost and resources

The Polish activities received funding from the HELCOM Commission and from the Polish National Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management. German activities were funded with about €150,000 with a contribution from RDF funds. All involved institutions contributed their own resources.

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

A joint schedule for the development of plans and co-operation was lacking. The initial objective of a joint plan was not reached.

9. Success and Fail factors

The pre-conditions for the development of an ICZM plan in Germany and Poland were different. Different legal and spatial planning systems as well as different approaches and responsibilities of the involved institutions created problems. The lack of a joint language, different funding sources and the long process hampered the co-operation. A different understanding of ICZM, whether ICZM should promote environmental aspects or balance ecological, economic and social aspects, existed among the institutions and the funding organisations. Altogether, two separate plans with dissimilar spatial coverage and thematic focus were developed for the German and the Polish part of the region. The aim of a joint plan has been withdrawn. Both plans were not implemented in regional planning documents.

10. Unforeseen outcomes

None so far.

11. Prepared by



















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13. Sources

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