

A Consortium for Integrated Management and Governance in the Costa Del Garraf - ES

1. Policy Objective & Theme

- ADAPTATION TO RISK: Managing impacts of climate change and safeguarding resilience of coasts/coastal systems
- ADAPTATION TO RISK: Preventing and managing natural hazards and technological (human-made) hazards
- ADAPTATION TO RISK: Integrating coherent strategies covering the risk-dimension (prevention to response) into planning and investment
- SUSTAINABLE USE OF RESOURCES: Preserving coastal environment (its functioning and integrity) to share space
- SUSTAINABLE USE OF RESOURCES: Sound use of resources and promotion of less resource intensive processes/products
- SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH: Balancing economic, social, cultural development whilst enhancing environment
- SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH: Improving competitiveness

2. Key Approaches

- Integration
- Participation
- Knowledge-based
- Ecosystems based approach

3. Experiences that can be exchanged

A successful approach for sustainable and integrated coastal management, through the establishment of a local Consortium which includes municipalities, county councils, and the Regional Departments of the Generalitat of Catalonia, to elaborate action plans and specific projects. This initiative is the implementation at the local level of all the European, national and regional ICZM regulations, promoting the co-ordination and co-operation with institutional actors, scientists and social associations.

4. Overview of the case

The Consortium was created in 2006 with the aim to sustainably manage a coastal, marine and land area in the county of Garraf, following the European Recommendation on ICZM. It comprises the municipalities of Sitges, Sant Pere de Ribes, Vilanova i Cubelles; Garraf Regional Council and three departments of the Government of Catalonia: Environment and Housing, Agriculture, Food and Rural Action and Country Planning and Public Works. The basic objectives to be carried out are related to the protection and conservation of Garraf's coastal area, the adaptation to, and mitigation of, climate change, the integration of environmental and biodiversity conservation with an economic and recreational use of the coast, and finally, institutional and citizen co-ordination.

5. Context and Objectives

a) Context

Garraf coast is an important area in terms of ecological values: it was declared a Special Areas for Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Area for Birds (SPA) and a member of the Natura 2000 network with a wide marine area (that stretches between the towns of Castelldefels and Cunit) and some land spaces (the area of Muntanyeta and the river Foix estuary); the

Long Beach and the Ribes bank estuary are included as natural wetland areas in Catalonia; Costas Garraf is an area of special importance for food and marine bird communities of the Llobregat and Ebre Deltas and even for the Mediterranean shearwater which breeds in the Balearic Islands. It is also an important area for bird migration in periods of rest. However, during the last century, the natural characteristics of this area were modified as a consequence of anthropogenic activities. In fact, the main pressures are: wetland reclamation for infrastructure, wetland drying up, delta regression, dune erosion, field salinisation and abandonment, solid waste disposal, aquifer pollution, port enlargements and reservoir-building causing coastal regression, etc. The Consortium was created in 2006 from the sustainable management, at a regional and local scale, of the coastal, marine and land area in the county of Garraf. Natural areas and the coastal landscape of the Consortium form a true regional Green Belt.

b) Objectives

The consortium aims to promote the dialogue and the creation of synergies to achieve a sustainable use of the coast. The general political objectives of the Consortium are: (1) ICZM; (2) the completion of the Green Belt district, connecting the coastal areas Colls, Long Beach and the mouth of the Foix, with the natural parks of Garraf and Foix Olèrdola, through a biological network connector associated with roads, streams and green and / or agricultural areas; (3) a territorial analysis, studying the growth pattern, territorial balance, the capacity and sustainability, vulnerability and the protection of the environment and landscape; (4) climate change mitigation and adaptation by promoting renewable energies, energy conservation, sustainable transport and reducing CO2 emissions; (5) the protection of the marine and coastal zone with emphasis on marine biodiversity, meadows of Posidonia, fishery resources, with the development of the Marine conditioning area of the Garraf coast; (6) the recovery of the historical memory, with the study and conservation of sea-faring traditions, customs, arts and fishing materials and water in general.

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

a) Management

The consortium is currently composed of 3 Regional Government Administrations (the Environment and Housing Department, the Territorial Policy and Public Works Department, and the Agriculture, Food and Rural Action Department of the Catalonia Government) and 5 Local Councils (Vilanova i la Geltrú city council, Sitges city council, Sant Pere de Ribes city council, Cubelles city council, Garraf district council)

b) ICZM tools

The political objectives of the Consortium were developed through a general action plan (adopted in 2007) and biennial action plans to implement it through specific projects.

The Consortium Action Plan of Integrated Management consists of 7 strategic lines: (1) Recovery and restoration of natural areas; (2) Improving ecological connectivity between natural systems; (3) Arrangement and regulation of public use. Improving accessibility; (4) Forest fire risk reduction; (5) the protection and improvement of the marine ecosystem of Garraf; (6) Fighting coastal erosion and the effects of climate change; (7) Reducing CO2 emissions.

The biennial Action Plan 2009-2010 includes the implementation of the following areas of work: (1) Avant project of Garraf footpaths; (2) Special protection plan and restoration of Riera de Ribes; (3) Artificial reefs park; (4) Garraf coasts area management plan of the Natura 2000 network; (5) Follow-up and control project of marine flowering plants and *Caulerpa racemosa* (with SARC, Submon, and DAAAR); (6) OBSEA project (with the group SARTI/UPC); (7) I International Workshop on ICZM; (8) Monitoring plan and environmental information for Colls; (9) Employment surveillance plan, cleaning and maintenance of Colls; (10) Training courses for local technicians (with the Diputació de Barcelona); (11) Environmental education Project in Aran ship. The timescale for the implementation and goals achievement is associated with each biennial Action Plan.

7. Cost and resources

The consortium draws on the contributions of its members. The budget is €120,000/year. With the inclusion of remnants of previous budgets and grants obtained in 2009 reaching €281,000. To this amount must be added the contribution of staff from

the Municipality of Vilanova valued at €71,500. The sum equals the actual cost of the Consortium for 2009 of € 352,500. The consortium currently has no personnel, and bases its operation with the transfer of staff detailed (from the Vilanova city council) and the involvement of technicians and administrative of other members.

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

The Consortium has consolidated its presence and organisation, incorporating all municipalities from the Garraf coast and the involvement of the Government of Catalonia. It has also consolidated its proposal in the field of experimentation in ICZM, and the proposal of an integrated management at local level. It has accomplished and executed specific visible projects, such as park reefs, footpaths, the restoration of the Ribes bank, marine area management, etc.

Despite some economic and management difficulties, the objectives are being achieved in the timescale defined.

9. Success and Fail factors

Factors that were helpful in achieving the objectives are: the environmental and landscape values of Garraf coast, its proximity to metropolitan areas, the implication of local coastal management, the coordination with regional institutions and the use of Colls process as a case study on ICZM. As internal negative factors: the complexity of coastal legislation, the dispersion of responsibilities among local, regional, national and European levels, the lack of confidence of the general society in the administration and the lack of resources. Also the growing awareness towards environmental issues and climate change and the involvement of society in general. The main obstacles were the diversity and complexity of legislative powers, the excessive separation between the state and local policies in Europe, and the difficulty in raising awareness of the Consortium.

10. Unforeseen outcomes

The positive impacts of the process lie with the amplification of projects related to the objectives of the consortium driven by others such as UPC OBSEA project, monitoring of Posidonia meadows, with the discovery in Vilanova of the presence of invasive algae *Caulerpa racemosa*, and the international Consortium after the conclusion of the 1st International Workshop on ICZM that took place in Sitges and Vilanova (1 and 2 October 2009). The growing awareness of the Consortium is also gradually increasing their availability to arrange strategic joint action and act as a real table of consensus and co-ordination. The negative outcomes are related to (1) the complexity of political and administrative difficulties of developing projects and their slowness; and (2) the difficulty of obtaining the necessary resources that increases as projects evolve and grow.

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13. Sources

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