

Cantabria's Coastal Zoning Plan - ES

1. Policy Objective & Theme

- ADAPTATION TO RISK: Preventing and managing natural hazards and technological (human-made) hazards
- 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: Developing Europe's regional seas sustainably
- SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH: Balancing economic, social, cultural development whilst enhancing environment
- SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH: Improving competitiveness

2. Key Approaches

- Knowledge-based

3. Experiences that can be exchanged

An integrated spatial analysis and diagnosis for the definition, cartographic de-limitation, analysis and assessment of the coastal territorial units to develop a coastal zone plan. The work is based on a multi-disciplinary and integrated approach in comparison with traditional zoning plans.

4. Overview of the case

A multi-disciplinary and integrated analysis of the coastal zone (including physical systems, demographic processes, urban planning, spatial organisation models, urban morphology, traditional settlements, beaches, coastal paths, housing, environmental issues, etc.) has allowed the development of a Coastal Zoning Plan (CZP), which provides three types of actions for the territorial units: Protection and Planning categories and Strategic Integral Areas.

5. Context and Objectives

a) Context

Cantabria's coastal zone, in the north of Spain, is characterised by a high ecological and landscape value, with several Natural Protected Areas, Sites of Community Interest (SCI) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) of the Natura 2000 network, and RAMSAR sites. The area is also subject to an enormous pressure due to urban expansion and the different socio-economic activities, such as tourism, agriculture and farming, industry, ports, residential uses, etc. This Plan has been developed because of a growing need to protect against the massive urbanism process which is threatening the coastal zone of Cantabria. The CZP is a Land Planning Tool to promote the co-ordination of sectoral policies and to enable the compatibility of coastal planning, environmental protection and sustainable economic development. The geographical scale for implementation is regional but the application affects the local level, as all the municipal plans must be adapted to this Coastal Zoning Plan. It is the first integrated spatial planning tool; the previous plans were more oriented to environmental and ecological resources, such as the Natural Resources Management Plan of the Natural reserve of Santoña, Victoria and Joyel Wetl

b) Objectives

The general objective of the CZP is to provide an integrated territorial planning and management tool. The specific objectives

are: (1) protecting, preserving and managing the coastal landscape as a unique way to acknowledge our coastal zone as a high quality area at the European level, (2) providing a structural basis for urban growth, based on roads and paths network and on the structure of the different territorial units; (3) ensuring the vitality and potential of agricultural areas, protecting the peripheral urban fields and the traditional agricultural installation systems through the establishment of adequate transformation or protection criteria; (4) geographical location of industrial uses; (5) identifying the most suitable locations for urban expansion in order to ensure all citizens their right to decent living conditions (6) ensuring the sustainable use of resources and infrastructures; (7) preserving the cultural heritage and the identity of our territories.

The timescale for the development of the Plan was 1.5 years (2003-2004). The timescale for the implementation is undefined.

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

a) Project Management

The Regional and Local administration entities were involved in the process. Besides this, a public information and consultation participatory process was carried out to involve the population. The Regional Government and the Local Councils have the competence to approve the urban and zoning plans, to write and approve the Singular Projects of Regional Interest (PSIR) that will develop the Strategic Integral Areas and all the conservation, planning and management projects affecting the coast.

b) ICZM tools

The CZP is a legislative and planning tool, based on several specific tools:

- Integrated territorial analysis, including physical, ecological, socio-economic and administrative coastal sub-systems. This analysis was stored and managed through a Territorial Units Database geo-referenced in a Geographic Information System.
- Coastal Zoning Plan, which proposes different initiatives for each territorial unit:
 - Protection category to preserve the territorial units with high physical, ecological or cultural values. The different figures within this category are Environmental, Coastal, Intertidal, River and Ecological Protection Areas, and Landscape Value Areas.
 - Planning category, for the following: Peripheral Urban Planning Area (already subjected to territorial transformation processes due to new uses), Traditional Model Planning Area (traditional organisation areas, usually oriented more to agricultural than urban uses), and Ecological-Forest Planning Area (to make the protection and economic production compatible).
 - Strategic Integral Actions (SIA) in specific locations with specific problems. This category is composed of Productive SIA, Environmental SIA and Planning SIA. Some examples are the Special Plan for the Bay of Santander, Coastal Paths Plan, Singular Projects of Regional Interest (PSIR), dunes environmental recovering plans, industrial strategic restructuring plans, cultural and tourist initiatives, etc.
- Public Participation Processes, to inform and collect the opinion of institutions and population at the regional and local level

7. Cost and resources

The multidisciplinary team in charge of the elaboration of this Plan is composed of geographers, historians, architects, civil engineers, etc. that provided the different perspectives for the study.

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

The general objective was achieved as the Plan was successfully defined and in the timescale defined. The specific objectives will be achieved from now on with the implementation of the Plan.

9. Success and Fail factors

Factors that were helpful in achieving the objective were the political willingness, the availability of funding, the need for coastal spatial planning and the legislative level conferred to the spatial planning tool, the high quality technical work and the multi-disciplinary approach.

A factor that hindered the achievement of the goals was the conflict generated by the land classification, as for example, some fields have been declared protected and “areas not allowed to be urbanised” with the subsequent effects and complaints of the owners that will not get any economic benefit from them anymore. Also the conflicts of competences that the local Councils representatives understood from this Plan: they interpreted the Plan as interference in their competences and it appealed. Several individual people and companies, which had already bought fields thinking of their future value and the benefits they would get from them, openly opposed the Plan.

10. Unforeseen outcomes

No unforeseen outcomes have been identified.

11. Prepared by























Raúl Medina / Pino González-Riancho, Environmental Hydraulics Institute IH Cantabria, Spain.

12. Verified by

Ángela de Meer Lecha-Marzo and Valentín Castillo Salcines; “Land and Territory: analysis and planning” Research Group. Geography, Urbanism and Spatial Planning Department, University of Cantabria, Spain.

13. Sources

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