

Initiating ICZM at Selkämeri, western Finland - FI

1. Policy Objective & Theme

- 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 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
- Socio-economic

3. Experiences that can be exchanged

Land use planning is of great importance in Bothnian Sea ICZM. Regional land use plans are considered to be most crucial in this case because: in the planning procedure all key stakeholders are involved; provincial planning gives guidelines for land use planning in communities; a provincial plan is conclusive; the provincial plan, as an illustrative instrument, facilitates communication between stakeholders.

4. Overview of the case

The Finnish Coastal Zone Strategy was prepared for the purpose of national implementation and also forms a basis for the Bothnian Sea ICZM planning process. In spite of good management methods, the state of the coastal zone gives increasing cause for concern. Water quality and natural diversity are changing for the worse. Population and business activities on the coast are growing whilst, on the other hand, opportunities for practicing traditional means of livelihood are diminishing. Accident risks in maritime areas are increasing and floods and storms are also becoming stronger as a consequence of climate change.

5. Context and Objectives

a) Context

The Selkämeri coastal area lies at the Bothnian Sea on the west coast of Finland. Here, the waters are in quite good condition, compared to the Gulf of Finland and the Archipelago Sea. Indications of eutrophication have, however, been observed. The intensified purification of municipal and industrial waste water has fundamentally improved the state of the discharge areas. A level has been achieved in the treatment of waste water in which further intensification produces only small improvements in the state of the sea area. At the same time, pressure towards marine and coastal areas in the Bothnian Sea region has increased. This puts great challenges of sustainable use of the coastal zone including increased use of coastal areas, e.g. controlling the deterioration of the state of environment; sustaining occupational opportunities; minimizing accident risks brought about by increasing traffic; and preparing for the impacts of climate change.

b) Objectives

The general objective of the Bothnian Sea ICZM is to try to draw attention and interest to the Bothnian Sea. Other objectives are to strengthen the local and regional identity, to promote national and international co-operation and to support environmental/marine protection, sustainable development and biodiversity in the region. The ICZM promotes research and development activities in the Selkämeri area.

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

a) Management

The ICZM – initiative is going to be implemented in the framework of Botnia-Atlantica – programme, and will be financed by funds allocated for provincial development. The responsible body is the Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment in Ostrobothnia). It is being conducted and carried out by three separate working groups. The Group of Authorities defines policy trends and follows up the progress of the procedure. The ICZM Group of Ostrobothnian Archipelago and Coastal Areas from the Regional Council of Ostrobothnia, appointed by the The Board of the Regional Council in 2007, follows up the coastal strategy, and takes care of information change and makes provisions for eliminating conflicts. The task of the Preparatory Group is to promote the planning and preparatory procedure.

b) ICZM tools

One of the milestones in the strategic process was started by preparing the Finnish Coastal Zone Strategy which is now continuing with the Bothnian Sea ICZM. Land use planning and utilisation of e.g. GIS –systems are important instruments in Selkämeri ICZM. Preparation of the regional land use plan of Satakunta began in 2003 and it was published in spring 2009. Awareness-raising and capacity building in the form of seminars and workshops are also important tools in promoting ICZM in this particular coastal zone. Implementation of the Water Framework Directive and the Baltic Sea Action Plan (which came into force in 2008) are also statutory tools to be enforced.

7. Cost and resources

Cost calculations are not available.

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

Effective communication to the wider general public throughout the ICZM process is an important factor. Disparate administrative objectives and actor interests, diversity of practices and lack of information easily hinders sustainable use and management of coastal zones.

9. Success and Fail factors

The activities have just started but it seems that the Finnish Coastal Zone Strategy (2006) forms a good basis for preparation of the Bothnian Sea ICZM. Land use planning which already has long traditions in Finland, gives good grounds both for preparation of the ICZM and arranging public participation processes. The ICZM presumably has considerable social-economic effects which should be assessed to a reasonable extent. Being a missing link in policies and legislation, it also has a tendency to raise awareness in this coastal zone.

10. Unforeseen outcomes

Funding the project is a challenge; if possible, funding will be arranged in co-operation with local authorities, communities and enterprises. It is also a great challenge to keep up a long term planning process with full co-operation when the fruits of that may be picked no sooner than after a few decades time. Public participation procedures and reconciliation of diverse interests

of stakeholders are also demanding tasks in the long run.

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13. Sources

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