People, nature and harbours– FI/RU

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 ECONOMIC GROWTH: Developing Europe's regional seas sustainably
- SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH: Balancing economic, social, cultural development whilst enhancing environment

2. Key Approaches

- Integration
- Participation
- Knowledge-based
- Ecosystems based approach
- Socio-economic

3. Experiences that can be exchanged

The focus in both this Finnish and Russian initiative was to search for new practices of participation in order to give stakeholders a wide range of possibilities to take part in the planning procedure and also to offer a channel for interest groups to communicate with each other. Sustainable nature tourism and recreation were developed in the Finnish part. The management planning process for game and fisheries offered a new approach to find solutions in hunting in conservation areas. For Lake Pihlajavesi area, a joint management system was developed. In the Russian part of the project, four pilots were carried out.

4. Overview of the case

The cross-border Finnish-Russian initiative ‘People, Nature and Harbours’ concerned solving environmental problems, exchange of information and methodologies of nature conservation and protected area management, pilot projects and study tours. The Finnish aspect consisted of three parts which were 1) planning the management of Natura 2000 area in Lake Pihlajavesi; 2) stocktaking of underwater nature in eastern Gulf of Finland; and 3) the seals in the Gulf of Finland. The Russian aspect consisted of six parts, several pilots, underwater inventories of marine habitats and species and the seals in the Gulf of Finland and in Lake Ladoga.

5. Context and Objectives

a) Context

The main target of the Finnish work was to further develop a participatory approach towards joint management of the multiple use of protected areas with unique, vulnerable and especially valuable species using Lake Pihlajavesi and the endemic Saimaa seal as a pilot area. It worked for enhancing the local understanding and acceptance of nature protection, and developing a joint management system for the area. Land use and management planning processes for mosaic-like areas with several land-owners and land-use purposes require applying the ecosystem approach in the planning. It is essential, therefore, to pay attention to the social dimension of planning, in addition to the ecological and social dimensions In the Russian part of

the work, approaches for public participation and stakeholder involvement into joint management, conservation and sustainable use of natural sites were tested. Methods of joint monitoring systems of the eastern Gulf of Finland were developed for the seal populations' monitoring and for marine habitats and species.

b) Objectives

The principal objectives of the project were to protect and monitor internationally and regionally important nature areas situated on the river basin of the eastern Gulf of Finland, and to develop, in co-operation with local stakeholders, sustainable protection and use of nature areas as part of social and economic development. Specific objectives were developing protection and monitoring marine ecosystems in the Eastern Gulf of Finland; and researching the impacts of climate change on underwater nature and state of seal populations. The objectives of the Russian part of the project were, to test the approaches for public participation and stakeholder involvement into joint management, conservation and sustainable use of natural sites; and to complement the establishment of a harmonised monitoring of the eastern Gulf of Finland catchment.

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

a) Management

The Ministry of the Environment in Finland and Metsähallitus were responsible for the Finnish part of the project. Metsähallitus was responsible for the implementation of the project. National authorities involved were the South Karelian Association and South-East Regional Environmental Centre. Also environmental administration, the Game and Fishery Research Institute and Sea Research Institute and municipalities co-operated intensively with each other. Specific work was done by working groups. In the Russian part of the project, Metsähallitus had the role of an overall lead partner with the Saint Petersburg Naturalist Society (SPNS) taking the role of the responsible partner for the general co-ordination and implementation.

b) ICZM tools

One of the ICZM tools in the Finnish part has been developing and utilising a multi-purpose planning for Natura 2000 areas with ecosystem services included in the planning procedure taking recreational values and tourism into account. Stakeholder participation and specific co-operative working methods have been utilised. Methodological development of inventories concerning e.g Saimaa Ringed Seals; marine environment; alien species etc. are important tools for planning and decision-making. In the Russian part, digital maps of land use of pilot areas have been created and materials for management plans of the four pilot sites have been prepared by the project experts..

7. Cost and resources

The objectives of the project were realized and intended results reached. However, meeting the objectives of the cross-border co-operation between south-east Finland – Russia proved to be somewhat difficult. Due to the separate supervision and management of the financing instruments, the result was actually implementation of two separate endeavours with equal names and with similar contents in the neighbouring countries. In the Finnish part; the aim of the Pihlajavesi master plan was to contribute to the development and use of participatory planning and decision making methods and increasing efficiency of the plan. Essential was to reach stakeholders in close connection with the Pihlajavesi area. In spite of seal protection, the growth of the seal stock has stopped in recent years. Indicator-based monitoring of climate change and other human activities in the Gulf of Finland is of great importance; methodology of marine inventories was further developed and data on marine habitats and species was collected. In the Russian part; the work was carried out according to the action plan approved. However, the constant re-organisations of the Environmental administration of the Leningrad Region has somewhat hindered effective management of regional protected areas and caused also problems in implementation.

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

The costs of the Finnish part were €300,000 in total and the costs of the Russian part were €250,000.

9. Success and Fail factors

In Finland: The objectives were largely met. Participative planning, intensive co-operation between stakeholders and commonly agreed objectives increase the safety and living conditions of Saimaa ringed seals. Engagement of local people to seal protection is of great importance. New and sensitive indicators found in water inventories (Monoporeia affinis; Saduria entomon) improve the possibilities to monitor impacts of climate change on sea water. In Russia: Preparation of materials and development of methodologies for the management of the pilot sites contributed to the conservation of biodiversity in the vicinity of Saint Petersburg. However, further management responsibilities of these facilities are unclear. The main problem was the continuous re-organisation of nature conservation bodies in the government of the Leningrad Region. Another fail factor was the weak co-operation with the harbours of Primorsk and Ust-Luga. As two of the largest harbours of the Gulf of Finland having huge environmental impacts to the ecosystem of the Gulf and its catchment area the harbours were originally a target. Co-operation was planned to reduce the environmental effects of them, but unfortunately almost no response was received from the harbour authorities.

10. Unforeseen outcomes

None in the Finnish part but in the Russian part, a nature trail supposed to be constructed would have required an EIA; no such assessment could be done and so it could not be constructed. Also there are unclear responsibilities of further management of recreational equipment which has led to the exclusion of constructing recreational infrastructure in the River Svir Delta pilot site.

11. Prepared by

Marja-Leena Kosola, SYKE, Finland

12. Verified by

Arja Halinen, Metsähallitus, Finland

13. Sources

- South-East Finland - Russia Neighbourhood Programme Final Narrative Report (2009) Tacis component of the joint project. Contract Number: 2006/132-844
- People, nature and harbours - ihmiset, luonto ja satamat. Hankkeen loppuraportti
- Biodiversity in the Baltic Sea. An integrated thematic assessment on biodiversity and nature conservation in the Baltic Sea (2009) Baltic Sea Environment Proceedings No. 116B (at http://www.helcom.fi/stc/files/Publications/Proceedings/bsep116B.pdf

People, nature and harbours (309.5 KB)

Tacis final report (151.21 KB)