

Coastal management strategy for southwest Finland - FI

1. Policy Objective & Theme

- SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH: Balancing economic, social, cultural development whilst enhancing environment

2. Key Approaches

- Integration
- Participation
- Socio-economic

3. Experiences that can be exchanged

The development of a management strategy to take into account conflicting uses of the coast and the impacts of human use.

4. Overview of the case

A management strategy for the southwest of Finland has been developed to ensure an environmentally sustainable future that promotes vitality and permits economic growth yet respects the characteristic features of the area and its natural values. A pilot ICZM plan was drawn up for the municipality of Uusikaupunki. This town was chosen because of its diverse environment and economic structure.

5. Context and Objectives

a) Context

The coastal area of southwest Finland is part of the Baltic Sea, between the Baltic proper and the Bothnian Bay. The area covered by the initiative consists of the coastal waters and their drainage area. The archipelago of some 8300 km², which is the largest in the Baltic, is topographically complex, having more than 2000 islands and some 12000 km of coastline. The sea area is characterised by low salinity and a strong seasonality with high summer temperatures and ice cover during the winter.

The coastal areas in the archipelago are facing conflicts between economic and recreational activities, tourism as well as the need for nature protection. The economic activities are fishing and fish farming, specialised agriculture, animal husbandry and basic industries. Sea transport and land transport are important factors causing pollution. The permanent population is some 30000 people, but the area also has some 20000 summer cottages which means that the population considerably increases during the summer months.

b) Objectives

The objectives, on a general level, were to develop and implement innovative and effective measures for integrated coastal zone management in Southwest Finland. This was to include participatory planning with all relevant stakeholders involved, and creating a framework for decision-making to ensure that the special circumstances of the area were taken into consideration.

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

a) Management

The Regional Council of Southwest Finland, a joint municipal authority which functions in accordance with the principles of municipal self-government, was responsible for the work. It operates as the authority on regional development as well as the region's planning and lobbying organisation. It co-operated with the Southwest Finland Regional Environment Centre, the fisheries unit of the Employment and Economic Development Centre of Southwest Finland, the Department of Geography at the University of Turku and the Municipality of Uusikaupunki.

b) ICZM tools

The work enabled the drawing up of an Integrated Coastal Zone Management strategy for southwest Finland. Implementation consisted of two main activities. A very comprehensive data collection and sampling programme covering all relevant aspects was carried out. This was followed by a thorough analysis concentrating on conflicting factors and on the identification of different management options. This included taking stock of existing data, networking with relevant stakeholders which contributed to a conflict assessment between environmental objectives and economic activities in the area. The strategy was piloted in the Uusikaupunki area. The availability of data proved to be the main constraint for the project. Additional efforts were made to ensure the availability of relevant, reliable and detailed data for public use. Some of the constraints encountered were the restrictions on data use due to confidentiality issues relating to national defence, the costs of data, etc.

A specific pilot project, to demonstrate coastal zone management in an operational context, was established in the northern part of the area, around the town of Uusikaupunki. This is a town of 16,400 inhabitants on the west coast of southwest Finland. A considerable proportion of its area is covered by sea. The local people make their living from the car, metal-working and chemical industries, fishing, aquaculture and the port. Tourism is mainly confined to the summer months. The outermost islands in the Uusikaupunki archipelago are covered by an extensive Natura programme. The Uusikaupunki marine areas have suffered from eutrophication in the past few decades due to agricultural, industrial and other emissions. The assignment addressed the policy objectives and priorities of the Water Framework Directive, the Habitats Directive and implementation of national legislation. It served as a demonstration pilot for the compilation of the Finnish national ICZM strategy. The strategy addressed the issues and constraints of preserving the regional (traditional) lifestyle and economic activities while at the same time tackling the need for environmental protection of the HELCOM hot-spot area of the Archipelago Sea. Thus the results were focused on ensuring socio-economic aspects and environmental sustainability.

7. Cost and resources

The total budget was €660,904 of which there was a Life contribution of €324,905.

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

An innovative aspect of the project lay in making the best use of up-to-date GIS information and aerial photos for a more detailed identification of conflict points in the area, and the extensive inclusion of regional stakeholders and the general public to ensure a shared understanding of integrated coastal zone management. The increase in the seal population has been seen as a problem for fishing and there has been pressure to intensify seal hunting. These types of conflicts over nature conservation can best be prevented by means of information, instruction and guidance and the management plans for the Natura areas satisfy these requirements. The growth in boating needs to be matched by an increase in control although the downsides of boating can be reduced by developing the marina services, since this reduces the strain on other areas.

9. Success and Fail factors

After the work ended, the personnel and their know-how were used to continue the work on compiling the national strategy.

10. Unforeseen outcomes

This project has been selected as one of the 21 "Best" LIFE Environment projects in 2005-2006

11. Prepared by

A H Pickaver, Coastal & Marine Union (EUCC)

12. Verified by

It has not been possible to verify this case.

13. Sources

- The future of the coastal zone: A coastal management strategy for Southwest Finland (undated) Regional Council of Southwest Finland.



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