

Coastal Zone Plan for Tramore Bay area, Co. Waterford (IE)

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

2. Key Approaches

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

3. Experiences that can be exchanged

Preparation of the Tramore Coastal Zone Plan was supplemented by a study of the economic, social and environmental (ESE) significance of the area. Each of these elements were examined individually with involvement of relevant stakeholders with a view to preparing an overall statement of value. The Coastal Zone Plan will sit within a hierarchy of other local and regional plans including the Tramore Local Area Plan and the Waterford County Development Plan, both of which are legally binding.

4. Overview of the case

Tramore is a traditional coastal resort situated on Ireland's south-east coast. The area is subject to strong recreational pressure and has a range of conservation designations associated with it. In light of this an ICZM approach to management was recommended to the Council, the planning authority responsible for the area. A first step in this process was a statement of the area's economic, social and environmental significance. This was achieved through consultation with key sectoral stakeholders who identified specific strategic issues for their sector (ESE). It was proposed that work would form the basis for a dedicated Coastal Zone Plan.

5. Context and Objectives

a) Context

Tramore occupies a coastal location overlooking Tramore Bay 13 kilometres (8 miles) to the south of Waterford City on Ireland's south eastern coast. The town is a leading seaside resort and economically significantly important for the south east region. There is a 4.8 kilometre long strand which is the centre for the town's main recreational activity. The Strand is backed by clay cliffs composed of organic sediments, hard shoreline defences, a shingle ridge and a dune-beach barrier system dominated by a mature dune complex of national and international conservation value being designated as a Ramsar site, an SAC and SPA at European level and a Natural Heritage Area (NHA) at national level. A study carried out by the Coastal & Marine Resources Centre in 2006 found that continued shoreline erosion is threatening the dunes and therefore the viability of the spit. This has resulted in concern from local residents and stakeholders that any potential breach of the spit could cut off the dune system as a public amenity and expose the coast behind to the full force of wave action.

b) Objectives

Previous work had focused on coastal protection works at the site and during the course of that study it was found that there was little or no general information about Tramore's cultural and environmental significance. It was recommended that an ICZM approach to management should be promoted. In response to this the Council commissioned a scoping study on ICZM for the area. The objective of that work was to document the environmental and ecological value of Tramore Bay and hinterland by collating all existing knowledge and experience with a view to recognising the area as an integrated coastal zone that requires co-ordinated management and continuous monitoring to maintain its unique ecosystem, avoid future conflicts and promote best practice in developing and enhancing the Tramore Bay area. A central element of the work was the identification of strategic issues for the area, management responsibilities, potential points of conflict and methods for their resolution. This involved carrying out questionnaire survey with representatives from all three sectors: economic, social and environmental. A key finding of the work was that all sectoral groups were aware of ICZM and were overwhelmingly in favour of its use as a management tool in the study area.

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

a) Management

The initial background work was carried out by the Coastal and Marine Resources Centre, University College Cork on a consultancy basis for Waterford County Council. When the studies were completed the findings were presented separately to local stakeholders, during a dedicated public meeting, and to the local Town Council and the wider County Council. A dedicated Coastal Plan for Tramore would be enshrined in both the Local Area Plan and the County Development Plan hence it was necessary to engage and have the support of the local and regional political community.

b) ICZM tools

The scoping study for ICZM of Tramore Bay was developed on a participatory basis with the support of all relevant stakeholders. Economic, social and environmental stakeholder groups were identified and questionnaire circulated in order to identify strategic issues for the area, management responsibilities, potential points of conflict and methods for their resolution. Their combined responses were used to form a full list of issues that needed to be addressed in any future coastal zone management plan for the area. Both supporting studies were presented to locally elected Government officials. This should insure political support for any future ICZM effort.

Waterford County Council enacted bye-laws in 1997. These entered into force in 1998 and apply to Tramore Strand. The bye-laws prohibit arrange of activities, specifically the depositing of soil, seaweed, stones and similar materials as well as fire, damage to grasses and plants, sports activities, camping, mechanical vehicles, dogs and horses. The bye-laws permit the local authority to licence selling activities. The bye-laws specify what constitutes an offence and provides for on-the-spot fines as well as prosecution by the Local Authority or Gardaí [Irish Police Force].

7. Cost and resources

No information is available.

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

To date none of the recommendations of the Tramore Local Area Plan 2007-2013 have been taken forward. The scoping study was effective in so far as it demonstrated that the need for an integrated approach to management was accepted by representatives from economic, social and environmental sectors. The study also highlighted strategic issues of importance to each sector and how these could be addressed by the responsible authority. As of December 2009 the Coastal Zone Plan for Tramore has yet to be developed despite strong support from both Council and stakeholders. Undoubtedly Ireland's current economic climate has had a role to play in the lack of progress made in implementing ICZM in Tramore. Local authorities are under increasing financial pressure and in many cases have been forced to reduce staff numbers.

9. Success and Fail factors

Concern could be expressed at the lack of progress made on implementing ICZM despite the fact that it is widely advocated as a more suitable management approach and it would appear to have support at the stakeholder and sectoral level. Relatively straight-forward management recommendations, for example new signage and fencing, have not been taken forward by the Council or any other responsible agency. From a public perception point of view, this could be detrimental to future ICZM efforts. Fencing surrounding dune blow outs is being monitored and was repaired in 2009 along with volunteer days where volunteers planted marram grass (*Ammophila arenaria*) on exposed dune blow outs. Similar works will be carried out in 2010, including fencing repair works subject to available funding. Waterford County Council have also received funding from Fáilte Ireland for signage and a walkway around the dunes. The Council applied for biodiversity signage under the Biodiversity Awareness Fund last year but unfortunately were not successful.

10. Unforeseen outcomes

None known.

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13. Sources

- CMRC. 2006. Review of the coastal protection at Tramore Strand, Final Report. Coastal and Marine Resources Centre, University College Cork, Cork. Available from: <http://www.waterfordcoco.ie/en/services/conservationandheritage/naturalheritage/publications/>
- CMRC. 2008. A Scoping Study towards Integrated Coastal Zone Management of Tramore Bay, Co. Waterford. Prepared for Waterford County Council: an action of the County Waterford Heritage Plan 2006-2010. Coastal and Marine Resources Centre, University College Cork, Cork. Available from: <http://www.waterfordcoco.ie/en/services/conservationandheritage/naturalheritage/publications/>
- Waterford County Council. 2006. Tramore Local Area Plan 2007-2013. Waterford County Council, Dungarvan, Co. Waterford, Ireland.



A Scoping Study Towards Integrated Coastal Zone Management o (1.87 MB) 



Coastal ProtectionTramore (3.81 MB) 



Tramore LAP (2.27 MB) 