

Awards for local coastal projects - BE

1. Policy Objective & Theme

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

2. Key Approaches

- Integration
- Participation

3. Experiences that can be exchanged

Awards are granted for concrete projects proving a sustainable approach of relevance to the Belgian coast and coastal management.

4. Overview of the case

The Coordination Centre on ICZM in Belgium launches a call for sustainable coastal projects every two years. Organisations, private actors and authorities can apply for the award if they can clearly illustrate the benefits of their project for sustainability at the coast.

5. Context and Objectives

a) Context

Sustainable management is often a difficult and abstract concept. In order to make this concept more tangible and concrete, the Coordination Centre on ICZM decided to grant awards which can demonstrate sustainability through projects and initiatives and are of specific relevance for the coast. An independent jury screens the projects, using a set of sustainability criteria, which are communicated to the applicant. There are three categories of projects: economical, environmental and social. Projects can also be evaluated as “promising”, which means that they don’t pass the sustainability test for 100%. The jury will give advice on how to improve the project in order to achieve sustainability.

b) Objectives

- Positive feedback on concrete and good examples of sustainability
- Stimulance for the applicants to continue with the good work in actually implementing sustainability
- Stimulate new sustainable initiatives
- Communication tool to demonstrate what ICZM can mean concretely

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

a) Management

- The Awards are an initiative of the Coordination centre on ICZM and her partners (province of West-Flanders, regional (Flemish) government, the national (Belgian) government and Flanders Marine Institute).
- Jury: experts from administrations, scientific institutes and network organisations. The jury members are published on the website. The jury works via consensus.

b) ICZM tools

The Awards for sustainable coastal projects are used as an awareness-raising tool and communication tool.

The independent jury uses a set of agreed sustainability criteria to evaluate the sustainability of the projects. The criteria are:

- Innovative character
- Long-term perspective
- Precautionary principle
- Scientific basis
- Horizontal and vertical integration and local benefits
- Environmental costs considered
- Integration into policy processes
- Participation and communication
- Solidarity
- Coastal specificity

The benefit for the Award winners are:

- A recognition and appreciation for their good work
- A chance to share experience with other sustainable initiatives
- Extra communication on the project through the press release, website and the brochure.

Applicants can apply for the Award by reacting to the call launched by the Coordination Centre. Members of the jury can also propose sustainable projects. Participation is free of costs. The procedure is kept very simple: the applicants have to fill in a 2-page document motivating why they consider they qualify for an Award. The jury can invite the applicants to give a more detailed presentation. The Award itself is a plaque which can be displayed showing all visitors the positive effects of the Award-winning project.

7. Cost and resources

First edition of the awards (2006): Development of concept and campaign as a whole (incl. communication strategy, logo, lay-out, texts for brochure, website development, launch event etc.): €10,466. Translation to French and German (website and brochure), printing costs of brochure and invitation to launch (3 languages); €10,728. Design and development of Award: €2,235. Design and development of banners and advertising material: €2,091. Total cost: 25,521
 Second edition (2008): Write and revise texts for website: €726. Brochure 2,500 ex (texts, lay-out, printing, etc): €1,638. Develop Awards: €200. Total cost: € 2,564
 Second launch event: total cost (catering, invitations, accommodation etc.): €1,752. Other costs: Mailing brochure: €200. Hosting and contract for website: € 1,433.

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

The first Awards were granted in 2006 to 39 projects. Because this was the first edition, the jury looked back 10 years in time to detect good examples of sustainability. In 2008, 9 initiatives received an award. The Award was clearly appreciated by the applicants. They saw it as a learning process themselves, getting a better insight into the meaning of sustainability and the different dimensions. The sustainability criteria proved very useful as guidance document. The Awards will be granted for the third time in 2010.

9. Success and Fail factors

Fail factors:

- Risk of not reaching the target audience, resulting in few applications.
- Because the process is kept as simple as possible, the jury might not have a 100% clear view on all aspects of the project. A more complex format might however put off potential candidates.

10. Unforeseen outcomes

Very positive reaction by applicants, who appreciated the demonstration of different aspects of sustainability (it is much more than only environmental aspects). The list of criteria was actively used by applicants for self-screening, showing that the set is a useful tool. This lead some of them to conclude that they had to work on some criteria before submitting.

11. Prepared by

Kathy Belpaeme, Coordination centre on ICZM, Belgium

12. Verified by

Bjorn Degrande, provincie West-Vlaanderen, Belgium.

13. Sources

- www.dekustkijktverder.be (website in Dutch, French and German)