

THE CHALLENGE OF THE INTEGRATED COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT (ICZM) IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

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I. EUROPEAN TERRITORIAL STRATEGY

In May 1999 the European Territorial Strategy (ETS) is conceived in Potsdam (Germany). This is a document of not obligatory assumption by member States which pursues the sustainable development of the European Union.

The ETS advocates the collaboration between the States and their regional and local Authorities, in order to coordinate decisions in regard to land use planning and zoning, since undertaken projects can have repercussions that transcend the borders.

The territorial policies of the EU are based on the principles of sustainable development, emerged in the Brundtland Report (1987), specified in an economic, social cohesion, a natural and cultural heritage conservation and a well-balanced competitiveness in all the territory of the Union.

Given the heterogeneous nature of the European space, there are some economic, social and environmental differences that must be superated, by respecting, however, regional diversities. The common prospects are concentrated in the competitiveness policy, the transeuropean networks, the structural funds, the Common Agricultural Policy, the research and technological development and the activities of the European Investment Bank.

In terms of environment, the EU aspires to promote some measures with relation to the soil uses and pollution, water, acoustic and atmospheric pollution, and environmental impact assessments. There are hardly any references to the necessity of an integrated coastal zone management, despite the exceptional European coast length and despite the importance of that space both in the exploitation of resources and in the appearance of risks associated to the land-sea interface. That lack of references to the coast management in the ETS can be explained by the existence of other specific documents about this scope, such as the European Commission's Demonstration Programme on ICZM (1996), that promotes the cooperation among all the agents involved in a concrete field.

II. EUROPEAN STRATEGY ON ICZM

The European coasts are a strategic space for the economic and social member States' development, but its environmental integrity is threatened by anthropic erosion, pollution and permanent uses conflict in maritime and terrestrial zones. Few impact uses are being replaced by others that damage their capacity of recovery. The EU, informed about the relevance of preserving the coasts of the member States, understands the necessity of planning this place from the perspective of integrated management and sustainable development.

For that reason, in 1996 the European Commission's Demonstration Programme on ICZM starts. It is based on thirty-five local and regional projects devoted to show the strategy application. The Programme posed the hypothesis that the problems of degradation and inadequate management of coastal zones were connected to the ignorance regarding the impact of human activities, the lack of coordination between Civil Services and the hardly any participation of the interested participants.

From the thirty-five projects presented in the Programme as an example of good practice related to ICZM, seven principles of sustainable management are obtained:

1. Taking a comprehensive perspective
2. Taking into account the specific conditions of the zone
3. Working accordingly with natural processes
4. Applying a participative planification in order to cause consensus
5. Getting the participation of all the competent Civil Services
6. Using a combination of instruments
7. Taking decisions in order no to jeopardize the future

Nevertheless, in application of the principle os subsidiarity, it prevails the respect to the responsibilities of every administrative sphere, with the actuation of the EU only when policies of States, regions or towns are not effective. An increase of volume of expenditures is not pursued, but a more suitable use of the funds already assigned.

The integrated management is a generic method that promotes the sustainable management of coastal zones. Its philosophy insists in the engagement of all the society, in the coordination among civil services, in the search of solutions to concrete problems, in the application of the principle of precaution and in the adaptation to the current institutional and policies structures.

Given the great typological variety of coastal zones in Europe, problems are so diverse that it is not possible to applicate a standard practice of integrated management. The same text of the Programme raises that the election of the approach of ICZM depends on the historical, cultural and traditional context, just as on the natural conditions of the zone and on the problems detected.

The Demonstration Programme tries to highlight the problems and possible solutions in these thirty-five zones, heterogeneous as for physical, social and cultural conditions. The strategies which have been used are, therefore, flexible, and they share a territorial, participative approach which assures the economic development and the social cohesion. The

EU just directs the member States nationally, regionally and locally, giving them institutional and legal support.

III. RECOMMENDATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL CONCERNING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ICZM IN EUROPE

In this way, the European Commission presents the Communication COM (2000) 547 final concerning to the ICZM: an European strategy, where problems of the European coast are highlighted, as well as the necessity of adopting a flexible management which takes into account the specific conditions of each zone and enables to make adjustments as problems and knowledge advance.

Both documents (the Demonstration Programme on ICZM and the Communication Com (2000) 547 final) are the texts in which the Recommendation 2002/413/CE concerning the implementation of ICZM in Europe is based. It does not require an obligatory assumption by member States.

In this document, the EU recommends the member States to make national reportings to show the applicable coastal policies and the institutions related to the coastal management in all its levels, as a preliminary step to prepare a national strategy, in order to facilitate the coherence and the coordination of undertaken actions and to begin the promotion of measures of public participation in coastal management.

Also it is recommended adopting an strategic approach based on the protection of the coastal environment, by admitting the threaten that the increase of sea level and the violence and the frequency of sea storms suppose. As regards, the text proposes to work according to the environment, by monitoring the urbanization process.

The Parliament proposes to adopte, too, some mechanism of acquisition of lands and donations to the public domain, in order to guarantee both the public access to it and the protection of more delicate zones.

In Spain there is not still any organization devoted to acquiring coastal lands, unlike France, country that enjoys long tradition in this field, even previous to the approval of the Recommendation 2002/413/CE. The analysis of the French *Conservatoire de l'espace littoral* proves the success, at a national level, of this instrument recommended subsequently by the EU.

The *Conservatoire de l'espace littoral* (Coastal Protection Agency) is a public organisation under tutelage of the French Department of Ecology. Its territorial policy aims for protecting natural areas on the coast, banks and lakes. Its competences are very limited: first, purchasing fragile or threatened areas, and later, setting its vocation of use. The Agency do not prevents from making any activities but, with help of specialists, defines the compatible uses with marked objectives and it states how purchased places must be administered. The management of the Agency is not direct, but it is entrusted to the municipality local collectivities or associations, provide that they guarantee the set orientation of use.

The Agency acquires prioritily the lands threatened by urbanization and artificial making, damaged places and those which deserves to be opened to the public. The price of purchase/sale of lands is fixed neither by the Agency nor the owner, but by the Finance Department

through the *Service des Domaines*. The price is based on the transactions made in other similar lands next to that which is wanted to buy.

The Agency acquisition programme is defined by an administrative council. The town council are consulted on the projects involving them. It is intended, then, to elaborate a common territorial strategy since the acquired lands become inalienable.

IV. EVALUATION OF ICZM IN EUROPE

In 2007, the European Commission presents to the Parliament and the Council a balance of the Recommendation 2002/413/CE in coastal member States.

Previous approaches were focused on adopting a management method in order to reduce pressures on the coast and to make compatible and coherent the uses in conflict, provided that activities developed on the coast are specially vulnerable in the presence of the rising of the sea level, sea storms, coastal erosion or sea intrusion. An atmosphere of coordination among administrations was also pursued, avoiding the adopted sectorial perspectives, replacing it by an integrated strategy, and looking for an understanding that goes beyond the borders.

In the Recommendation 2002/413/CE, the member States were requested to inform about the progresses in developing a national strategy of ICZM in a period of forty-five months from the approval of the text on, period which finished at the end of February 2006. On that date, only fourteen out of the twenty coastal member States had presented an official reporting, what it meant 65% of coastal member States and 70% of the European coast.

The contributions of each member State present processes of integrated management of very diverse levels, but all of them regulate to a certain extent the use and development of their coasts. However, except any isolated incident, it does not exist a mature ICZM in which all the administrations involved participate.

Most of national strategies were adopted in 2006 and its put into practice has just started. However, the EU ICZM Recommendation has been useful to make the member States aware of the necessity of establishing a sustainable management, although there are discernible differences regarding comprehension and degrees of assumption of the principles shown on the Demonstration Programme and other subsequent documents.

From national reports presented, the European Commission notices few signs of effective mechanisms of implementation, that come up against problems of financing, limited support of certain administrations and heterogeneous interpretation of ICZM in Europe.

In spite, new progresses are envisaged thanks to the edition of the Green Book on Future Maritime Policy of the EU, adopted in 2006, and from the Marine Strategy Directive, that will establish environmental rules necessary to safeguard marine environment and its resources. Both documents lay the foundations of the European maritime policy and try to introduce a system of planification and zoning of maritime space through the research of optimum places for locating economic activities connected to the sea, avoiding the conflict of uses and managing both the marine development and the adjoining lands.

In this context of future, the ICZM will become an important element of the maritime policy of the EU. Although the ICZM is at present only a Recommendation, possibly it will soon become obligatory for member States. The edition of the Green Book and the approval on Marine Strategy Directive -of obligatory transposition in national legislation-

conceived like a base of a future European maritime policy, in which the ICZM is considered like a worthy territorial instrument, necessarily must have legislative repercussions on coastal zones management of all the member States.

V. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS: THE EXPERIENCE OF THE *JUNTA DE ANDALUCÍA*

In Spain, the *Junta de Andalucía*, supported by the Group of Planning and Integrated Coastal Zones Management of the University of Cádiz, has presented in October 2007 a pioneering document –The Governance of Andalusian coast– that accepts the principles of the European Strategy of ICZM as their own, making compatible a respect for the environment and a rational use of resources.

The Andalusian document propounds three general goals: building a system of alliances among administrations, having suitable instruments of coastal management at one's disposal, and getting necessary resources to implement the ICZM. It consists in a generic method that must be put into practice in different ways in each area, as far as each coastal field suffers from own problems. Those goals must be given an expression later to concrete actions aimed for rectifying the faults of management, coordination and communication previously checked in the territorial diagnosis.

The challenge consists in using a strategy in which all the sides are involved: politicians, technical experts and citizens in general. In the presence of the current policies of sectorial nature, the new system of management aspires to the coordination of different social actors, by adopting a global perspective of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, that can be corrected or fortified.

