

INTEGRATED COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT (ICZM) IN THE SOUTHERN NORTH SEA: SUSTAINABILITY INDICATORS FOR COMMUNICATION, MONITORING AND MANAGEMENT GUIDANCE

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The SAIL partnership is a transnational ICZM effort bordering the Southern North Sea, seeking regeneration of regional economies of Zeeland (NL), West-Flanders (B), Nord Pas de Calais (F), Kent and Essex (UK), and the protection and enhancement of cultural and natural diversity. Guidelines for ICZM developed by the EU, UNEP and FAO, underline the relevance of indicators to monitor and evaluate effectiveness of ICZM. Starting January 2004, VLIZ is developing a set of indicators for the SAIL region to monitor change in the state of the coastal and marine environments, assess trends in socio-economic pressures and conditions and appraise the effectiveness of policies in addressing these issues. Methodology for indicator selection is based on close examination of the Vision for the SAIL area, from which ICZM strategies are drawn by SAIL partners for priority policy areas (bathing water quality, cultural and natural heritage, sustainable fisheries). Further selection is based on degree of compliance with the following criteria: policy relevance, measurability, performance, data availability, communicative value and transnational compatibility. Information will be available for end users through Internet (GIS interface) with appropriate time series and/or geographic resolution defined by the scope of the indicator, and presented as the first 'State of the Southern North Sea Report' in 2005. The VLIZ proposal is developed in close cooperation with the EU ICZM Expert Group. The set will be used as a template to assist Member States, and Acceding and Candidate Countries, in preparing national coastal strategies by 2006.

The challenge for the ICZM approach is to integrate and identify causal relations between environmental, socio-economic and governance performance components within a Pressure-State-Response framework. Effects of ICZM must also be monitored against specific baselines and goals.