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Institutional and policy framework and identification of key policy makers at EU and national levels

How to achieve sustainable water ecosystems management connecting research, people and policy makers in Europe (AWARE)

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CO Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Commission Services)

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1. INTRODUCTION

“IN GETTING OUR WATERS CLEAN, THE ROLE OF CITIZENS AND CITIZENS' GROUPS WILL BE CRUCIAL. “

The European Union's coastal regions are under constant pressure. The increasing demand for coastal resources is leading to their degradation including reduced water quality and quantity, accelerated erosion, accumulation of pollution, loss of fisheries resources, to name the most important threats. Moreover, this degradation has negative social and economic consequences (European Commission 2001).

The management of European inland and coastal waters is largely governed by the Water Framework Directive. The Directive regulates the identification of European waters and their characteristics, on the basis of individual river basin districts, and the adoption of management plans and programs of measures appropriate for each body of water. Under its article 14, the directive calls for active involvement of stakeholders and public in the implementation.

THE AWARE APPROACH

The deterioration of coastal waters, mainly due to the excessive inputs of nutrients from river basins, is the issue of concern of the AWARE project. Nutrient enrichment in coastal zones leads to a series of undesirable effects such as excessive algal growth, changes in the stability and structure of coastal ecosystems, toxicity effects in food from shellfish and beach closures affecting tourism.

Conventionally, coastal problems have been tackled by the sectors involved on an individual basis. It is becoming evident, however, that a new, integrated vision is needed in order to get a proper understanding of what is happening in the entire coastal system (European Environmental Agency 2006) and which solutions are most effective. Integrated management of coastal zones requires integrated assessment of the problems and their solutions involving all stakeholders from scientists to citizens and policy makers. Unfortunately, most researchers still find it difficult to take the perspective needed to communicate models to stakeholders.

The AWARE project aims at bridging the gap between scientists and policy makers by introducing and involving citizens into case studies of participatory

scenario building. In particular, AWARE will show how to connect science, policy and society into a participatory process in order to support sustainable management of coastal water ecosystems using three case studies as pilot experiments. In workshops citizens, policy makers, scientists and other stakeholders will explore and discuss which options to maintain or improve the water quality of coastal zones are desirable.

SCOPE OF THIS REPORT

Coastal zones are often not the target of particular legislation. Situated on the edge between land and ocean, they mostly form part of legislation designed either for land or marine based human activities. Apparently, the vision of coastal zones as a seamless transition zone of the land sea interface is a concept that is difficult to apply in both a scientific and a policy context. The most far going attempt to envision coastal landscapes as particular land sea units for policy development is an EU recommendation on integrated coastal zone assessment.

This report produces a summary of the policy and institutional framework that has competence to regulate coastal zone areas. This summary focuses (1) on international legislative initiatives that are in place, mainly driven by the European Commission services, and (2) on legislation that regulates the quality of coastal waters.

In chapter 2 an overview is given of the European legislation and international and regional agreements relevant for the coastal areas.

Chapter 3 lists the authorities who are responsible for implementation of the water framework directive in the countries that are covered by the study sites as these may be major stakeholders in the AWARE participation workshops. Additional attention went to the implementation of the ICZM Recommendation on coastal zone management.

Chapter 4 summarizes the main findings.

This report can be used by the project partners as a primary source for the citizens and stakeholder workshops whenever there is a need to explain the current status of Europe's response to the challenges that are presented by all forms of water deterioration in coastal zone areas.

2. THE POLICY FRAMEWORK: REVIEW OF EU WATER QUALITY POLICIES IN COASTAL ZONE AREAS.

The last two decades, the European Union adopted several directives that aim to properly manage Europe's waters. Where initially the approach was sectorial, later legislation has a more integrated character.

Sectorial approaches focused on pollution abatement by addressing emissions caused by single sectors such as agriculture (Nitrates Directive), industry (Dangerous Substances Directives) or households (Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive). In parallel, sectorial legislation aimed to protect waters by setting quality criteria for particular uses such as bathing (Bathing Water Directive) or food production (Shellfish Water Directive).

These EU initiatives are complemented by regional agreements between Member States and third countries in regional seas conventions, OSPAR, HELCOM and the Barcelona Convention.

During the last decade, more integrated approaches have been developed to tackle the unsustainable use of water as a resource: the Water Framework Directive for the river basin management of inland and coastal waters, the Marine Strategy Framework Directive for Europe's regional seas and a Recommendation on Integrated Coastal Zone Management for coastal zone areas.

A short summary of the scope of these international agreements is provided in Table 1. Each time, their relevance for coastal zone areas is indicated. More details can be found in the text of this chapter.

Table 1. EU legislation and regional conventions regulating water quality in Europe's coastal zones

Policy	Aim	Relevance for coastal zone
Water Framework Directive Directive 2000/60/EC	To achieve good chemical and ecological status in surface and groundwaters	In coastal areas, the WFD covers transitional waters and coastal waters up to one nautical mile from the territorial baseline of a Member State for a Good Ecological Status and up to 12 nautical miles for a Good Chemical Status.
Nitrates Directive Directive 91/676/EEC	To reduce and prevent water pollution caused or induced by nitrates from agricultural sources	The eutrophic state of coastal waters must be taken into account in order to assign and update vulnerable zones
Bathing Water Directive Directive 76/160/EEC	Sets the minimum quality criteria to be met by bathing water based on two parameters, intestinal enterococci and <i>E. coli</i>	Coastal zones are defined as in the WFD and must comply
Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive	To ensure that all significant discharges of sewage (public services and industrial sectors) undergo treatment before discharged into surface waters, estuaries or coastal waters	Coastal waters are defined as the waters outside the low-water line or the outer limit of an estuary. Some derogations apply provided that Member States can show that the discharges do not adversely affect the environment
Quality of Shellfish Waters Directive Directive 2006/113/EC Will be repealed by the WFD in 2013	Establishes compulsory quality criteria for Member States' shellfish waters	Applies to those coastal and brackish waters designated by the Member States as needing protection or improvement in order to support shellfish (bivalve and gastropod molluscs) life and growth and thus to contribute to the high quality of shellfish products directly edible by man
Discharge of dangerous substances: protection of the aquatic environment Directive 2006/11/EC Will be repealed by the WFD in 2013	To eliminate pollution caused by the discharge of substances in list I To reduce pollution caused by products in list II	Applies to internal coastal waters: waters on the landward side of the base line from which the breadth of territorial waters is measured, extending, in the case of watercourses, up to the fresh water limit
ICZM recommendation Recommendation 2002/413/EC	The European Union recommends that the Member States adopt a strategic and integrated approach to the management of their coastal zones	No definition foreseen
Marine Strategy Framework Directive Directive 2008/56/EC	To achieve of maintain good environmental status of the marine waters	Coastal waters as defined by Directive 2000/60/EC, their seabed and their subsoil, in so far as particular aspects of the environmental status of the marine environment are not already addressed through that Directive or other Community legislation
Habitats Directive Directive 92/43/EEC	To ensure biodiversity by conserving natural habitats and wild fauna and flora in the territory of the Member States To set up a ecological network of special protected areas, known as Natura 2000	Several coastal aquatic habitats of community interest are included in the directive, form part of Natura 2000 and must comply
OSPAR	To prevent and eliminate pollution and to protect the maritime area (North East Atlantic) against the adverse effects of human activities	Coastal zone as defined by Directive 2006/11/EC
HELCOM	To help reduce pollution in the area around the Baltic Sea	It includes the internal waters, i.e., for the purpose of this Convention waters on the landward side of the base lines from which the breadth of the territorial sea is measured up to the landward limit according to the designation by the Contracting Parties
Barcelona Convention	To reduce pollution in the Mediterranean Sea and protect and improve the marine environment in the area, thereby contributing to its sustainable development	Its revision in 1995 (Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean) applies to coastal areas as defined by each Contracting Party within its own territory

WATER FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE (WFD)

DIRECTIVE 2000/60/EC OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL OF 23 OCTOBER 2000 ESTABLISHING A FRAMEWORK FOR COMMUNITY ACTION IN THE FIELD OF WATER POLICY.

The WFD directive provides for the management of inland surface waters, groundwater, transitional waters and coastal waters in order to prevent and reduce pollution, promote sustainable water use, protect the aquatic environment, improve the status of aquatic ecosystems and mitigate the effects of floods and droughts. The WFD aims to achieve a Good Ecological Status and a Good Chemical Status by 2015.

Since 2006 the WFD has been amended by several decisions or directives to regulate particular aspects such as priority substances or environmental quality standards. New daughter directives regulate particular aspects mentioned in the WFD such as the quality of groundwater and flood risk management.

Several existing directives regulating specific problems and will be repealed by the WFD in due time.

The competence of the WFD in coastal zone areas

The WFD has also competence for transitional waters and coastal zones.

Transitional waters are defined as bodies of surface water in the vicinity of river mouths which are partly saline in character as a result of their proximity to coastal waters but which are substantially influenced by freshwater flows.

Coastal waters are defined as surface waters on the landward side of a line every point of which is at a distance of one nautical mile on the seaward side from the nearest point of the baseline from which the breadth of territorial waters is measured, extending where appropriate up to the outer limit of transitional waters.

Figure 1 shows for the North Sea case study the spatial delineation of transitional waters, coastal waters and the exclusive economic zone as proposed by the Member States.



Fig.1. The WFD is based on the management of river basin districts. Transitional waters are in red, coastal waters in green. The sea is divided in different exclusive economic zones (EEZ).

Source: European Environment Agency and Flemish Marine Institute.

In coastal areas, the WFD covers transitional waters and coastal waters up to one nautical mile from the territorial baseline of a Member State for a Good Ecological Status and up to 12 nautical miles for a Good Chemical Status.

NITRATES DIRECTIVE: POLLUTION CAUSED BY NITRATES FROM AGRICULTURAL SOURCES (ND)

COUNCIL DIRECTIVE 91/676/EEC OF 12 DECEMBER 1991 CONCERNING
THE PROTECTION OF WATERS AGAINST POLLUTION CAUSED BY NITRATES
FROM AGRICULTURAL SOURCES

The so called Nitrates Directive (ND) is designed to protect the Community's waters against nitrates from agricultural sources. These sources are the main cause of water pollution coming from diffuse inputs. The Member States must identify surface waters and groundwater which are affected or liable to be affected by pollution. Especially those groundwater or surface water bodies where nitrate concentrations exceed 50 mg/l are targeted. The Member States must also define vulnerable zones which contribute to pollution (Fig. 2).

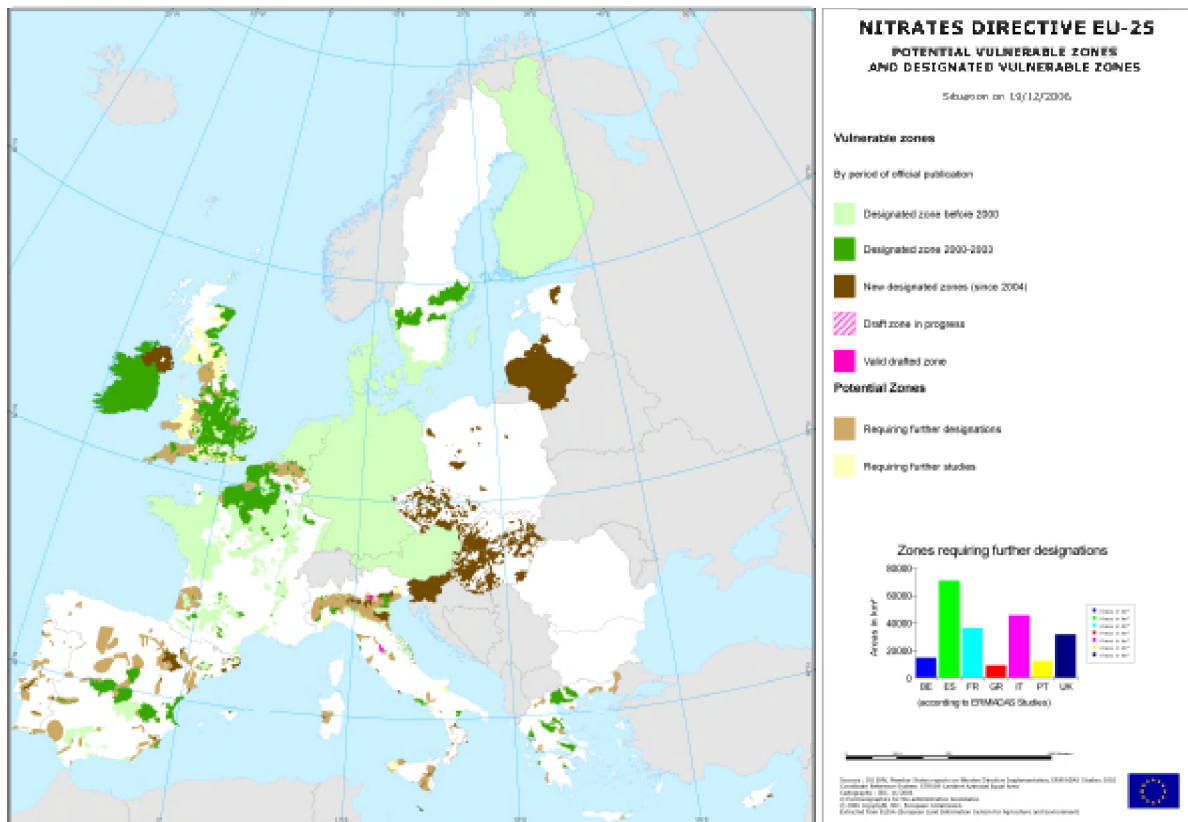


Fig.2. Identification of vulnerable zones under the Nitrates Directive.

The competence of the ND in coastal zone areas

The coastal zones are not the target of this directive, which aims to protect surface and ground waters by reducing nitrogen inputs from agriculture on land. However, the trophic state of coastal zones has to be taken into account for the designation of vulnerable areas.

BATHING WATER DIRECTIVE (BWD)

DIRECTIVE 2006/7/EC OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL OF 15 FEBRUARY 2006 CONCERNING THE MANAGEMENT OF BATHING WATER QUALITY AND REPEALING DIRECTIVE 76/160/EEC

This directive lays down rules for the monitoring, assessment and management of the quality of bathing water and for the provision of information on that quality. The water concerned is surface water that can be used for bathing, apart from water used in swimming pools or spas.

The directive imposes the measurement of two bacterial variables for analysis: intestinal enterococci and *Escherichia coli*. These parameters will be used for monitoring and assessing the quality of the identified bathing waters and for classifying them according to their quality.

Member States must monitor their bathing waters every month during the bathing season and they have to assess their bathing waters at the end of every season on the basis of the information gathered during that season and the three preceding ones.

Following the assessment, the waters are classified in one of four quality levels: poor, sufficient, good or excellent. The category "sufficient" is the minimum quality threshold that all Member States should attain by the end of the 2015 season at the latest. Where water is classified as "poor", Member States should take certain management measures, in particular banning bathing or posting a notice advising against it, providing information to the public, and suitable corrective measures.

Information relating to the classification and description of the bathing waters and their possible pollution is publicly available at the website of the European Environment Agency.

The competence of the BWD in coastal zone areas

Under this directive, coastal zones are defined as in the WFD and must comply. As an illustration, Figures 3 and 4 present the bathing water quality of the season 2008 at coastal sites for the North Sea and the Baltic Sea.

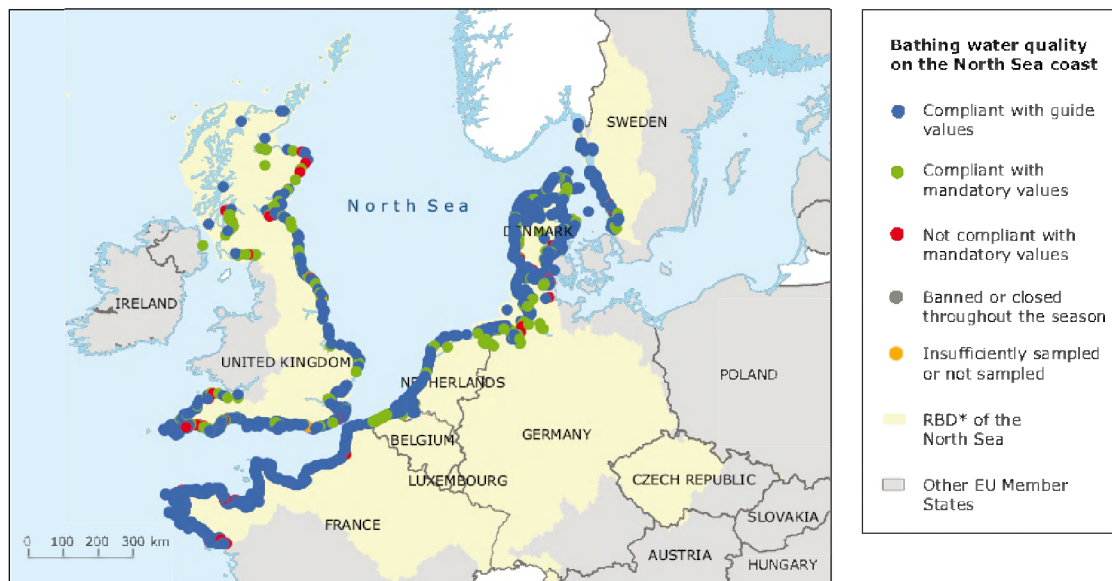


Fig.3. Bathing water quality on the North Sea coast.

Source: European Environment Agency.

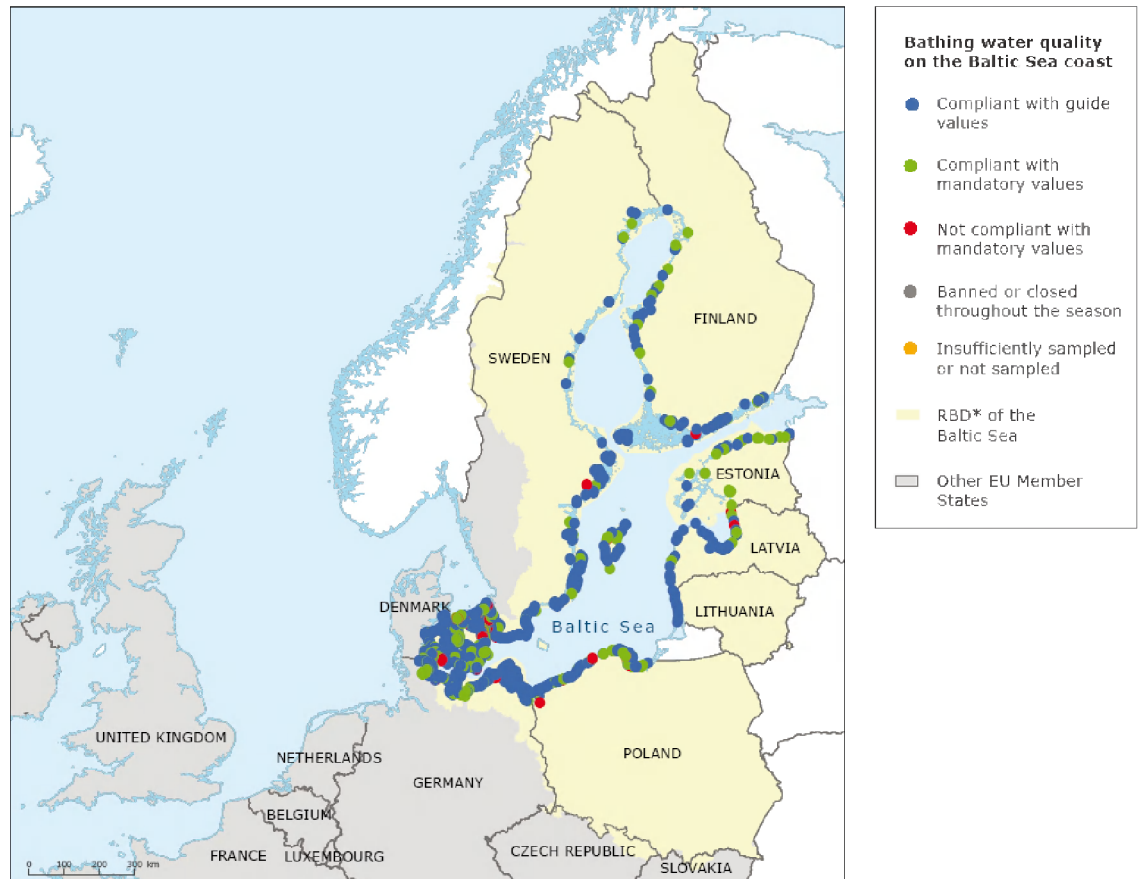


Fig.4. Bathing water quality on the North Sea coast.

Source: European Environment Agency.

URBAN WASTE WATER TREATMENT DIRECTIVE (UWWTD)

COUNCIL DIRECTIVE 91/271/EEC OF 21 MAY 1991 CONCERNING URBAN WASTE WATER TREATMENT

Due to their volume, discharges of urban waste water are the second most serious cause of water pollution in the form of eutrophication. The UWWTD concerns the collection, treatment and discharge of urban waste water and the treatment and discharge of waste water from certain industrial sectors. Its aim is to protect the environment from any adverse effects caused by the discharge of such waters.

Industrial waste water entering collecting systems and the disposal of waste water and sludge from urban waste water treatment plants are subject to regulations and specific authorisation by the competent authorities.

The deadline for Member States to have treatment systems in operation for agglomerations with more than 2000 inhabitants was 31 December 2005, although new Member States, like Estonia and Latvia, have received a transition period to achieve this target by 2015.

The competence of the UWWTD in coastal zone areas

Coastal waters are defined as the waters outside the low-water line or the outer limit of an estuary. Some derogations apply provided that Member States can show that the discharges do not adversely affect the environment.

DISCHARGE OF DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES DIRECTIVE: PROTECTION OF THE AQUATIC ENVIRONMENT (DDSD)

DIRECTIVE 2006/11/EC OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE
COUNCIL OF 15 FEBRUARY 2006 ON POLLUTION CAUSED BY CERTAIN
DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES DISCHARGED INTO THE AQUATIC ENVIRONMENT OF
THE COMMUNITY

This directive presents the rules for protection against, and prevention of, pollution resulting from the discharge of certain substances into the aquatic environment. To combat the pollution of these waters, two lists have been compiled of dangerous substances that need to be controlled: pollution caused by the discharge of substances in list I must be eliminated; pollution from the products in list II must be reduced.

The directive sets quality objectives and emission limit values for list I substances based on the best available techniques. These limit values are compulsory unless the Member States prove that the quality objectives are being met and continuously maintained.

The competence of the DDSD in coastal zone areas

The directive applies to internal coastal waters defined as waters on the landward side of the base line from which the breadth of territorial waters is measured, extending, in the case of watercourses, up to the fresh water limit.

SHELLFISH WATER DIRECTIVE (SWD)

DIRECTIVE 2006/113/EC OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL OF 12 DECEMBER 2006 ON THE QUALITY REQUIRED OF SHELLFISH WATERS.

The SWD concerns the quality of shellfish waters, i.e. the waters suitable for the development of shellfish (bivalve and gasteropod molluscs). It applies to those coastal and brackish waters which need protection or improvement in order to allow shellfish to develop and to contribute to the high quality of shellfish products intended for human consumption. It is the Member States' responsibility to designate these waters. The directive establishes parameters applicable to designated shellfish waters as well as indicative values, mandatory values, reference methods of analysis and the minimum frequency for taking samples and measures. These parameters are set for pH, temperature, salinity and the presence or concentration of certain substances (dissolved oxygen, hydrocarbons, metals, organohalogenated substances, etc.).

The competence of the SWD in coastal zone areas

This directive is particularly evident for the case study Sacca di Goro. The directive applies to those coastal and brackish waters designated by the Member States as needing protection or improvement in order to support shellfish (bivalve and gasteropod molluscs) life and growth and thus to contribute to the high quality of shellfish products directly edible by man.

MARINE STRATEGY FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE (MSFD)

DIRECTIVE 2008/56/EC OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL OF 17 JUNE 2008 ESTABLISHING A FRAMEWORK FOR COMMUNITY ACTION IN THE FIELD OF MARINE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

This directive aims to achieve a good ecological status in the marine water by protecting and restoring Europe's marine ecosystems and by ensuring the ecological sustainability of economic activities linked to the marine environment. Clearly, the directive is inspired by the Water Framework Directive, both in its goals as in its implementation.

Coordination occurs at the regional level (Baltic Sea, North-East Atlantic, Mediterranean and Black Sea). To this end they can benefit from the experience and capabilities of existing regional organizations such as HELCOM, OSPAR or MEDPOL.

The Member States must firstly assess the ecological status of their waters and the impact of human activities. This assessment covers an analysis of the essential characteristics of these waters, the main impacts and pressures, particularly as a result of human activities and an economic and social analysis of the use of these waters and the cost of the degradation of the marine environment.

Member States must then determine the good ecological status of the waters on the basis of criteria such as biodiversity, the presence of non-indigenous species, stock health, the food chain, eutrophication, changes in hydrographic conditions and concentrations of contaminants, the amount of waste and noise pollution. On the basis of the evaluation of waters, the Member States must define the objectives and indicators to achieve this good ecological status.

The competence of the MSFD in coastal zone areas

Coastal waters are defined as in the Water Framework Directive. Coastal waters, their seabed and their subsoil must comply with the MSFD when particular aspects of the environmental status of the marine environment are not already addressed through the WFD or other Community legislation. This means that coastal waters are covered by the WFD but that any objectives that are not covered by the WFD are so by the MSFD.

EU ICZM RECOMMENDATION: DEVELOPMENT AND INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT OF COASTAL ZONES

RECOMMENDATION 2002/413/EC OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF
THE COUNCIL OF 30 MAY 2002 CONCERNING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
INTEGRATED COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT IN EUROPE

Since 1995, concern about the state of Europe's coastline has led to a number of EU-initiatives, which build upon the concept of integrated coastal zone management (ICZM). ICZM promotes an integrated approach that involves all relevant stakeholders and takes a long-term view of coastal zones. ICZM attempts to balance the needs of development with protection of the very resources that sustain coastal economies. It also takes into account the public's concern about the deteriorating environmental, socio-economic and cultural state of the European coastline (European Environmental Agency 2006). The European Union has begun to address problems related to the state of our coasts resulting in a number of policy documents, which specifically target the coastal zone.

- The Commission's communication on ICZM Strategy for Europe (COM(2000)547) asks for integrated management of the coastal zone that requires action at local and regional level.
- The European Parliament and Council adopted a Recommendation concerning the implementation of Integrated Coastal Zone Management in Europe (COM/00/545 of 8 Sept. 2000).

This latter initiative recommends that the Member States adopt a strategic and integrated approach to the management of their coastal zones. To that end, it lays the foundations for such an approach based on the protection of the coastal area, its economic and socio-cultural development and on coordination. It also recommends a series of principles, a national stocktaking exercise and a national strategy.

The competence of the ICZM Recommendation in coastal zone areas

Coastal zones are not spatially defined in the Recommendation and its implementation is based on voluntary cooperation of the Member States.

HABITATS DIRECTIVE (HD) AND NATURA 2000

COUNCIL DIRECTIVE 92/43/EEC OF 21 MAY 1992 ON THE CONSERVATION
OF NATURAL HABITATS AND OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA

The cornerstone of Europe's biodiversity policy is the natural Habitats Directive and its ecological network Natura 2000. Through this directive, the European Union is seeking to ensure biodiversity by conserving natural habitats and wild fauna and flora in the territory of the Member States. The Natura 2000 network of special protected areas is being set up for this purpose (Fig. 5). The network is given coherence by other activities involving monitoring and surveillance, reintroduction of native species, introduction of non-native species, research and education.

The competence of the HD in coastal zone areas

Coastal aquatic habitats are protected under the Habitats Directive and Member States must take all necessary measures to guarantee the conservation of habitats in special areas of conservation, and to avoid their deterioration.



Fig. 5. The present status of the Natura 2000 network nearby the case study site Sacca di Goro. Natura 2000 sites are indicated in green.

REGIONAL SEA CONVENTIONS

Three regional conventions, OSPAR for the North East Atlantic, HELCOM for the Baltic and the Barcelona Convention for the Mediterranean essentially aim to protect these regional seas from marine pollution and eutrophication via intergovernmental cooperation. They usually work with recommendations and decisions on which the signing parties agree and report. Decisions often express the level of reduction of the emission of nutrients or certain pollutants that the signing parties must achieve by a certain deadline. HELCOM and OSPAR have their own secretariat while the Barcelona Convention operates under the UNEP Regional Seas Program.

The competence of the regional sea conventions in coastal zone areas

Under the OSPAR, HELCOM and Barcelona conventions, coastal zones are within the area of competence. The OSPAR Convention uses the same definition for coastal zones as in the Dangerous Substances Directive. The HELCOM Convention includes waters on the landward side of the base lines from which the breadth of the territorial sea is measured up to the landward limit according to the designation by the signing parties. The original Barcelona Convention adopted in 1976 excluded internal waters, and hence coastal zones, from its convention text. It was revised in 1995 as the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean, which applies to coastal areas as defined by each signing party within its own territory.

3. INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK: NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION OF EU POLICIES

This chapter summarizes how the European legislation is implemented in countries in which the study sites are situated. We focus on the Water Framework Directive which has direct consequences for the management of coastal zone water quality, the key issue of the AWARE project. In addition, a summary is given on the implementation status of the ICZM Recommendation.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WATER FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE

The common implementation strategy (CIS)

The implementation of the WFD raises a number of shared technical challenges for all involved actors. In addition, many of the European river basins are international, crossing administrative and territorial borders. Therefore a common understanding and approach is crucial to the successful and effective implementation of the WFD.

In order to address these challenges in a co-operative and coordinated way, the Member States, Norway and the Commission agreed on a Common Implementation Strategy (CIS) for the WFD.

Although not legally binding, these decisions are generally regarded as leading in the implementation process. Legally binding decisions can be taken in the Art. 21 Committee. To support the implementation process technical preparatory work is done in working groups and coordinating activities are executed by the Strategic Coordination Group (SCG).

Implementation of the WFD in Member States

The national authorities responsible for implementation of the WFD are listed in the Article 3 reports of each river basin district. These reports can be consulted at:

http://circa.europa.eu/Public/irc/env/wfd/library?l=/framework_directive/implementation_documents_1/wfd_reports

Clearly, these agencies or authorities may be invited as primary stakeholders in the AWARE workshops as they have both the competence and the interest in the issue of concern.

CASE STUDY SACCA DI GORO, ITALY

The case study area is part of the Po river delta. The Italian authority responsible for the implementation of EU directives in this area is the Emilia-Romagna Region (Direzione Generale Ambiente e Difesa del Suolo e della Costa: DgAmbSegr@Regione.Emilia-Romagna.it) with the support of other public organizations. In particular:

- The Oceanographic Service of Regional Agency for Environmental Protection (ARPA) (<http://www.arpa.emr.it/daphne/>) is responsible for WFD monitoring activities in transitional waters.
- The Po River Basin Authority (<http://www.adbpo.it>) has the mission of implementing actions for achieving the WFD goals in the Po River Basin, transitional waters included.
- The application of the UWWTD is a task of the Administration of the Province of Ferrara, with support from the ARPA for wastewater control (see also the Italian Decree Law No. 152/2006).
- The Local Agency for Public Health (AUSL) of Ferrara (<http://www.ausl.fe.it>) is competent for monitoring faecal pollution as indicated in the Bathing and Shellfish directives. On this subject, the license (concession) for shellfish farming is delivered by the regional Authority, but the management of farming activities in the lagoon is controlled by the Province of Ferrara (<http://www.provincia.fe.it/acquecostiere>)
- The Regional Park of the Po Delta (<http://www.parcodeltapo.it/>) is responsible for the Ramsar sites and is contributing for the implementation of Habitat and Birds directives within the Natura2000 network. The application of such directives is also a task of the Nature and Park Conservation Service of the Emilia Romagna Region.

CASE STUDY GULF OF RIGA, LATVIA AND ESTONIA

The gulf of Riga is shared by two Member States, Latvia and Estonia. In Latvia, the Ministry of Environment (www.vidm.gov.lv) has overall competence for implementation of the WFD in its four river basin districts. The Latvian Environment, Geology and Meteorology Centre (www.lvgmc.lv) is the

competent authority for river basin management planning including coastal and transitional waters as defined by the WFD.

Estonia has three river basin districts in which the Ministry of the Environment (www.envir.ee) is the competent authority covering the WFD implementation, also in transitional waters and coastal zone areas.

CASE STUDY NORTH SEA, BELGIUM AND FRANCE

The North Sea case study is centered on three river basins: the Scheldt, the Somme and the Seine. The competence for the Somme and the Seine is in the hands of regional environmental agencies. In particular, the coordinating prefect of the basin Seine Normandy and the coordinating prefect of the basin of Artois Picardie are responsible for the Seine and the Somme/Scheldt, respectively. More information can be found on www.eau-artois-picardie.fr for the Somme/Scheldt and on www.eau-seine-normandie.fr for the Seine.

The Scheldt in Belgium is crossing the three different regions of the country, which have competence over the environment. For implementation of the WFD, these are Brussels Institute for Management of the Environment, for the Brussels Capital Region, the Directorate-General for Waterways (voies-hydrauliques.wallonie.be) and the Directorate-General for Natural Resources and Environment for Wallonia (environnement.wallonie.be) and the Co-ordination Committee Integrated Water Policy for Flanders (www.ciwvlaanderen.be). This latter authority is competent for the Belgian transitional waters, while the Federal Government takes responsibility over the coastal zone.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ICZM RECOMMENDATION

Rupprecht Consult GmbH (Germany) and its partner the International Ocean Institute (Malta) (2006) evaluated the implementation of the EU ICZM recommendation in the different Member States and identified many suggestions for improvement. The report as well as can be downloaded at <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/iczm/home.htm>

Overall, 18 of the 24 coastal Member States and Accession Countries have officially reported on the implementation of the EU ICZM Recommendation by mid-June 2006. The national contact points for the implementation of this Recommendation are given in Table 2. In the 24 EU coastal Member States and Accession Countries the status of policy implementation is as follows:

- No country has implemented an ICZM National Strategy as prompted by the EU ICZM EU Recommendation.
- In seven countries the implementation of an ICZM National Strategy is pending.
- In six further countries documents considered as equivalent to an ICZM National Strategy have been developed, or coastal zone management strategies have become (or planned to become) an integral part of its spatial planning processes.
- In eleven countries no ICZM equivalent policies are in advanced stages of preparation, only fragmented tools are in place to address coastal issues.

Figure 6 compares the performance of the countries based on the above classification.

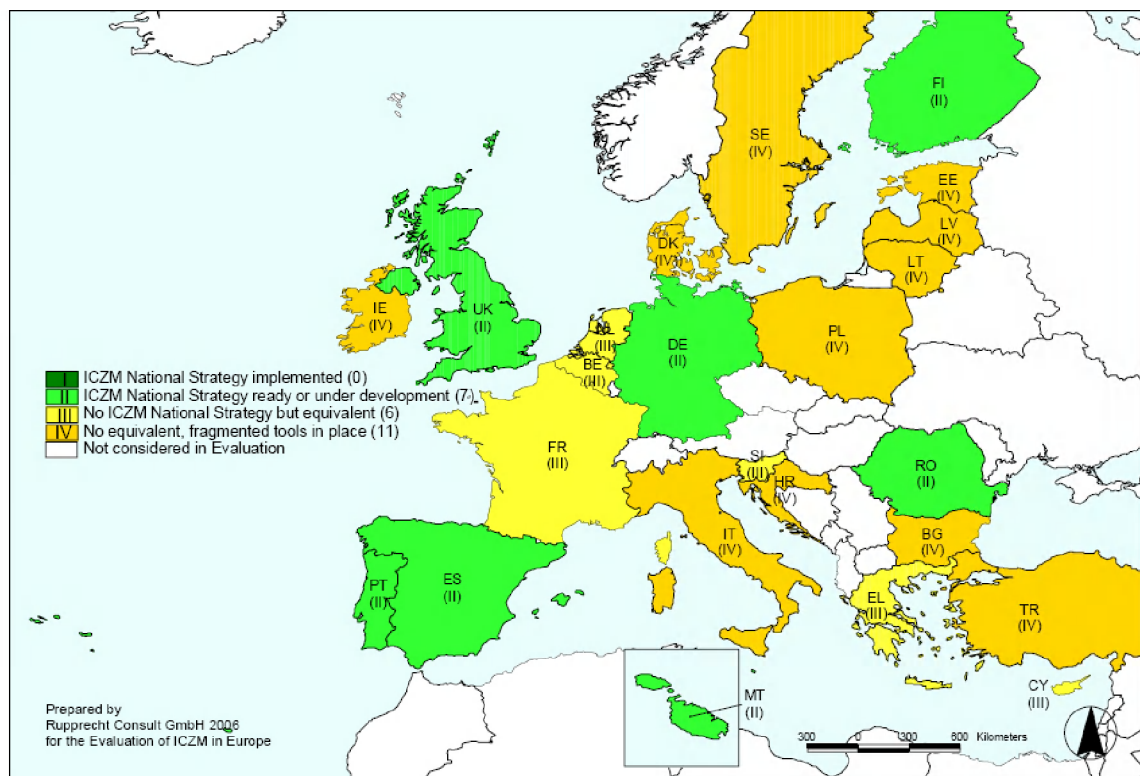


Fig. 6. Status of the implementation of the ICZM Recommendation in the Member Status in 2006.

4. SUMMARY

1. The water quality of many coastal areas in Europe is strongly affected by the discharge of nitrogen and phosphorus. The excessive inputs are leading to a state of eutrophication which has negative impacts on the coastal ecosystem and on our society.
2. This report produces a summary of the policy and institutional framework that has competence to regulate coastal zone areas.
3. The Water Framework Directive (WFD) represents the Europe's response to the challenges raised by poor water management. The directive sets up an integrated framework aiming to restore aquatic ecosystems to good ecological status by engaging all stakeholders involved. The WFD includes coastal zones in its area of competence up till 1 nautical mile as for the good ecological status and up till 12 nautical miles as for the chemical status.
4. Several supporting directives relate to or regulate particular aspects of water quality in coastal zones. These are the Nitrates Directive, the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive, the Bathing Directive and the Quality of Shellfish Waters Directive.
5. The WFD is being complemented by the Marine Strategy Framework Directive. Coastal zones have to comply with this new directive for those issues that do not fall under the WFD. Cooperation between the Member States will build further on the existing Regional Sea Conventions.
6. An EU recommendation on integrated coastal zone management could support reaching the objectives of the WFD and the MSFD in coastal zones but the recommendation is based on voluntary cooperation of the Member States and has no consequences in case of non compliance.
7. The national authorities responsible for the implementation of the WFD and the recommendation on integrated coastal zone management are included in this report.

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