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The annual meeting of the ENCORA Steering and Advisory Committees took place on 14-16 February in Thessaloniki, Greece. The main purpose was to reflect on the achievements of the first year and to decide on actions promoting the use and effectiveness of the networking services put in place. Several articles in this e-news highlight initiatives decided at the annual meeting.

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Advisory Committee recommendations

The Steering Committee (SC) took great benefit from the advice of the Advisory Committee (AC), whose members coordinate other major European cooperation initiatives. The AC noted that coastal practitioners, policy advisors and other stakeholders are still underrepresented in ENCORA. They recommended a more proactive involvement of the national networks in practical coastal issues at the local and regional scale; the networks could assist in bringing relevant parties around the table, in providing and sharing information and in finding common objectives. ENCORA could also help to better link local and regional initiatives to national and international initiatives and vice versa. The AC recommended a proactive use of the network services for creating synergy among research projects and for involving end-users. It considered the Coastal Wiki a promising initiative with great potential for fostering the exchange of knowledge and experience among different coastal stakeholders. The user community should be better identified and involved in the development of the Coastal Wiki. Quality control of the Wiki content requires special attention. According to the AC, ENCORA is becoming a major facility to promote national and European cooperation on coastal issues, which will be highly beneficial for the European communities of science, policy and practice.

Steering Committee decisions

At the end of the meeting the SC launched several actions to improve the effectiveness of the networking services and to simplify their use, in particular the Contact Database and the Coastal Wiki. The SC identified three important topics for which an action plan will be prepared. The first topic is related to the present research priorities of the 7th Framework Programme. There was a strong feeling among the SC members that important deficiencies in present

knowledge and practice are not sufficiently recognised and that there is an urgent need to highlight related research priorities in a convincing way. The second topic is the involvement of practice and policy representatives in ENCORA. The Coastal Wiki may trigger their interest, but therefore we have to make sure that it addresses the right issues in the right way. The third topic is the follow-up of ENCORA after the funding period. Many of the networking services are designed such that they are largely self-supporting, but a minimum level of coordination remains required. For each of these topics a SC member will prepare a strategy document that will be elaborated later into an action plan

FP7 interest

Several members of ENCORA have asked for assistance in finding partners to respond to the recent call of the 7th Framework Programme. As we expected that a similar need was felt also by other members we decided to send out a general enquiry on FP7 interest within the national networks of all participating countries. The answers collected by the national coordination offices were integrated in an international FP7 interest list. This list can be viewed on <http://www.encora.eu/fp7.php>. It is the responsibility of the listed institutes to establish contacts with eventual partners and to create consortia; ENCORA will take no such initiatives on behalf of its member institutes. Members who have expressed an interest in a particular topic have no obligation to contact other institutes that have expressed a similar interest or to accept these other institutes in a consortium. We hope that the interest list will help our members to find suitable partners for preparing proposals for this call of the Framework Programme. For most of the call topics the deadline for submitting a proposal is 2 May 2007.

ENCORA supports new Integrated Project SPICOSA

During its kick-off meeting in Rome, the team of the new Integrated Project SPICOSA discussed the benefits of making best use of ENCORA mechanisms for disseminating project results and identifying cooperation partners. SPICOSA is being funded under the 6th Research and Development Framework Programme of the European Commission. It aims at developing and testing a conceptual methodological framework for achieving sustainable development along Europe's coasts. This goal will be achieved by:

- creating an operational Systems Approach Framework (SAF) of the coastal zone for assessments of policy alternatives. The SAF must emerge from existing knowledge and evolve with new knowledge.
- overcoming two critical challenges facing multidisciplinary science, that of creating a working science-policy interface and that of qualifying and quantifying complex systems, in order that the SAF is scientifically credible and operationally functional.
- implementing and testing the SAF over eighteen diverse Study Site Applications throughout the European region, such that its operational use is not limited to any specific policy issue, socio-economic condition, or Coastal Zone type.
- generating a SAF Portfolio consisting of generic assessment-methodologies, decision-support tools, models, and new knowledge useful for Integrated Coastal Zone Management, in a manner that is user-friendly and updateable.
- improving the communication and integration among the main actors and infrastructures of coastal zone systems that promote sustainable development in a manner that is self-perpetuating.
- generating new opportunities for academic and professional training in Integrated Coastal Zone Management.

The links to ENCORA objectives are obvious, such as the multidisciplinary approach, the science-policy interaction, and the focus on the ICZM

methodology. SPICOSA is particularly interested in using the Coastal Wiki as a means for disseminating project outputs and the contact search mechanisms for identifying other initiatives across Europe that would benefit from a close cooperation with SPICOSA and vice versa.

The ENCORA team is appreciating this possibility of providing assistance and hopes that other coastal projects will realise the benefits of making best use of ENCORA's mechanisms and services.

Shore Protection Technologies Course 17-20 September 2007

The Gruppo Nazionale per la Ricerca sull'Ambiente Costiero (GNARC), in collaboration with Rete Italiana per la Costa (RIC-ENCORA), Project OPTIMAL-BEACHMED-E (Optimisation des Techniques Intégrées de Monitorage Appliquées aux Littoraux) and Project IGCP-UNESCO 515 (Vulnerability and resilience assessment of coastal zone in Mediterranean and Black Sea areas related to the forecast sea level rise for management purposes) is organising a training event on Shore Protection Technologies addressed to young researchers and technicians of the Public Administration. This training event will illustrate several shore protection methods, with special regards toward soft and innovative techniques that are applicable to the Mediterranean coasts.

The course will be held in English language and it will take place in Marina di Massa (Tuscany-Italy) from 17 to 20 September 2007.

It will be articulated in both theoretical classes and field trips along the coast.

On 21 September 2007 will be held a national scientific workshop on the subject of innovative techniques for shore defence, it is an additional event to which participants of the course are welcome to attend.

More Information:

<http://www.ric.unibo.it/SiteData/Files//ShoreProtectionStrategiesProgramm.pdf>

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Colophon

The ENCORA objective is to facilitate and create new opportunities for sharing knowledge and experience on coastal issues in Europe. This electronic newsletter will inform you frequently about the activities and achievements of the network. Every issue will contain a section with news about your national network or ICZM related topics in your country.

This electronic newsletter may be forwarded freely to others working in the ICZM fields. If you would like to receive the ENCORA Newsletter directly, please contact your national coordinator or subscribe to www.encora.org. News-items for publication can be send to encore@rikz.rws.minvenw.nl.