

→ VENICE PLATFORM DECLARATION SIGNED BY 28 NETWORKS

A few hundred representatives of coastal and marine organizations from across Europe attended the Venice Platform ceremony on 28 November. The ceremony launched the pilot phase of a [European Platform of maritime, marine and coastal networks](#). This Platform will carry on and extend the endeavour of the ENCORA Coordination Action to share practice, experience, knowledge and information among countries and sectors. The Platform will also facilitate a dialogue among stakeholders and European institutions on the further development of a European Maritime Strategy and a European Strategy for Marine and Maritime Research.

Representatives of DG Mare, DG Environment and DG Research expressed strong support to the Platform initiative. Each of the 28 networks represented in Venice also gave a statement of support and signed the Venice Platform Declaration. The Declaration states that “the subscribing parties, representatives of maritime, marine and coastal networks, express their intention to engage in a cooperation process, which will support the European Maritime Policy in several ways: by assisting in the definition of policy priorities related to coastal and maritime matters; by cooperating on issues of common concern; by taking greater benefit of the widespread available knowledge and experience in Europe; by making a more efficient use of mutual resources and investments.”

Early 2009, maritime, marine and coastal networks will be invited to an open assembly meeting, to discuss future cooperation processes and structures. This first step in the Platform construction process will be prepared by EUCC, CORILA, ENCORA and the post-Aberdeen Forum.

A broad consortium of networks representing marine and maritime research organizations, led by the Aberdeen Task Force and including several signatories of the Venice Platform Declaration, is preparing a proposal in response to the call “Support to Maritime Partnership” of the 7th RTD Framework Programme. The Platform initiative will greatly benefit from this Support Action.



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→ **NEED for NATIONAL NETWORKING**

At the Littoral conference in Venice, National Networks organised a special ENCORA workshop to present an overview of their achievements and to discuss future plans. The workshop focused on strategic networking issues encountered in many countries:

- the use of ENCORA networking for regional approaches in ICZM;
- the economical drive and personal benefits of ENCORA networking;
- how ENCORA networking can help the implementation of ICZM.

The conclusions of this discussion can soon be found on the Coastal Wiki, as a guidance for National Networking.

Although most national networks have not yet secured funding for the coming years, all of them have grown strong enough and have acquired sufficient recognition to continue after the end of the ENCORA Coordination Action. The new Platform will maintain the interaction between the national networks at the European scale. All ENCORA members therefore may continue stimulating their not-yet-involved colleagues to become member of their national network.



→ **WISE WITH WIKI**

The ENCORA session on Coastal Wiki at the LITTORAL conference in Venice demonstrated the rich palet of ICZM-related information pages on this 2-year old encyclopaedia portal. A series of speakers illustrated several applications of the Coastal Wiki concept:

- as teaching tool it has been integrated in the curriculum of several universities;
- as dissemination tool it contributes to the communication of project

results (of e.g. MARBEF, SPICOSA) to a broader audience of practitioners and policymakers;

- as a publication tool it greatly enhances the outreach of handbooks and inventories (e.g. Sand Transport Manual, European Dune Inventory, GKSS Coastal Atlas).

In the crowded session room a lively discussion followed. Overall, the audience applauded the Coastal Wiki and agreed that it made ICZM knowledge more accessible to a wider public. Moreover, the portal is a cost effective way of disseminating experiences with ICZM in the EU. The audience also suggested several (technical) improvements. Coastal professionals in Europe do not yet take full advantage of the opportunities offered by the Coastal Wiki to engage into collaboration with remote colleagues, although one of the workshop participants said he now collaborates with a consultant thanks to a Coastal Wiki article he had written.

The Coastal Wiki will not stop at the end of ENCORA; several ENCORA partners (VLIZ, EUCC, Deltares) will continue hosting and managing the Coastal Wiki. A further broadening of the user community will contribute to a still better coverage with up-to-date knowledge and experience. We therefore call on all ENCORA members to recommend the Coastal Wiki in their personal networks and to link the Coastal Wiki (www.coastalwiki.org) to websites of their projects and organisations.



A toast to all ENCORA's who made it possible to make such a big success of the project and it's future!!

The ENCORA team wishes you a merry Christmas and a happy 2009



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.