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DIRECTORATE-GENERAL
ENVIRONMENT
Directorate D – Water, Chemicals & Cohesion
ENV.D.3 – Cohesion policy & environmental impact Assessments
The Head of unit

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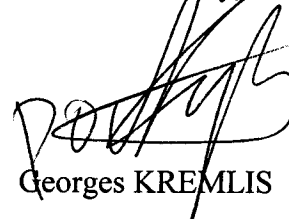
By e-mail

Subject: Final minutes ICZM expert group meeting, 1 June 2006

Dear Members of the ICZM expert group,

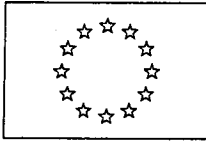
Please find attached the final minutes of our meeting 1/6/2006. Compared to the draft minutes there are a few additions under point 2: the need to progress on the knowledge basis underpinning coastal planning and management, and a sentence recognising that the current ICZM Recommendation remains in force even if there is no reporting deadline beyond 2006.

Yours faithfully,



Georges KREMLIS

Attachments: Final minutes



Final minutes

Expert group ICZM Recommendation 6th Meeting 1 June 2006, Brussels

1. Introduction

The Chairman, Georges Kremlis, welcomed the participants and noted with satisfaction the high number of countries that were represented. In line with the conclusions of the meeting in September 2005, a few European coastal stakeholders organisations were invited to the meeting and their representatives briefly introduced themselves.

Agenda and participants list in annex.

2. Presentations by Member States of national processes to implement the EU ICZM Recommendation

Athena Mourmouris gave an overview of **integrated coastal zone management policy in Greece**. Overall the quality of the Greek coast is good, problems are concentrated in specific areas. Activities towards a more integrated planning and management of the coastal zones in Greece date from well before the EU Recommendation. The activity culminated in a proposal for a special legal framework for the planning of coastal zones in 2002. However the framework did not enter into force, mainly due to the overlap an immediate application would imply for the existing 10 year spatial plans. In the meantime however ICZM principles were introduced in regional spatial plans (2003), urban plans having already incorporated an integrated approach prior to the EU Recommendation. In 2005 a National Spatial Plan was launched and 3 thematic plans. This process may lead to further adaptation of the regional plans. The process is also linked to the setting of priorities for the 2007-2013 Cohesion policy period. After 2007 special legal instrument will need to be re-considered. Aspects calling for further actions are co-ordination (both horizontal and vertical), regular participation of stakeholders and enforcement.

The draft report from Greece further to the EU ICZM Recommendation is ready and is awaiting approval to be submitted.

From the questions and discussion that followed the presentation the chairman highlighted the significant role that the **SEA directive** can play as the Directive's scope encompasses land-use and town and country plans and many sectoral plans, including tourism. Moreover an SEA report should, among others, examine the relationships with other plans or programmes, as well as the coherence of the plan or programme's objectives with environmental objectives established at national and Community level. The chairman also reminded the participants of the funding opportunities for coastal zones management offered by the **Cohesion policy**. For the period 2007-2013, regional

sustainable development strategies are encouraged, and relevant investment themes such as risk prevention (flooding, erosion..) and climate change are covered. The cooperation objective explicitly includes coastal zone management strategies and activities. However to actually seize these spending opportunities, Member States must include coastal zones into the National Reference Frameworks and the Operational Programmes which are currently being prepared.

3. Reports submitted by Member States further to the EU ICZM Recommendation

The chairman informed the meeting that the Commission has officially received reports from **10 coastal Member States** (Belgium, Germany, Cyprus, Finland, France, Malta, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, UK). This represents only half of the 20 coastal Member States, and also just over half of the EU coastline in length. Some reports are still in the pipeline (Denmark, Greece, Latvia, Sweden). Countries are encouraged to submit any further reports quickly so that the score can be improved. Reports will be made available on the public website linked to the evaluation of the ICZM Recommendation.

This part of the meeting was intended to share among the participants the results from the national processes and especially to engage a first reflection on the next steps that would be necessary to promote ICZM at European level. The context is clearly the **Commission report to the European Parliament and Council**, due end 2006, and the broader Green Paper Towards a future Maritime Policy for the Union.

Birgit Snoeren informed the participant on the state-of-play as regards **the Green Paper Towards a future Maritime Policy for the Union**. The Green Paper is due for adoption on 7 June and will set off a **consultation process** that is to run until the end of June 2007. The coastal zones are covered in the vision for a future maritime policy and hence it is important that experts in coastal zone management and stakeholders participate in the consultation. There will be an internet consultation and a series of events at which the Green Paper, overall or specific topics, will be discussed. A few events are organised by the Commission, but others by third parties. Member States and stakeholders are invited to make known the events (conference, workshops, etc) at which the Green Paper, and in particular the issues of relevance for the coastal zones, can be presented and discussed.

Brief presentations were provided by the 10 countries that had submitted a **report further to the EU ICZM Recommendation**. The presentations showed the great variety of approaches taken by Member States in responding to the EU ICZM Recommendation. Moreover, the reports reflect often not a final national ICZM Strategy but rather a certain stage within an on-going process. The priorities and measures envisaged by the different countries vary therefore quite significantly.

However the presentations and the discussion highlighted some **recurrent concerns and areas for action**. Based on the orientations taken in the national processes it is clear that in the great majority of countries there is a need to improve governance of the coastal zones, covering horizontal and vertical integration, cooperation and more systematic involvement of stakeholders. More specifically several times the need was raised for better knowledge to underpin coastal planning and management, as well as indicators for policy making. It was also recognised that much more needs to be done in terms of communication and awareness raising to create a durable support and implementation basis for ICZM. Further support continues to be needed in the area of incentives to ICZM projects, exchange of best-practice, stimulation of projects that demonstrate a multi-disciplinary approach and the benefits of ICZM. Like in previous meetings of the expert

group, the need was expressed to improve planning and management of the land-sea interface, and to stimulate practical mechanisms and practice to govern use of marine resources especially in cross-border context. Coordination at regional sea level should be continued and further elaborated in certain areas, but overlap and inconsistencies should be avoided between new measures at the EU and the regional sea level. Compared to the current EU ICZM Recommendation text, the definition and scope of ICZM could be improved, the principles could be made more specific and the instruments or tools for ICZM implementation could be better described. The coordination of policies, from the inception at EU level, should remain a priority. Finally it was also stressed that more could be done to apply an integrated approach in structural funds and TENs programmes and projects.

While most of the discussion centred around matters of governance and ICZM as a process, some specific coastal problems were also highlighted. The risk of erosion and flooding were mostly referred to, including the impacts of climate change on these natural hazards. A few other themes were mentioned occasionally: off-shore wind/renewable energy, reconciling nature protection with other uses, especially tourism, and control of urbanisation.

Apart from the substance of possible further action to support ICZM, also the most appropriate **type of instrument(s)** for such further action was discussed. The meeting was split over the need or not for a more binding instrument at EU level. Half of the experts that expressed themselves on the issue would as an initial reaction prefer to keep the current Recommendation and complement the instrument through actions such as guidance, at least for the time being. The other half would favour a modified Recommendation or a (framework) Directive. The discussion brought out the pros and cons of the options that are in principle available. It was noted that the administrative and decision making process for a modified Recommendation or a Directive are equally long and effort consuming. A Recommendation would allow to be more ambitious or cover sensitive topics, as it provides flexibility for countries to adapt their circumstances. The option to keep the current Recommendation, but support further ICZM implementation through guidance, would provide stability at a time when most national strategies are just starting. Many activities at EU and international level are going on, of which first stock would have to be taken. However, the current Recommendation does not include a timeline beyond 2006 and focus may be lost in absence of a reporting schedule or other common goal to work towards. The current Recommendation also does not provide a basis for 'guidelines'. As regards a binding instrument, realistically only a framework could be envisaged given the subject matter and the variety of systems and level of advancement in ICZM. Positive aspects of a framework Directive would include the long-term safeguarding of ICZM processes started and providing focus. It would give a stronger position to involve stakeholders or authorities together who might not be sufficiently motivated through a Recommendation. A Directive would also imply that ICZM would be given more priority and access to funding would be facilitated. It was also noted that in the end ICZM is translated in practical management of the coast; management could not be a purely voluntary matter. However, a Directive may trigger strong reactions among certain stakeholders, jeopardising the whole ICZM process. Also the subject would be extremely difficult to capture well in a Directive; notably clear measurable objectives fail. Finally the negotiating and decision making process would probably be very difficult. Amongst other issues the legal basis would need careful reflection (would the environment legal basis be adequate to cover ICZM? Would unanimity be required given the linkage to land-use and town and country planning?).

The Chairman concluded that under the current Recommendation a lot of activity has been deployed by Member States. A key question for the choice of an instrument will be whether this *acquis* is sufficiently strongly in place or whether there is a risk of losing the momentum towards more integrated planning and management of coastal zones. In the latter case a stronger instrument will be more appropriate. Given the significant number of countries that prefer to keep the current Recommendation, the options should be kept in mind, but there needs to be agreement on how the momentum can be kept. Finally, the choice for an instrument need not to follow immediately: in a few years, if there would be signs of collapse of ICZM processes a proposal for a stronger instrument could be made. While the current ICZM Recommendation does not provide reporting deadlines beyond 2006, it remains in force as the basis of the national strategies and the generic principles it contains.

The Chairman also drew the following practical conclusions

DGEnvironment will send the external evaluation on ICZM to the participants in September, probably with a few questions on issues it wishes to address in view of the Commission's report by the end of 2006. If a meeting prior to the finalisation of the Commission report is not feasible, then participants will be given an opportunity to be consulted probably on the basis of a working paper.

The Green Paper Towards a future Maritime Policy for the Union will be sent to all participants once adopted. Participants are invited to make known all relevant events at which the Green Paper, and in particular topics of relevance to the coastal zones and ICZM, can be presented and discussed.

4. Commission evaluation of the EU ICZM Recommendation

Deborah Meyer Wefering (Rupprecht Consult) gave an overview of the external evaluation which is currently being carried out, in view of the Commission report to the European Parliament and Council, end 2006.

The methodology combines a number of information gathering and assessment tools. An assessment grid and guidelines were developed for the analysis of the national reports. Apart from national reports, also other documents relevant to ICZM have been collected. For 6 countries (of 24: 20 coastal member states + 4 candidates) there is as yet little information available. All information is stored on the ICZM evaluation space, which is shared among the evaluators network and with restricted access for member states and the Commission. Where reports are available the assessments are either completed or progressing. A cross-country analysis will be carried out to derive trends at EU level. To complement the reports and desk research, a questionnaire campaign is launched (deadline 30 June) and telephone and face-to-face interviews are being held. The interviews are directed to countries with reporting gaps and used to cover issue related gaps to support the findings. A validation workshop with a limited number of experts will be held on 22/23 June in Bremen to discuss the findings and the draft recommendations. The final report is due 18 August.

A public website will be operational from 2 June onwards. It will contain information about the evaluation and the national reports, the questionnaire and a special feed-back page. Countries are invited to support the evaluation by making the existence of the website, and in particular the questionnaire, known to stakeholders and interested parties.

5. Information and data for ICZM

Françoise Breton, EEA-ETC, presented the results from the first analysis of the progress indicator test, carried out in 8 countries. The progress indicator distinguishes 4 phases, from basic to mature implementation of ICZM. The first results show a good evolution in the first phase, but progress is especially in the 2nd phase between 2000-2005. Some progress is evident in phase 3, but it depended on the country. Only a few initial developments are noted in Phase 4. The first analysis shows that the questionnaire-method chosen is producing real results and is legitimate. Methodological comments concerned the too narrow range of response options (YES/NO/Don't know) and the actions representing Phase 4. These points need to be taken up in a revision of the indicator.

Xavier Martí, Generalitat of Catalonia and lead-partner of DEDUCE project¹, gave an overview of the activities of the DEDUCE project. The project implements the sustainability indicators developed by the Working group with various partners across the EU and at different levels (EU, national, regional, local). The project therefore gains much needed experience in integrating indicators over different scales. Beyond the calculation of the common indicators along a standard indicator format, DEDUCE examines the feasibility of an interregional observatory and it will develop an evaluation model to guide the use of the indicators in the coastal decision making processes. The project will close with a technical workshop in March 2007 (Barcelona) and a conference in June 2007 (Brussels).

Andrus Meiner, EEA, presented the report "The changing faces of Europe's coastal areas", which will be officially launched by the EEA later in June. Key issues raised are the continuing development of the coastal zone, the services offered by the coastal zones, climate change and the need for adaptation and the policy response to these various issues. The report is a pilot exercise to test integrated spatial assessment. Hence, the report draws lessons regarding the collection of data and analysis of information. A strong partnership approach will need to continue to further fill the data gaps and allow consistent assessment at the EU level.

Finally, Françoise Breton presented the initial thoughts of the Working Group as regards possible orientations for further work until mid-2007. This would be centered around the continuing collection of data and involvement of more countries, both for the sustainability and for the progress indicator; refinement of the progress indicator results; further methodological work to bring the sustainability and the progress indicator together; and contributions to the discussion raised by the Green Paper towards a European Maritime policy on the need for data and information for coastal decision makers.

Birgit Snoeren concluded that the work delivered by the WG-ID is recognised as very valuable in supporting the implementation of the EU ICZM Recommendation. The working group is asked to continue its efforts and present a workprogramme until June 2007. The main lines to develop are the gathering of more data and the further refinement of the methodology, including the analysis of the correlation between progress in integration and trends towards sustainability.

¹ <http://www.genocat.net/mediamb/sosten/deduce/deduce.htm>

Conclusions

Birgit Snoeren concluded the meeting by

- Inviting countries to submit their reports further to the ICZM Recommendation very quickly and to actively cooperate with the evaluators, especially by making the public website and the questionnaire known to stakeholders.
- Inviting countries to suggest events at which the Green Paper and further measures for ICZM can be presented and discussed
- Inviting countries to read the draft EEA report and submit comments directly to Andrus Meiner, should there be factual mistakes.
- Inviting the Working Group on Indicators and Data to present a workprogramme until mid-2007.

The date for a next meeting will be decided, but is likely to be in early 2007.



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ENV.D.3 – Cohesion policy & environmental impacts

Agenda

Expert group ICZM Recommendation

6th Meeting, 1 June 2006

**DGEnvironment, Avenue Beaulieu 5, Brussels
meeting room A
10 hrs – 16 hrs**

10.00 Welcome

- Presentations by Member States of national processes to implement the EU ICZM Recommendation
- Reports submitted by Member States further to the EU ICZM Recommendation
 - short presentations
 - discussion

12.30 – 14.00 Lunch

- Commission evaluation of the EU ICZM Recommendation
 - presentation of the state-of-play by the external evaluator
 - discussion
- Information and data for ICZM
 - EEA report State-of-the-coast
 - Interreg project DEDUCE
 - Working group “Indicators and Data” presentations and discussion

16.00 Conclusions

ATTENDANCE LIST

6th meeting Expert group - Integrated coastal zone management ICZM

01/06/2005 – Brussels – BU-5 0/A

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