ICZM

Integrated Coastal Zone Management in Germany

Assessment and steps towards a national ICZM strategy

Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety

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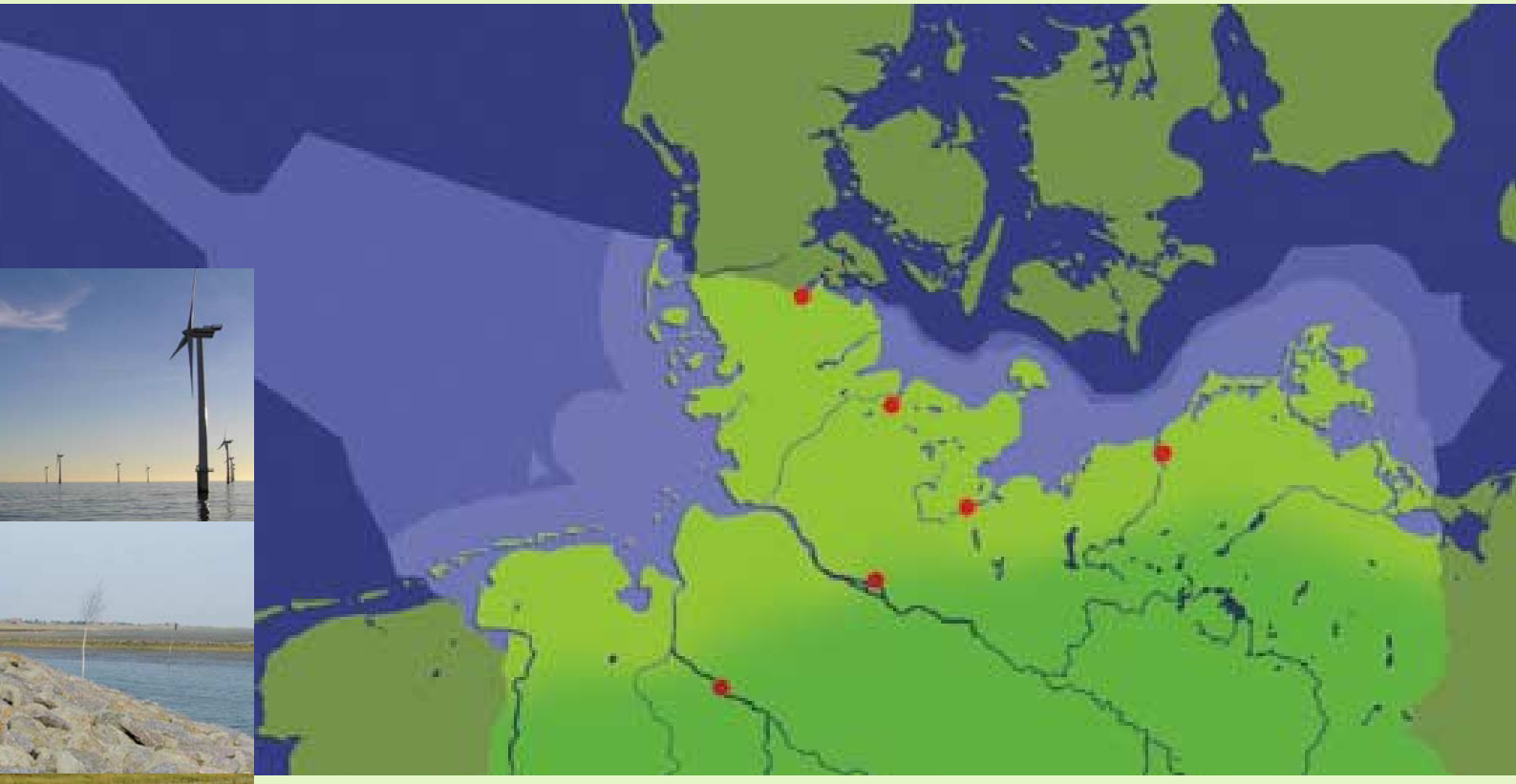

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100 Jahre Naturschutz als Staatsaufgabe
Zukunft mit Natur

Assessment and steps towards a national ICZM strategy

Overview

What is the objective of the ICZM strategy?

The strategy of an "integrated coastal zone management" (ICZM) formulates basic ICZM principles based on the EU recommendation 2002/413/EC, describes and analyzes the ecological, economic, social and legal situation in coastal and marine areas and on this basis elaborates steps to support the ICZM process and thus implementation of the basic ICZM principles.

What is ICZM aimed at?

ICZM is aimed at making a contribution to the development and preservation of coastal zones as an ecologically intact and economically prospering habitat for humankind.

What is ICZM?

ICZM is an informal approach to supporting sustainable development of coastal zones through good integration, coordination, communication and participation. On the one hand, ICZM is a process that should permeate all planning and decision-planning levels as a guiding principle and, on the other hand, is a tool applied for the purpose of integrated identification of potential development and conflict as well as for resolving conflicts in an unbureaucratic manner.

What is ICZM not intended to be?

ICZM is not an independent formal planning and decision-making tool and not an instrument for pushing through specialized and individual interests.

Where does ICZM apply?

ICZM deals with the interactions between the exclusive economic zone (EEZ), the coastal sea (12 sm zone), the transitional waters in accordance with the Water Framework Directive (WRRL), the areas adjoining estuaries and influenced by the tides as well as the adjoining rural districts and respective administrative units on shore. The relevant scope is defined by the interrelationships existing in each individual case.

How did the ICZM strategy come into being?

The development of this strategy is already part of the ICZM process. It follows extensive (preliminary) work by various parties involved, integrates the relevant actors into a supporting working group and will be presented and discussed at a conference. At the same time the varying points of view of different actors and the necessity of open communication have already clearly emerged and influenced the strategy.

What steps does the ICZM strategy call for?

An analysis of the situation on the coast shows that major sections of the basic ICZM principles have already been implemented by means of the current set of legal instruments and the situation of the German coast based on that. The ICZM strategy urges a number of further adaptations of the legal control instruments and is aimed at fostering the ICZM process by creating the basis for continuation of the dialogue process. Additional experience is to be gained at various levels in best practice projects.

Who implements ICZM and the ICZM strategy?

ICZM should permeate all relevant areas; therefore, all actors will contribute to its unbureaucratic implementation. At the same time bottom up and top down processes must complement each other since different approaches are appropriate for different problems and challenges.

Summary to the national strategy of the federal German government for a Integrated Coastal Zone Management

(Kabinettsbeschluss vom 22.03.2006)

1. Reason

The recommendation of the European Parliament and the Council of 30. May 2002 to implement a strategy for integrated management of coastal zones in Europe (2002/413/EC) forms the framework for this strategy paper. The steps towards a national strategy as well as basic principles for integrated management of coastal zones are developed on the basis of a national assessment. The assessment, the basic principles and the strategy constitute the core elements of the national report for integrated management of German coastal zones.

2. ICZM at EU level

Given the outstanding significance of European coastal zones from an ecological, economic, social and cultural point of view as well as for recreational purposes, the European Union has continuously devoted its attention to the development of European coastal zones and evaluation of their state. In the view of the Commission, integrated coastal zone management attempts "to create a balance between the benefits of economic development and utilization of coastal regions by humankind, the benefits of protection, preservation and restoration of coastal zones, the benefits of minimization of losses of human life and property as well as the benefits of public access to and enjoyment of the coastal zones, at all times within the limits set by natural dynamics and stress-bearing capacity" *(EU Commission, 1999, A European Strategy for ICZM, p. 16).*

to create a balance within the limits set by natural dynamics

ecologically sustainable, economically balanced, socially compatible

In the view of the European Union, therefore, the implementation of an ecologically sustainable, economically balanced and socially compatible coastal zone management that also gives careful consideration to cultural aspects meriting protection and maintains the integrity of the coastal eco-systems is of decisive importance for sustainable development.

By virtue of the above mentioned recommendation 2002/413/EC, the Member States were called upon to focus their attention on this tool and submit a report by February 2006.

The ICZM recommendation is only one part of various activities of the EU concerning marine and coastal policy. It is embedded in the strategic goals of the EU, which are formulated through the Lisbon strategy, among other things, and clearly defined by the Green Book on EU marine policy for sea areas and the thematic strategy on the protection and conservation of the marine environment. This makes obvious that the coastal and marine areas in the EU shall be developed in a sustainable manner.

3. Stock taking of the North Sea and Baltic Sea coastal zones

The development of a national ICZM strategy is based on an assessment of the economic, social and ecological situation of the German coastal zones as well as of the legal, political and administrative structures and institutions that have an influence on the conditional framework for taking action in the coastal regions.

The allocation of responsibilities between the federal, state and local governments, reflecting Germany's federal structure, and the cooperation of the specific authorities concerned is incorporated into a dense network of international agreements that govern, in particular, shipping and the marine environment as concerns going beyond national boundaries and represent the framework for cross-border cooperation.

Identification of central interactions and conflicts

With regard to the goals of integrated management, the assessment takes into consideration the economic actors such as shipping, port management, industry, overland transport infrastructure, oil and natural gas production, renewable energies, transmission routes, sand and gravel extraction, fishing and mariculture, agriculture and tourism on the basis of their importance for coastal zones. Coastal protection, maritime traffic regulations, sediment management, waste management, defence, settlement and regional development, protected areas, preservation of the cultural heritage, regional planning levels and tools, nongovernmental organizations, education and science as well as monitoring in the coastal region are taken into account as further relevant actors, activities and tools in the coastal region. The status quo as well as the development prospects and central strategies is briefly characterized for each of these activities. After a summary of the respective governing legal framework the economic, ecological and social relevance of the specific activity are outlined. On this basis central interactions and conflicts with other activities and actors in the coastal region are identified which might be handled also within the framework of ICZM processes.

After that the current state of the environment and nature in the German section of the North and Baltic Sea is described. Intensive fishing, inputs of contaminants and nutrients, environmental risks and pollution due to maritime shipping as well as interventions affecting the region are viewed as the central pollution and stress factors. Changing problems and varying risk potentials are identified for the input of nutrients and contaminants. In addition, developments for various areas and species are differentiated for the changes in biodiversity in the North and Baltic Sea. Challenges for coastal protection will become discernible in particular as challenges related to climate change on the basis of the current level of knowledge.

4. Steps towards a national strategy

For the national strategy ICZM is viewed as an informal approach aimed at supporting sustainable development of the coastal zones through good integration, coordination, communication and participation. On the one hand, ICZM is a process that should permeate all planning and decision-making levels as a guiding principle and, on the other hand, is a tool applied prior to formal procedures for the purpose of integrated identification of potential development and conflict as well as for resolving conflicts.

The ICZM strategy pursues a spatially comprehensive approach and examines the interactions between the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), the coastal sea (12 sm zone), the transitional waters in accordance with the Water Framework Directive (WRRL), areas adjoining the estuaries and influenced by the tides as well as the adjoining rural districts and respective administrative units on shore. ICZM is thus the only level that looks at this functionally cohesive area, the coastal zone, in its entirety.

The national strategy was prepared using the preliminary work of other departments, especially the German Federal Ministry for Transport, Building and Urban Development (BMVBS) and the German Federal Ministry for Education and Research (BMBF), as well as by means of an R&D project of the Federal Environmental Agency, accompanied by the Federal Agency of Nature Conservation, and under the overall control of the Federal Ministry of the Environment. The development was supported by the working group "National ICZM Strategy", whose activities were carried out through the involvement of various federal departments, the coastal German states and parties concerned. Different and in some cases contrary conceptions of a national ICZM strategy have emerged between the societal interests involved. They are reflected in the strategy and at the same time underline the necessity of ICZM processes. The development process and the comments of the actors involved are documented at *www.ikzm-strategie.de*.

The national strategy is based on the following basic principles:

1. ICZM shall promote **sustainable development** of coastal zones with their specific ecological, economic and social features and support the sustainability strategy of the federal German government.
2. ICZM represents a guiding principle for political and social action at all levels in coastal zones and is aimed at coordinating the development of coastal zones through a comprehensive approach and **integration** of all concerns.
3. ICZM incorporates all relevant policy areas, economic and scientific actors, social groups and levels of administration into the process (**participation**) in order to identify development potential at an early stage, find solutions for which there is a consensus and improve conflict management.
4. ICZM is viewed as a continuous process that combines the phases of planning, implementation and evaluation of changes in coastal zones so as to make the best possible use of experience for the future (**experience transfer**).

sustainable development, integration, participation, experience transfer

basic ICZM-principles have already been implemented in Germany

On the basis of these basic principles, the results of the assessment are analyzed and a strength and weakness profile of the current situation in coastal zones and of the existing set of legal instruments formulated, making use of further work. The strength and weakness profile clearly indicates that major aspects of the ICZM basic principles have already been implemented in important areas through the planning practice established in Germany on the respective legal foundation. However, it is also plain that further steps have to be taken to improve the achievement of goals at the planning and in particular at the individual decision-making level:

- The basic principle of **sustainable development** is increasingly a subject of discussion in coastal zones and is also given consideration in acts of law (e.g. ROG [German Regional Planning Act]; GAK [Joint Task for the Improvement of Agricultural Structures and Coastal Protection] as a support tool). It is also based on increased promotion of regenerative energies through the EEG (Renewable Energy Sources Act) and especially in coastal zones. Important progress has been made in the establishment of nature reserves as well as in the reduction of inputs of various substances and substance groups relevant for the environment. However, sustainability goals in coastal zones are formulated only sporadically and degradation of various environmental parameters continues to be noted.
- In principle, the set of graduated and interlinking legal (planning) instruments developed in Germany already provides suitable tools for horizontal, vertical, territorial and time-related **integration** in the coordination of the development of coastal zones and is currently supplemented by the introduction of regional planning, currently in the preparation phase, in the EEZ. However, procedures in coastal zones are fragmented in some cases and do not give adequate consideration to interactions between the respective concerns.
- **Participation and communication** in the development of coastal zones are fundamentally provided for through broad, early and extensive involvement of all relevant policy sectors, economic actors, social groups and administrative levels in the various processes and procedures on a basis of equality and through the existing set of legal instruments and an established practice that goes beyond this in some cases. However, there is need for extended communication and resolution of conflicts also by means of informal participation procedures.
- **Experience transfer** is guaranteed through comprehensive continuous monitoring programmes for regional planning and environmental quality and the extensive capture and availability of statistical data regarding the social and economic mainstay of sustainability. However, further steps are meaningful, such as formulation, operationalization and application of ICZM indicators and better coordination of monitoring programmes

Photo: Panthermedia

In the past years different activities of considerable importance for implementation of the ICZM goals in terms of content have already been initiated at all levels in Germany, e.g. for further development of the set of legal instruments in the areas of regional planning, procedures and information. In particular, the federal government, the Länder (German federal states) and local authorities have developed activities apart from further development of the set of legal instruments in order to generate know how and experience, foster sustainability in coastal zones, improve coop ration between governmental, economic, social and research institutions and organizations as well as further develop the quality of the available knowledge within the framework of research and project support. The following measures are especially important:

further steps are necessary

The federal government has improved the set of legal instruments by transposing European legislation – particularly the Strategic Environmental Assessment, the Water Framework Directive, extension of the Freedom of Information Act and public involvement as well as the Natura 2000 directive – into German law and through further development of national regulations (e.g. through the law for improving preventive flood protection, extension of regional planning to the EEZ and amendment of the Offshore Installations Ordinance). Furthermore, programmes pursuing development goals relevant for ICZM have been designed in cooperation with the Länder. They include the national maritime conference, the port concept of the German seaports and the central command for maritime emergencies. Other important measures are the national strategies for sustainability and biodiversity, the marine strategy as well as the trilateral cooperation for protection of the Wadden Sea with the Netherlands and Denmark.

In recent years, the German federal states have developed diverse activities in the areas of regional planning and development as well as the methods of integrated coastal management. Furthermore, the local authorities have worked up goals and practices of importance for ICZM through regional cooperation, participation in international forums and projects as well as activities within the framework of local Agenda 21 projects.

With respect to the existing set of tools and activities the national strategy envisages four areas in which further steps should be pursued:

1. Further optimization of the set of legal instruments according to the basic ICZM principles
2. Creation of the basis for continuation of the dialogue process
3. Best practice projects and their evaluation
4. Development and application of ICZM indicators

However, this should not lead to the creation of new bureaucratic obstacles. On the contrary, by initiating broad-based participation, acceleration of the problem-solving process is targeted since conflicts can be identified, discussed and resolved at an early stage.

initiating broad-based participation

Moreover, current fields of action, on which the ICZM activities should focus in the next few years, such as within the framework of best practice projects, can be derived from the assessment. They primarily consist of an in-depth analysis of ecological, economic and social trends in coastal zones against the background of the targeted sustainable development, coordination of offshore activities, reduction in spatial needs through multiple use, opportunities for increased cooperation in port operation and management, challenges within the scope of coastal protection as well as conflicts in goals between nature conservation and other concerns.

Implementation of the national strategy will have to be pursued by federal and state legislators as a top down approach, especially in connection with optimization of the existing set of tools in accordance with the basic ICZM principles.

Furthermore, the federal and Länder governments will have to provide resources and communication platforms and perform coordination tasks. In addition, another focal point will be bottom up oriented cooperation between governmental institutions with local, regional and social actors.

5. **Evaluation of the expected impacts of the national strategy on the state of the coastal zones**
   The national ICZM strategy is designed to be pursued in small steps in view of the set of legal instruments developed, on the one hand, and reservations regarding further regulations, on the other hand. The contribution of these steps to an ecologically, economically and socially sustainable development of coastal zones will depend on further shaping of the ICZM process.

6. **Evaluation of the implementation and application of the legal provisions and policies of the Community with impacts on the coastal zones**
   In the evaluation of the implementation and application of the legal provisions and policies of the Community special attention is given to the contributions of the NATURA 2000 directive (FFH directive and Bird Protection Directive), the Water Framework Directive (WRRL) as well as the directive concerning the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SUP-RL) to development of an integrative set of legal instruments and a high level of protection. The need for greater consideration of ICZM goals will be pointed out in fishing, agricultural, energy, regional and structural policy. The coming EU marine strategy directive is viewed as a strengthening of the sustainable development of coastal zones and thus of the goals of the national ICZM strategy.

7. **Presentation and discussion of the strategy**
   As part of the participation process, the ICZM strategy will be presented and discussed at a conference in Bremen on 27/28 Apr 2006 (see *www.ikzm-strategie.de*). The primary focus there should be placed on how to continue to put the approach into practice.

sustainable development of coastal and marine zones

Photos (2): Panthermedia

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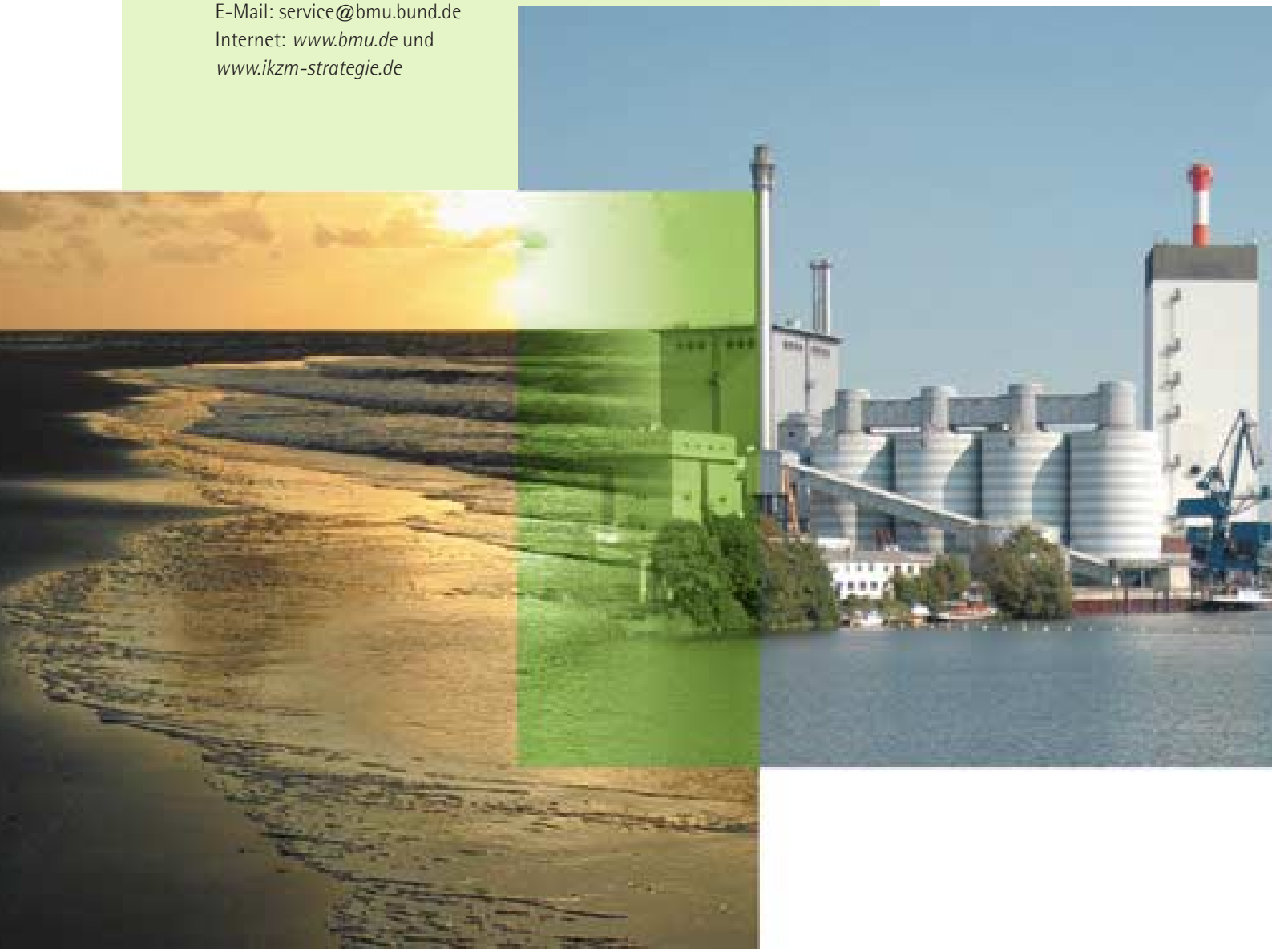

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