Double Dutch? Transferring the integrated area approach to Bulgaria

Paper for the 2008 Berlin Conference on the Human Dimensions of Global Environmental Change, Berlin, 22-23 February 2008.

Carel Dieperink (Utrecht University, Copernicus Institute for Sustainable Development and Innovation, P.O. Box80115, 3508 TC Utrecht, the Netherlands, C.Dieperink@geo.uu.nl)

Linda van Duivenbode (POVVIK-Mec B.V., Ondiep-zuidzijde, 3551 BW Utrecht, the Netherlands)

René Boesten (POVVIK-Mec B.V., Ondiep-zuidzijde, 3551 BW Utrecht, the Netherlands)

Abstract

National and regional development plans and private sector investment plans guide the development of the Bulgarian coastal zone. Still, the development is focussed on short-term returns and profits. Pressure from the great number of investors combined with competition between municipalities to attract investments, limited national funds to support the needed development of infrastructure and utilities and the weak legal basis for enforcing the top down implementation of the plans contribute further to this short term thinking. Long-term thinking integrating several societal interests is required in order to meet the sustainability challenges.

The Dutch integrated area approach is an attempt to integrate several societal interests. So far it has been quite successful. At the request of the Bulgarian government the approach is transferred to Bulgaria in order to develop a vision and a strategy for integrated coastal zone management for the Black Sea coast. The Bulgarian request is also a consequence of the EU Recommendation on Integrated Coastal Zone Management, which urges EU member states to develop a strategic action plan for their coastal areas. With financial support of the Dutch government a Dutch-Bulgarian team is trying to transfer the approach to Bulgaria through the MyCOAST project.

In this paper we will reflect on this project. We will first discuss the EU Recommendation to be followed by a specification of the integrated area approach. Although the integrated area approach is generally regarded a successful attempt to develop areas with competing land use claims or environmental problems, success is only guaranteed if several conditions are met. The MyCoast project should meet these conditions to enhance the changes of success. We will comment on the project approach and give an overview of the project activities and preliminary results. We finish this paper with some concluding remarks concerning the prospects of the MyCoast project.

1 Challenges for the Bulgarian Black Sea coast

Coastal areas are only a minor part of the earth's surface. Despite this, they are very popular for human settlement. Population density in coastal zones is much higher than in inland areas and will continue to increase (UNEP, 20007). Coastal areas also attract a great number of tourists. They have always been attractive to people as they offer seafood, a moderate climate, recreation, leisure and transport facilities. As a result, the spatial pressure on the coastal areas is very high. Pollution, over fishing, soil and ecosystems degradation and loss of biodiversity might result. The current issues of climate change and sea level rise make the problems in coastal zones even more urgent. Sustainability is at risk so coastal societies have to face sustainability challenges. This general argument is also valid for the Bulgarian Black Sea coast. The Bulgarian Black Sea coastal zone increasingly faces pressure from tourism development, seasonal population influx from foreign property owners and 'pensionados' and resource use. Tourism is booming during the last decade. Plans for construction of resorts, golf courses and marinas seem to have accelerated in the two years prior to the Bulgarian EU accession in 2007. On the other hand the coastal zone has a great value as cultural and biodiversity asset.

National and regional development plans and private sector investment plans guide the development of the Bulgarian coastal zone. Still, the development is focussed on short-term returns and profits. Pressure from the great number of investors combined with competition between municipalities to attract investments, limited national funds to support the needed development of infrastructure and utilities and the weak legal basis for enforcing the top down implementation of the plans contribute further to this short term thinking. Long-term thinking is required in order to meet the sustainability challenges. This long-term thinking should integrate several societal interests.

The Netherlands, having one of the world's most densely populated coastal zones, have developed such integrated strategies. The Dutch integrated area approach is an attempt to integrate several societal interests. So far it has been quite successful. Examples demonstrate that this Dutch integrated area approach results in more broadly supported and feasible programmes. At the request of the Bulgarian government the approach is transferred to Bulgaria in order to develop a vision and a strategy for integrated coastal zone management for the Black Sea coast. This Bulgarian request is also a consequence of the EU Recommendation on Integrated Coastal Zone Management, which urges EU member states to develop an integrated strategic action plan for their coastal areas. With financial support of the Dutch government a Dutch-Bulgarian team is trying to transfer the approach to Bulgaria through the MyCOAST project. Aim of the project is the drafting of a vision for the future of the Black Sea coast (2030) and of a strategy to coordinate future development.

In this paper we will reflect on this project. We will first discuss the EU Recommendation being one of the rationales for transferring the approach to be followed by a specification of the integrated area approach. Four successful examples illustrate this approach. Although the integrated area approach is generally regarded a successful

attempt to develop areas with competing land use claims or environmental problems, success is only guaranteed if several conditions are met. The MyCoast project should meet these conditions to enhance the changes of success. We will comment on the project approach and give an overview of the project activities and preliminary results. We finish this paper with some concluding remarks concerning the prospects of the MyCoast project.

2 The EU Recommendation on ICZM

In May 2002 the European Parliament and Council adopted the Recommendation concerning the implementation of Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) in Europe (2002/413/EC). Objective of this Recommendation is to stop degradation of coastal zones by adopting an "environmentally sustainable, economically equitable, socially responsible, and culturally sensitive management of coastal zones, which maintains the integrity of this important resource while considering local traditional activities and customs that do not present a threat to sensitive natural areas and to the maintenance status of the wild species of the coastal fauna and flora" (European Union, 2002). As the title makes clear the implementation of this integrated management is recommended, not legally required. Moreover ICZM is not a blueprint, but should mainly be seen as a *process*. The recommendation introduces 8 principles that indicate best practices of integrated coastal zone management. Integrated coastal zone management requires:

1. A broad overall perspective (thematic and geographic) taking into account the interdependence and disparity of natural systems and human activities with an impact on coastal areas;
2. A long-term perspective taking into account the precautionary principle and the needs of present and future generations;
3. Adaptive management during a gradual process, which will facilitate adjustment as problems and knowledge, develop. This implies the need for a sound scientific basis concerning the evolution of the coastal zone;
4. Local specificity and the great diversity of European coastal zones, which will make it possible to respond to their practical needs with specific solutions and flexible measures;
5. Working with natural processes and respecting the carrying capacity of ecosystems, which will make human activities more environmentally friendly, socially responsible and economically sound in the long run; management of coastal zones in Belgium, Netherlands and England for example combines traditional (expensive) "hard engineering" solutions with more natural processes such as breaching sea defences in some areas and giving more space to the sea in order to protect the coastline;
6. Involving all the parties concerned. Stakeholders are all those individuals and organisations with an interest in or responsibility for the management of the coastal zone

Participatory planning works to build the opinions and perspectives of all of the relevant stakeholders into the planning process through collaborative involvement. Involvement builds commitment and shared responsibility, harnesses local knowledge helps to ensure identification of real issues and tends to lead to more implementable solutions. Early involvement can develop trust and commitment. (European Union, 1999).

(economic and social partners, the organizations representing coastal zone residents, non-governmental organizations and the business sector) in the management process, for example by means of agreements and based on shared responsibility;
7. Support and involvement of relevant administrative bodies at national, regional and local level between which appropriate links should be established or maintained with the aim of improved coordination of the various existing policies. Partnership with and between regional and local authorities should apply when appropriate;
8. Use of a combination of instruments designed to facilitate coherence between sectoral policy objectives and coherence between planning and management; this implies that legal and economic instruments shall be combined with voluntary agreements, information provision, technological solutions, research and education.

Not only the European Union, but also the Commission on the Protection of the Black Sea against Pollution, the implementing body of the Convention on the Protection of the Black Sea, has adopted among others the ICZM strategy in its Strategic Plan of Action for the Recovery and Protection of the Black Sea. Black Sea states are also expected to develop a national ICZM strategy (Black Sea Commission, 2007).

The Dutch are said to have had strong influence on the contents of the Recommendation (Snoeren, 2007). Several principles can be traced back to the Dutch integrated area approach. This integrated area approach is deeply rooted in Dutch political culture (Dieperink and Steyn, 2005; Driessen et al, 2001).

3 Main characteristics of the integrated area approach

The integrated area approach is an open, interactive, planning process. Not only governmental actors but also actors representing market parties and civil society participate. The approach is based on five principles: take the wishes of stakeholders into account; jointly come up with innovative ideas and solutions; stimulate experts to develop novel solutions; creatively apply new technical means; and ‘learn by doing’. Application of the approach should result in the development of a coherent view on the long-term development of an area and the establishment of a package of measures to accelerate the implementation of policy. This package should create a working basis for the authorities and other parties concerned and a response to specific regional opportunities and problems. Characteristic of the approach is that environmental protection is included at the start of planning future developments, instead of leaving it to the end of the planning stage (Pegasus, 2004). These objectives will be reached through a three-stage process. The integrated area approach starts with an explorative ‘voice stage’, continues with an ‘agora stage’, and ends with an ‘action stage’ (Enthoven and De Rooij, 1996).

In the first phase, one of the parties takes the lead in organising a joint approach to regional problems. During this voice stage, the stakeholders are invited and challenged to contribute to a joint formulation of the challenges. Separate groups of stakeholders are identified and invited to participate, either in a steering committee, project group, a

working group or a sounding board group (Driessen et al, 2001). The latter generally consists of outside experts and /or representatives of the private sector. The method of holding group discussions gives all members the opportunity to voice their views. If everybody is willing, an initial covenant is signed. This sets out the objective, content, organisation, manpower and financial resources, phasing and the timetable for the project.

The agora stage ('agora' is the Greek word for 'meeting place') is meant to muster all available creative potential to come up with ways to address the challenges identified in the preceding stage. Participants are invited to dream about ideal area characteristics. A set of possible solutions is generated during a series of sessions chaired by an outside moderator. Techniques of brainstorming and the formulation of analogies can be applied. They are asked to dream about area development. Draftsmen elaborate the ideas in the form of designs and situation sketches. Technical experts from various disciplines can also attend these interactive sessions. The explicit aim is to maximize creativity. The resulting solutions are then presented to the stakeholders in a written survey in order to reach a common perception. The final outcome is a list of desired and undesired alternatives. The most favoured solution to emerge from the round of interactive sessions ideally has hardly any opponents and is subsequently selected as the most desirable and most feasible one by the locals.

In the subsequent action stage, this solution is fully elaborated, and the representatives of the stakeholders made sure their constituencies would accept it. After another critical review by experts and interested parties, a final decision is reached on a project. A final or policy covenant sets out the concrete agreements made in order to implement the action plan. The parties state their intention to do their utmost to ensure implementation of the plan. Finally implementation begins.

The integrated area approach is a challenge for governmental actors. They have a special role to play. On one hand they are also negotiating and consultative partners, on the other hand they have to safeguard the democratic and legitimate character of the processes

4 Successful examples of the integrated area approach

The application of the integrated area approach has led to the resolution of stalemates in several cases. The course of processes could be changed as most important parties could be drawn into the project and given enough room in the project organization, interweaving of interests appeared possible resulting in win-win outcomes and overall party satisfaction. Several so-called 'ROM' (Spatial Planning and Environmental) projects, so-called 'WCL' (Valuable Man-made Landscapes) projects, pig farming industry reconstruction projects and Infralab projects can serve as successful examples.

ROM projects were initiated in the Netherlands at the end of the 1980s in order to solve problems of a spatial planning and environmental nature and to accelerate implementation of spatial planning and environmental policy. The focus in these projects

is on improving the quality of the environment by means of spatial planning policy, and on making spatial developments possible by achieving a clean environment. The problems in the ROM areas were inevitably urgent ones that must be solved, problems that cannot be tackled adequately or quickly enough through the regular channels. A coherent approach was essential. One of the most challenging ROM-projects, the ROM-Rijnmond project, involves the sustainable development of the Port of Rotterdam region. Figure 1 gives an overview of the project.

Figure 1: Objectives and their specifications of the ROM-Rijnmond project (Pegasus, 2004, p. 26)

Objectives	Targets	Indicators	Projects
Strengthening the mainport position	More space for mainport Rotterdam	Creating space for the port	Land reclamation
	Increasing the accessibility of port and industry	Congestion	Motorway 15, Vaanplein-Maasvlakte
			Opening regime bridges
			The A4 corridor
		Modal split goods traffic	Platform modal split
			Rotterdam internal logistics (RIL)
			Agro-logistics
			Promoting the use of pipelines
Improving living conditions	Decreasing environmental pressure through enterprise	Noise pollution traffic	Motorway 20: reducing traffic noise
			Delta project noise
		Traffic emissions	Delta project road traffic
			Urban distribution of goods
			Transporting hazardous goods by sea vessel
	Cutting down on use of energy and raw materials	Energy use	Energy 2010
			Industrial ecology
			Sustainable site selection policy
	More recreational facilities and better living conditions	A vital port	Riverfront project southern bank
			Sustainable restructuring port area
		Environmental awareness	Restructuring waterfront – North bank of the Maas
			Hoogvliet North
		Nature and recreation	Cultural heritage
			Regional green agreement

Interactively a plan of action with specific subprojects was drafted aiming both at a further (economic) development of the Port of Rotterdam and at the maintenance of a high quality of life and a clean environment for the surrounding area (social, environmental). The plan integrates elements of environmental policy, town and country planning and other policies of importance for the area. The action plan describes the measures, the policy instruments and the financial resources to be committed by the authorities and by the various business sectors and environmental NGOs. The agreements made in the action plan work through into the formal planning structures such as regional spatial plans, land-use plans or water management plans. The plan got a legal status as its contents were endorsed twice (in 1993 and 1998) in a voluntary agreement signed by the

Ministries of Environment and Physical Planning, Transport and Public Works, Economic Affairs, Agriculture, Nature Conservation and Fisheries, the Province of South-Holland, the Rotterdam region and 17 municipalities.

One of the most remarkable results of the ROM-Rijnmond approach is the plan to reclaim offshore a shallow mudflat of 2000 hectares, the so-called Tweede Maasvlakte (Second Meuse Plain, the first Meuse Plain had been reclaimed in 1972) (Glasbergen, 2002, p. 311-312). This Second Meuse Plain will be used for the enlargement of the Rotterdam port and the development of industrial areas. Many sections of Dutch society had been engaged in discussions about the need to enlarge the port of Rotterdam to meet an expected growth in the container sector. During open discussions on usefulness and necessity of the land reclamation option, compensation for nature losses was asked for and granted. Nature development projects with a total size of 750 ha (600 ha belonging to the Landscape Park Buytenland and 2 areas north of Rotterdam) and the establishment of a marine park will compensate for the environmental effects of land reclamation. In 2006 Parliament approved this win-win compromise by a special law. During the last year formal procedures (environmental impact assessments, destination of the coastal area (the Voordelta) as Natura 2000 site, local development plans, air pollution plans to meet EU air quality standards for NOx and PM, permits for sand extraction at sea and for the implementation of activities influencing protected nature areas had to be fulfilled to have the implementation started in the summer of 2008 this year (Project Mainportontwikkeling Rotterdam, 2007). According to the planning the construction of the dikes will be finished by 2013. In that year the first industries can start their activities as well.

Through *WCL projects* an attempt is made to strengthen the multi-functionality of Valuable Man-made Landscapes while at the same time keeping their unique identity. To this end, local authorities work together with representatives from the agricultural sector and NGOs in the field of recreation and nature conservation. National government supports the implementation of this policy by making specific funding available. In several WCL-areas public and private partners succeeded in reducing the environmental impact of agriculture (Ministry of Agriculture, 2007). The environmental impacts of agriculture have also been dealt with in *Reconstruction projects* that relate to the restructuring of the pig farming industry. The preparation and implementation of the reconstruction plans is done cooperatively, whereby government representatives and representatives of trade and industry and NGOs work in concert. Provincial authorities have the prime responsibility for these reconstruction projects, but separate, so-called ‘reconstruction committees’ have been set up for each project consisting of the representatives of municipalities, water boards and nature conservancy, agricultural and environmentalist organisations. Representatives of the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment and the Ministry of Agriculture are advisory members. Reconstruction projects have resulted in changes of the Dutch landscape as agricultural land is transformed into nature. The projects support the development of the ecological main structure, the Dutch part of the European Natura 2000 network. Formerly isolated nature reserves on areas like the Utrechtse Heuvelrug and the Veluwe have been connected now. Brooks and rivulets will be transformed in their original meandering

forms and hundreds of farmers will move their pig farms to special farming development areas (Minister Veerman positive about reconstruction, 2006).

The *Infralab* (Infrastructure Laboratory) project is another successful example of the integrated area approach. Through this project the time required to plan motorway adaptations could be reduced (Glasbergen and Driessen, 2005; Driessen et al, 2007). Stakeholders (not only professional organizations but also civilians) expressed their satisfaction with the quality of this integrated approach as organizational fragmentation had been eliminated, and project development had become more of a cooperative venture. Solutions were less disputed and met the requirements of a wider range of interests. Most of the participants considered the solutions more sustainable as well. Politicians were the least enthusiastic about the approach. By the end of the process they felt a little uncomfortable about their own greatly diminished role.

Some authors refer to the Dutch integrated area approach as manifestation of a green polder model (Glasbergen, 2002). However the approach is not unique for the Netherlands as similar initiatives were started in other countries as well (PEGASUS, 2004).

5 Success conditions for the integrated area approach

The integrated area approach is no cure-all. It cannot resolve all the problems that are associated with the traditional approach to government, which is characterized by centrist and hierarchical intervention. Compared to traditional sectoral approaches the integrated area approach certainly has its strengths (see among others Driessen et al, 2001, p. 324; Pegasus, 2004, p. 5; Geul, 2005, p. 134; Edelenbos, 2005; Black Sea Commission, 2007). It should result in linking intellectual and organizational capacities of all stakeholders, an enrichment of the process and in better broader accepted plans with integrated mutually supportive and feasible activities. However, the integrated area approach is complicated and requires good governance, coordination, monitoring and accountability (Driessen et al, 2001, p. 326). Governance means that initiatives have to be developed to bring the stakeholders together and get them to communicate with each other, getting parties to develop creative ideas. Coordination implies that different activities have to be geared to each other, allowing the parties to act in concert. Monitoring refers to the importance of being thorough with regard to content and legal, financial and administrative issues. Accountability calls for reportage on all activities that take place in the course of the policy process

More specifically, the chance that the integrated area approach will produce meaningful results and contribute effectively to the resolution of complex social issues is higher if certain (partly overlapping) conditions are met (o.a. Driessen et all, 2001, p. 324):

- All important stakeholders perceive a situation as undesirable, there should be a shared sense of urgency in society to improve the quality of an area;
- Those stakeholders who are absolutely indispensable in making strategic decisions and implementing policies are willing to participate;

- Stakeholders don't share a compromising prior history;
- Relevant stakeholders have insight into mutual interdependence and take major dependency relations between public and private actors into account; the more ambitious and wide ranging the aims the more dependencies will be recognized;
- Relevant stakeholders have a clear image of the role they have to play;
- Parties must be willing to negotiate with each other, they must have enough scope to defend their own interests, but are also willing to let go of their traditional standpoints;
- Despite conflicting interests, perceptions and opinions, effective coalitions can be formed and consensus options (package deals) are possible; participants have bad BATNA options so they can't threaten to terminate their collaboration and to obstruct the process by another route be it by taken legal proceedings or seeking publicity for their standpoint;
- Participants should have flexible and overlapping mandates from their constituencies;
- In the negotiation arena open dialogues, mutual respect for each other's interests prevail and by means of creative learning processes common points of departure for problem formulations and problem solving can be found;
- Process managers should have good management skills (be able to bring and keep people together, arranging and streamlining communication processes, able to get results from meetings and take a task as independent as possible); due attention should be given to weighting interests and cultivating consensus, explaining the decisions, making the steps transparent and clarifying the roles of the participants in the process; consensus will have to be continuously verified in the course of the implementation process or even have be built anew on the grounds of new developments and insights;
- The process should be transparent and clearly documented;
- Results can be reached fairly soon to show the added value of the approach;
- These results are accepted in formal political decision making processes;
- Process results can be formalised using existing legal instruments;
- Funding is available to organise the process and implement the process results.

If these conditions are met processes will be well rooted in or owned by society and feasible and realistic plans will result. It is of course easier to meet these conditions in projects with not too complicated substantive and technical objectives. Conditions are also easier met if the timeframe that the project covers is not too long as the longer it takes the harder it becomes to keep track of all the aspects that can play a role in the policy process. Project complexity is also dependent on the financial scope of a project. When a project has a large financial scope financing is generally harder to arrange.

6 The MyCoast Project approach

Following a request by the Bulgarian Government for assistance in developing an integrated management plan for the Black Sea coast, the Dutch Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and Environment (VROM) together with the Dutch Agency for

International Business and Co-operation (EVD) enabled a Dutch-Bulgarian team to set up the MyCoast project with the formal project title “Elaboration of a Vision and a Strategy for Integrated Coastal Zone Management in Bulgaria”. The project is funded by VROM under the framework of the Environmental Facility of the PSO Pre-Accession Program under the contract supervision of the EVD.

The Bulgarian counterpart for the project is the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works (MRDPW), while the Ministry of Environment and Water (MoEW), the Ministry of Transport (MoT) and the State Agency for Tourism (SAT) are beneficiaries. The Ministry of Environment and Water, one of the beneficiaries of the project has appointed the Director of the Black Sea Basin Directorate (BSBD) as participant. An Inter-ministerial Steering Committee would be set up to support the project. Povvik, a Bulgarian-Dutch consultancy company leads the project team. Apart from Povvik, the province of South Holland, the European Centre for Eco and Agro Tourism (ECEAT) and the Copernicus Institute for Sustainable Development and Innovation participate in the project team.

The aim of the MyCoast project is to develop a Vision for the future, an integrated Management Plan to realise the Vision and an institutional organisation to support the implementation of the Management Plan. The Management Plan needs to represent a broad range of functions and interests and should include tourism and recreation, business and industry, fisheries and aquaculture, maritime and shipping, nature, wildlife and environment, transport, agriculture, energy, cultural heritage and archaeology, oceanology and any others not yet mentioned. The integrated management plan should bring various sectoral strategies and programmes, with their stakeholders, together in an ongoing process towards a more integrated management of the Black Sea coastal zone
(
Figure 2).

According to the initial planning vision development with stakeholders would take place in 2007 to be followed by the drafting of the management plan in 2008. Initial ideas to develop the integrated management plan involved the application of a seven steps technique as outlined in table 1 and figure 3. By using this technique a programme of actions (projects) should be defined that optimise the use of available instruments and maximize contribution to achieving the objectives. After the integral assessment of the programme (step 7) authorities should formally approve the integrated management plan.

Being an open planning process MyCoast has to communicate broadly with stakeholders and the public at large. Therefore at the start of the project a communication strategy, with media plan and website (www.MyCoast.eu), has been developed. The media attention for the project (radio, television, printed press and internet) so far shows a general interest in the Dutch approach and what happens on and with the Black Sea coast.

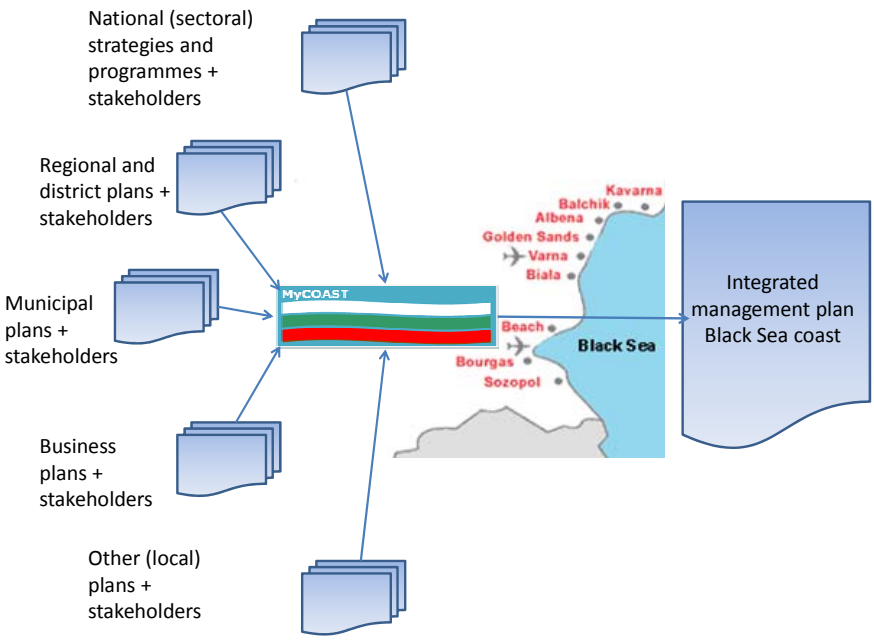

Figure 2: The MyCoast project towards an integrated management plan for the Black Sea coast

Step	Activity	Result
1	Create an overview of (sectoral) objectives from relevant strategy and operational programmes	A comprehensive overview of what different sectoral objectives and priorities are.
2	Structure the policy objectives into a hierarchy, working from abstract (qualitative) to more concrete (quantitative)	Identified and combined overlapping objectives and cluster of related objectives
3	Make a graphical representation in a "hierarchy of objectives"	Interdependent relationships between objectives made visible in a graphical display
4	For each objective list the potential (sectoral) instruments	An overview of legal, economic, communication, direct/indirect influence, general/specific instruments
5	Link the instruments to objectives with indication of expected effect	Insight into positive and negative effects of instruments on policy objectives. The *total* effectiveness of an instrument is the effect on each individual objective (horizontal column in Figure 1)
6	Determine the effect per objective	Insight into total effect of the various instrument on a policy objective (vertical column in Figure 3)
7	Determine the total effect across all objectives	Integral assessment of a programme or strategy.

Table 1: Getting insight in mutual interdependencies between objectives and instruments

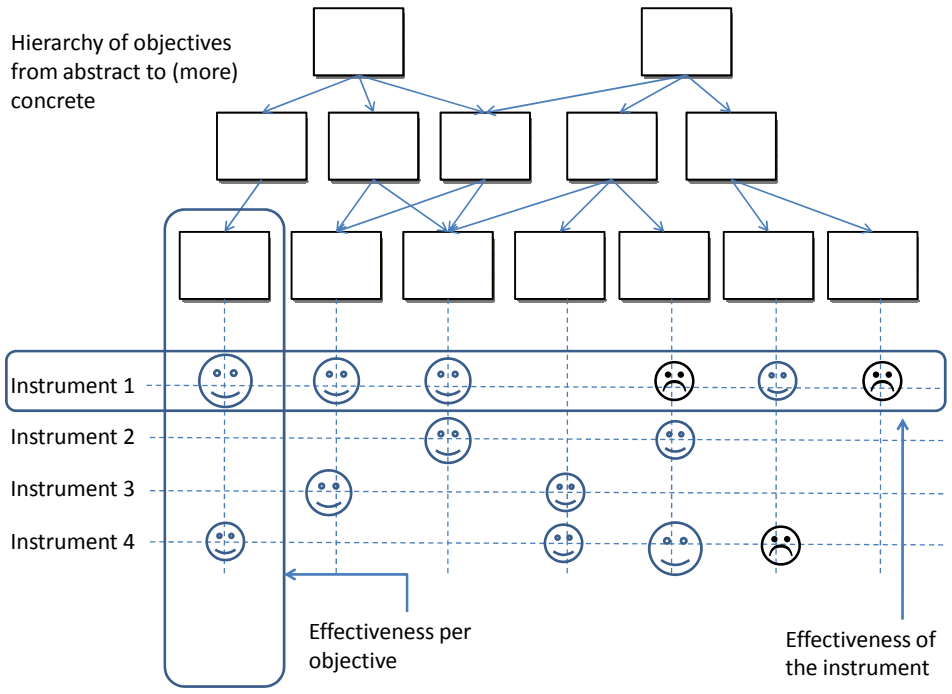

Figure 3: Graphic representation of mutual interdependencies of policy objectives and instruments

7 Initial project activities

During the first months of 2007 preparatory work was done. Several meetings have been organised to involve the Bulgarian stakeholders in the process. In February 2007 team members introduced the project team and project purpose and approach in meetings with representative organisations from tourism, business, NGOs, municipalities, ministries and district administrations. They were asked to provide access to their networks and to recruit participants for the visionary workshops. During April, May and July 2007 the first round of visionary workshops and meetings took place on the coast. Aware of the competing interests the decision was made to organise the workshops along sectoral lines so that initially sectoral visions would be developed. During one-day sessions representatives from municipalities, tourism, environmental NGOs, business and industries were asked to draft sectoral visions. First they had to identify main external forces or trends, secondly to determine the impacts of these trends on the stakeholders, thirdly to respond to the trends and finally to formulate a vision for the future.

Between July and October 2007 the MyCoast team has identified overlap, compatibilities and tensions between the sectoral visions. This identification has resulted in several topic papers (tourism and recreation, business and industry, fisheries and aquaculture, maritime and shipping, nature, wildlife and environment, transport, agriculture, energy, cultural heritage and archaeology, oceanology). Topic papers address current status of the topic,

relevant stakeholders and regulatory framework and trends with their impacts on stakeholders and other activities.

7 Preliminary evaluation of the MyCoast Project

For introduction and invitation we assumed representative organisations would give access to stakeholder groups. However participation in the workshops has been disappointing both in quantity and quality of people. Given the expressed concern by many stakeholders about the rapid development of the coast we assumed a greater willingness to participate than it turned out to be. During the sessions discussion had to be translated simultaneously, which complicates spontaneous and enthusiastic communications. Moreover stakeholders have difficulties to use their imagination when they were asked to sketch a dream of an ideal coastal area. A lack of experience with forecasting methods was identified.

From the first sessions and meetings with stakeholders, it also became clear that at present stakeholders show a lack of trust in political administrative systems. Only a small group of project developers and investors are said to have influence on decision makers. This group highly benefits from short-term investments in tourists' resorts at the moment. A lack of trust and therefore cooperation between the national and municipal level became manifest too. At the national level main idea is that coastal municipalities don't properly manage the resources. Municipalities feel that Sofia impinges upon their autonomy.

It appeared that the MyCoast project lacked Bulgarian ownership. Political will and ability to put ideas into effect were missing and public political support for the project had to grow. The Black Sea Basin Directorate (BSBD) has not accepted the chapter in the inception report concerning possible form and function of the legislative body for ICZM as they feel their objections have not been addressed in the new version of the report. The BSBD wanted to have clear in the Inception report what structure; tasks and authority the legislative body will have, while other partners see this as a project result. No Inter-ministerial steering committee meeting has been organised so far as major parties made clear that they need a decision making document to come together.

Project participants could not be transformed into problem owners. Main reason behind this is the level of abstraction of the project. The approach to develop a Vision for the whole coast for 2030 was too abstract to be relevant to coastal regions dealing with today's issues. For most stakeholders the scale chosen lacks relevance, as stakeholders' benefits don't manifest themselves on this scale. Our invitation did not clarify the benefits to stakeholder from participation in the MyCoast process. It was not clear for stakeholders what would be the results and who would be responsible for implementation.

The project team has decided to change the approach to overcome these problems. More personal introductions by team members were considered necessary to get a better

stakeholder understanding of the project approach and an improved stakeholder participation. Moreover it is expected that a shift of geographical scale to the district (Oblast) level would improve project performance. The Oblast level seemed to be a better scale as it's easier for stakeholders to identify with. Furthermore the District level seemed to be the most appropriate as in the near future an intermediary coordinating unit between state and municipalities will be needed. The Oblast has the legal authority to play this role. On this level it is also easier to apply for European funding. Bulgaria has 7 Operational Programmes to implement EU Structural Policies. So, instead of one vision for the whole coast three separate visions for the three Oblasts will be developed. In a later stadium these will be combined in one vision for the entire coast. In each Oblast pilot areas with competing land claims and interests and consisting of at least two municipalities were sought to develop management plans. Five pilot areas have been approached. Three - Dobrich, Varna and Bourgas - will function as pilots (see the map in figure 2).

8 Pilot projects

In November and December 2007 three multi-stakeholder meetings have been organised during which challenges for the pilot areas were identified. During earlier visits to the areas issue papers had been drafted which served as inputs for these meetings (POVVIK, 2008).

In Dobrich participants agreed that Dobrich needs to develop from a white spot on the map to a region recognised for its ecological agriculture and high quality tourism. Protection of the environment and nature are important to achieve this to combat erosion, improve water quality and adapt to the effects of climate change. Developing a long term vision and strategy for the coastal zone is considered relevant and important for sustainable economic growth. Apart from the District also Balchik municipality and Albena resort are willing to cooperate.

In Varna the discussion centred on the issue that the infrastructure of the eastern port is out of date and its location close to the city centre limits expansion both for the city and the port. Following a search along the coast a new site on lake Varna has been selected as best option to relocate the port. In the discussion that followed it became clear that the redevelopment of Port Varna East is more complex than simply site relocation and there is no universal agreement on the inland site as part of it is nominated as Natura 2000 area. There is however agreement that the port is of socio-economic importance to Varna and the wider region and could even be developed as a symbol for the city. This forms a basis for intra-regional cooperation between the many different stakeholders.

Also in Bourgas participants recognise integrated coastal zone management as a useful approach that should be linked with the city's (spatial) master plan which is to be completed by the end of 2008; the need for coordinated planning of economic and infrastructure development, nature protection and people is recognised. The advantages Bourgas has by being on the Black sea and having three lakes needs to be fully

developed. Its port and industry are of key importance for the municipality and wider region. Industry and business are quite ambitious having ideas for a new petrochemical plant that meets strict environmental standards, for the development and expansion of the port, the construction of a new pipeline and of new oil and gas terminals. Further challenges concern the improvement of waste management and the avoidance of traffic problems; sewage and waste water treatment plants need upgrading and polluted industrial sites need to be cleaned up; underlying this is the need for data collection, monitoring and information systems to provide input to decision making. There are also ambitions to improve the living environment by providing more green space and in particular to create an attractive sea front that is accessible for residents and can be reached by bike.

Quality and quantity of stakeholder meetings has improved greatly after the range of individual meetings last year and by focussing much more on the local aspect in the pilot regions. As a result the round table meetings were visited by good quality and broad representation of stakeholders. Political support is growing (the Bourgas round table for instance being hosted by the mayor) but needs further improvement. In the three pilot areas the voice phase has resulted in a first definition of challenges. This will be continued during the first months of 2008 after which ways to address the challenges will be identified during the agora stage. At the moment of writing decisions have to be made on the uploading of the pilot visions into a vision for the entire coastal zone. Plan is to organise a public event during which relevant deputy ministers/directors and mayors of the pilot regions endorse the Vision and sign a high-level memorandum of cooperation

9 Concluding remarks

As the project started only one year ago it is too early for a final evaluation. The MyCoast project is a challenge and a learning process for all participants. The major challenge for 2008 will be to influence present conditions in Bulgaria in order to transfer the integrated area successfully. Some conditions seem to be present already. A certain shared sense of urgency in Bulgarian society to improve the quality of the coastal area is manifest. Many stakeholders perceive the coastal situation as unsustainable and undesirable but they feel to have a lack of control over development. The Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works has announced that by the end of the year (2007) they will initiate the development of a national spatial scheme. This scheme could be helpful by structuring and absorbing the results from future projects initiatives. EU funding will be available to finance these initiatives. However administrative capacities should be further developed. Moreover, stakeholders should get a better insight into their mutual interdependence and in the role they have to play. Pilot projects will hopefully improve these conditions. On the pilot level it will be easier for stakeholders to participate and to find consensus options and package deals that will be accepted in the formal political decision making processes and by the public at large. If this is the case the added value of the integrated area approach can be shown soon.

Concluding, transferring the integrated area approach to Bulgaria is not a copy-paste activity but requires efforts, skills and creativity of all participants in order to avoid double Dutch situations.

References

Black Sea Commission (2007), Methodology for Spatial Planning within Integrated Coastal Zone Management, Available on the world wide web: http://www.blacksea-commission.org/main.htm, Accessed July 25th 2007.

Dieperink, C. and S. Steyn (2005), In the spirit of Europe? Five Dutch coastal zone projects as perceived from the European Recommendation on Integrated Coastal Zone Management (in Dutch) Utrecht, Copernicus Institute for Sustainable Development and Innovation.

Driessen, P.P.J., P. Glasbergen and C. Verdaas (2001), Interactive policy-making – a model of management for public works, in: European Journal of Operational Research 128, pp. 322-337.

Driessen, P.P.J., H. Goverde and P. Leroy (2007), Milieubeleid als interactievraagstuk, in: Peter Driessen and Pieter Leroy (eds), Milieubeleid, Coutinho Bussum.

Edelenbos, J. (2005), Institutional implication of interactive governance: insights from Dutch practice, Governance, an international journal of policy administration and institutions, Vol. 18, nr. 1, p. 111-134

Enthoven, G.M.W and A. de Rooij, Infralab, Impuls voor open planvorming en creativiteit, Bestuurskunde, volume 5, nr. 8, pp. 392-398.

European Union (1999) Towards a European Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) Strategy: General Principles and Policy Options, Demonstration Programme, Luxembourg, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

European Union (2002), Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2002 concerning the implementation of Integrated Coastal Zone Management in Europe (2002/413/EC), Official Journal of the European Communities, 2002: L 148/24.

Geul, A (2005), Policy construction, co production and communication, Six methods to develop policy (in Dutch), Second Revised Edition, Utrecht, Lemma.

Glasbergen, P (2002) The green polder model: institutionalizing multi-stakeholder processes in strategic environmental decision-making, European Environment 12, p. 303-315.

Glasbergen, P. and P.P.J. Driessen (2005), Interactive Planning of Infrastructure: the changing role of Dutch project management, in Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy, vol. 23, p. 263-277.

Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Fisheries (2001), Evaluation of the policy for Valuable Man-made Landscapes, Second Chamber 04-04-2001 (in Dutch), Available on the worldwide web:
http://www.minlnv.nl/portal/page?_pageid=116,1640937&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL&p_news_item_id=18303, Accessed July 18th 2007.

Minister Veerman positive about Reconstruction (in Dutch) (2006), Natuurnet, Available on the worldwide web: http://www.natuurnet.nl/thema/artikel991.html, Accessed July 18th 2007.
PEGASUS (2004), The PEGASUS Files, A practical guide to integrated area-based urban planning, EUROCITIES, November 2004.
POVVIK (2008), My Coast, Elaboration of a Vision and a Strategy for Integrated Coastal Zone Management in Bulgaria, Progress Report 3, POVVIK Utrecht.
Project Mainportontwikkeling Rotterdam (200&): Voortgangsrapportage 2, Brief van de Minister van Verkeer en Waterstaat Camiel Eurlings aan de voorzitter van de Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal, 28 september 2007, DGTL/PMR/07/008525/d46.
Provincie Zuid-Holland (2008), Project Mainport Rotterdam, Available on the World Wide Web: http://www.zuid-holland.nl/index/overzicht_alle_themas/thema_programma_en_projecten/pmr.htm Accessed, January 10th 2008.
Snoeren, B (2007), EC Working Group ICZM, personal communication May 2007.
UNEP (2007), Global Plan of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities, Available on the wordwide web: http://www.gpa.unep.org/content.html?id=199, Accessed July 25th, 2007.