

# Coastal Guide ICZM Information System

## 1. Key data

Project title:	Integrated management of the Flemish coast (West Flanders)
Country:	Belgium
Project phase:	study and planning
Launch:	1998
End:	2001
National funding:	749.767 in euros
EC-funding:	925.474 in euros for the three partners (Belgium, Greece, Portugal)
EC project references:	TERRA Network no.85 CZM
Lead partner:	Ministry of the Flemish Community
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Project website:	<a href="http://www.terracczm.gr">www.terracczm.gr</a>
Project area:	Belgian coast. The terrestrial component is entirely situated in the Flemish Region while the territorial sea is essentially still a federal Belgian competence. The coastal zone itself comprises a sand beach, backed by a discontinuous dune belt behind which is a low plain, which gradually rises as one moves inland.
Area size (land): (water):	The Belgian coast is approximately 65 km long yes
Population size:	Belgium: 10 239 085 inhabitants, Flanders: 5 940 251 inhabitants; West-Flanders: 1 128 774 inhabitants.
Policy background:	Human intervention makes it difficult to appreciate the natural erosion of the Flemish coast. Overall, approximately 50 per cent of the Flemish coast is erosive. Almost all the creation can be attributed to human intervention such as beach nourishment and the construction of long groynes.
Important sectors in the project set-up:	coastal defence, nature, tourism, environment, spatial planning.
Main aim:	The preparations for the development of a strategy for ICZM. A close and sustained collaboration between the administrations competent for coastal management; The development of a more dynamic coastal defence policy;

Expected results: A close and sustained collaboration between the administrations competent for nature conservation and for coastal protection.  
First draft for priorities for ICZM for Belgium, first draft of a strategy for ICZM. Set-up of a steering group for ICZM, involving administrations from the different policy levels.

## 2. Collaboration & integration

Objectives re collaboration & integration: co-operation between different policy levels.  
Ministries formally involved\*: The federal Belgian environment ministry  
Regions (county, province) formally involved\*: Flemish environment administrations, province of West-Flanders  
Municipalities (towns) formally involved\*: none  
Problems encountered: The project identified a role for the Regional Government in providing a bridge between the National Government which has responsibility for offshore activities and the provincial government which has already made excellent progress in achieving horizontal coordination. While the entire coast falls within one province, the Province does not have the administrative competency to deal with issues of national importance.  
Main achievements: Proposal for ICZM strategy and priority action plan for the Belgian coast.

## 3. Participation

Objectives re participation: Involve all relevant administrations in the first phase. In a later phase also sectors, actors and citizens.  
Environment stakeholders formally involved\*: yes,  
The Inter-cabinet Guidance Group/ Steering Group for ICZM. An initiative of the Flemish Region, established in 1994, and formalised by a Flemish Government Communication in 1995. It comprises regional and federal 'cabinets' and administrations; NGOs by invitation and a Task Group responsible for projects (TERRA, LIFE etc.). There are also regular meetings at the provincial level bringing together the coastal municipalities. The meetings seek a common approach to locally managed issues such as control of jet skis, and water quality monitoring.  
-A protocol is being developed to formalise the Federal-Region co-operation and requirements for consultation on relevant activities.  
Economic development stakeholders formally involved\*: no  
Public hearings: 0  
Public access to project data: Yes, but final report not ready at present - april 2001, Several summaries of studies can be found on the website: [www.terracczm.gr](http://www.terracczm.gr)  
Main achievements: The Province of West Flanders has established links with coastal neighbours in France and The Netherlands.

Problems encountered:

#### **4. Information**

Objectives re information: Information to the broad public about the TERRA-project in general, and about ICZM in Belgium.

Main achievements: 2 seminars on ICZM organised in November 1999, and in May 2000.

Problems encountered: A legal framework has to be worked out

#### **5. Policy aspects, relevance and success:**

##### **Legal Jurisdictional issues:**

Project objectives: New legislation concerning the marine environment is in preparation, which will, for example, require an *EIS* for certain activities at sea.

Main achievements: Inventory and study of the problems for constructions on beach and dike. The study resulted in a framework for permissions of beach and dike constructions in the future.

Problems encountered:

##### **Environment:**

Project objectives: Nature conservation is an important theme within the frame of ICZM. Nature conservation was also a main objective in the re-arrangement of a dune area De Fonteintjes.

Main achievements: (1) special attention for nature conservation in ICZM strategy and action plan.  
(2) re-arrangement of the dune area De Fonteintjes.

Problems encountered:

##### **Biodiversity conservation:**

Project objectives: Enhancement of biodiversity in the coastal ecosystem; protection of specific red list species.

Main achievements: Effort is jointly being made by the federal Belgian and regional Flemish environment administrations, together with the most important NGO's, for the restoration and management of the remaining coastal natural habitats. These efforts are granted support from the European Community as the LIFE Nature project "Integral Coastal Conservation Initiative". Disused land has also become available which is providing opportunities for habitat restoration

Problems encountered:

##### **Economic development:**

Project objectives: Long term promotion strategy to improve image for tourists. Quality is the most important factor, not quantity!

Main achievements: co-operation with tourist sector. The province of West-Flanders is drawing up a strategic plan for coastal tourism.

Problems encountered: North Sea tourism has declined in recent decades, and many coastal resort areas such as Ostende are left with a legacy of under-used accommodation along the coastal strip.

##### **Spatial planning & zoning:**

Project objectives: The provincial structure plan will serve the ICZM planning strategy.

Main achievements:

Problems encountered:

##### **Coastal defence:**

Project objectives: The most important dune- and salt marsh-areas along the Flemish coast are formally designated in terms of nature

conservation or scenic interest: state nature reserves, private nature reserves, special protection areas, Ramsar sites, green areas and protected landscapes. The main pressures facing important nature conservation sites are from general urbanisation, recreation, watercaptation, intensification of fishery and agriculture etc.

Main achievements: Action is being taken, however, to overcome these pressures: removing camping-sites from sensitive dune-areas, restricting the further urban development

Problems encountered: In West Flanders, human intervention makes it difficult to appreciate the natural erosion of the Flemish coast. However, approximately two thirds of the Flemish coast is erosive.

## 6. Progress & Continuity

Follow-up: Set-up of a co-ordination structure for ICZM, as a co-operation between the Flemish government and the province of West-Flanders. This Project is starting in the summer of 2001.

## 7. Sources

Project Report online: Final project report of TERRA-CZM will be ready in the summer of 2001

\*) formally involved means: as a project partner or represented in a project committee.

Version authorised by project co-ordinator

*Prepared by Mr. Peter de Wolf at the Ministry of the Flemish Community, Belgium*

### Bibliography:

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Thematic Study A, *Legal and Regulatory Bodies: Appropriateness to ICZM*, 1999

Thematic Study B, *Participation in the ICZM Processes: Mechanisms and Procedures Needed*, 1999

Thematic Study C, *Role and use of Technology in Relation to ICZM*, 1999

Thematic Study D, *Planning and Management Processes: Sectoral and Territorial Co-operation*, 1999

