



Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean Large Marine Ecosystem

**MedPartnership**

Together for the Mediterranean Sea



## National ICZM Strategies

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Guidelines for the preparation of National ICZM Strategies required by the Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) Protocol for the Mediterranean

**DRAFT**

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## Introduction

### Purpose

The core purpose of these Guidelines is to assist countries to strengthen or formulate national strategies for Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) as required by the Protocol on Integrated Coastal Zone Management in the Mediterranean (ICZM Protocol). The ICZM Protocol was signed in 2008 in Madrid and entered into force in March 2011.

Countries will elaborate or expand the strategies according to national priorities and circumstances. Where countries have an ICZM or other coastal strategy, this should be reviewed in the light of the Protocol and these Guidelines. Where countries have no National ICZM Strategies in place, one should be developed and adopted, and implementation should begin as a matter of priority.

In particular, Article 18.1 requires that:

*“Each Party shall further strengthen or formulate a national strategy for integrated coastal zone management and coastal implementation plans and programmes consistent with the common regional framework and in conformity with the integrated management objectives and principles of this Protocol and shall inform the Organization about the coordination mechanism in place for this strategy.”*

These guidelines are based on the interpretation of the Protocol with regard to the format, content and provisions of the National ICZM Strategies. The Guidelines are also designed to encourage consistency. It should also be emphasised that the provisions of the Protocol are without prejudice to stricter provisions respecting the protection and management of the coastal zone that may be developed, or contained in other existing or future national or international instruments or programmes (Article 4.3).

A further purpose of these Guidelines and accompanying advice is to help ensure that the *quality* of the implementation of ICZM in the Mediterranean matches the high aspirations of the Protocol.

The Guidelines, as well as a review of good practice in the national strategies all around the world, have been prepared within the GEF “MedPartnership” project (Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean Sea Large Marine Ecosystem). Special contribution to these Guidelines is a report “Integrating climate change into the ICZM planning process”, also prepared within the same project. The Guidelines will support the preparation of pilot National ICZM Strategies in two GEF eligible states, Algeria and Montenegro. Feedback from the two experiences will help improve the Guidelines for the benefit of the entire Mediterranean coastal community.

A brief description of a Strategy preparation process is provided in these Guidelines. A more detailed guidance on the ICZM process, which is to be applied for the preparation of the National ICZM Strategies too, is available at: [://www.pegasoproject.eu/wiki/ICZM\\_Process](http://www.pegasoproject.eu/wiki/ICZM_Process)

The Process will be constantly upgraded within the PEGASO project, funded under the EU Framework 7 programme.

Finally, these Guidelines represent a starting point for the new GEF project “Integration of climatic variability and change into national strategies to implement the ICZM Protocol in the Mediterranean”. They will also serve as a basis for the development of an Outline for the National ICZM Strategies tailored for the Adriatic countries within the framework of the IPA Adriatic SHAPE project (Shaping an holistic approach to protect the Adriatic environment between coast and sea) and will be used, as appropriate, within the EU MAREMED project, with which synergies are being established. On the other hand, findings of these projects will be reflected in the Guidelines, which are conceived as a “living support document” to be permanently upgraded at PAP/RAC.

### The ICZM Protocol

The approval and ratification process of the ICZM Protocol in the past two years has raised considerably the profile of ICZM in the Mediterranean. One of its key provisions is the requirement for the preparation of National ICZM Strategies along with the implementation of coastal plans and programmes in conformity with the objectives and principles of the Protocol.

In accordance with Article 18 therefore, National ICZM Strategies should facilitate the sustainable development of the coastal zone. Integration will be the key to achieving this purpose: the Strategies should provide a national framework for improving environmental, economic and social performance in an integrated manner.

The preparation of National ICZM Strategies and these Guidelines is a key output of the **Action Plan for the Implementation of the ICZM Protocol for the Mediterranean, 2012 – 2019**.

### Benefits of ICZM

ICZM can deliver improved environmental, economic and social performance through:

- Reducing direct damage and costs to the coast as a consequence of both natural processes such as erosion and flooding, and of human impacts such as congestion and overdevelopment;
- Preventing coastal pollution and the over-exploitation of natural resources;
- Mitigating coastal pollution and its economic and human costs;
- Mitigating the over-exploitation of natural coastal resources;
- Enhancing coastal zone outputs for economic sectors;
- Preserving unique coastal ecosystems along with their habitats and species;
- Preserving the cultural heritage, landscapes and geomorphology of coastal zones;
- Maximising coastal ecosystem services including: climate regulation, water resource conservation and supply, erosion and pollution prevention, biological controls, food and raw material security and production, genetic resource protection, along with

recreational, educational and cultural services;

- Maximising economic efficiency of business on the coast including: improving the environmental performance of coastal industries, reducing economic conflicts in space and time between competing uses, maintaining or restoring the benefit of the coastal landscape for the attraction and maximising of investment and tourism;
- Promoting social cohesion and improving the quality of life for coastal communities.

The cost of policy inaction is plain to see in terms of the most widely recognised indicators of development, pollution and environmental degradation, and is well documented elsewhere (“A Sustainable Future for the Mediterranean, The Blue Plan’s Environment and Development Outlook” 2005). Unfortunately, this “policy-off” condition predominated in the Mediterranean for many years. The Protocol represents a unique Mediterranean-wide commitment to reverse that condition.

### The Nature of National ICZM Strategies

The very qualities of the ICZM Protocol itself should be reflected in the National ICZM Strategies. These qualities of the ICZM Protocol are:

- **Innovative** – it represents innovation in international law;
- **Forward-looking and proactive** - preventing and not only reacting to coastal problems;
- **Comprehensive** - covering all issues crucial for coastal environment and its protection in the 21st century;
- **Integrated** - ensuring institutional co-ordination, co-ordination of national, regional and local authorities, involvement of non-governmental organisations and other competent organisations.

The presumption in the General Principles of the Protocol (Article 6) is that all sectors are of importance in the ecosystem approach - achieving the optimal combination of the approaches within a common spatial and temporal context. National ICZM Strategies should therefore represent all sectors. Sectoral integration should achieve optimal solutions rather than mere compromises or distortions due to institutional policy and funding priorities.

These Guidelines are based on the best available experience from around the world and the current “state-of-the-art” in ICZM and related fields. They are formulated by the Priority Actions Programme Regional Activity Centre (PAP/RAC), which is entrusted in Article 32 of the Protocol with assisting and supporting the Parties in its implementation. In the preparation of the National ICZM Strategies in the Mediterranean, PAP/RAC, together with other MAP Components, shall assist countries in ensuring appropriate integration of national priorities. The same applies to the MAP Components’ work on the ecosystem approach (EcAp), which is to be duly reflected in the National ICZM Strategies.

**The key features of the National ICZM Strategies for the Mediterranean will be:**

- **Inclusive stakeholder involvement in their preparation and implementation**
- **Approval at highest political level and high-level inter-ministerial co-ordination**
- **Focus on harmonisation and alignment with other relevant plans and policies, including climate change, and an effective regulatory framework**
- **Include strategies for communication, financing and capacity building for ICZM**
- **Focus on implementation, delivering tangible results on the ground**
- **Include the coastal zone in its entirety including territorial waters, integrating both land and sea**
- **A platform for the preparation and implementation of coastal plans and programmes, for transboundary and for international co-operation**

National ICZM Strategies should be reviewed regularly, based on the monitoring indicators defined during the strategy development, and updated in accordance with evolving conditions.



## Orientations of National ICZM Strategies

Building on both good practice and criticism of previous strategies and plans from around the world, the following orientations for the National ICZM Strategies in the Mediterranean are proposed:

### 1. Political Recognition

National ICZM Strategies should recognise the political context of ICZM and not be over-reliant on their technical merits. They should seek to influence policy beyond the remit of the national ministry or agency immediately responsible for ICZM.

### 2. Intra-Governmental and Inter-Ministerial Co-ordination

The harmonisation of the approaches to coastal issues across the higher levels of government and key sectors is essential. The ICZM Strategy should set out the practical form and scope of the institutional structures required to achieve harmonisation and effective co-ordination, in particular to break out of the narrow perception of ICZM as primarily an environmental activity and fully integrate climate change, social and economic development, the marine sector and others.

### 3. Partnerships and Ownership

In addition to the harmonisation on coastal issues across the higher levels of government, ICZM requires a wider partnership and ownership across civil society, between all levels of government, and with individual citizens. The National ICZM Strategy should therefore set the framework for this wider engagement through participative structures, capacity building and awareness-raising.

### 4. Legal Basis

National ICZM Strategies should identify how ICZM can be given a legal basis - either in the form of primary legislation - or through duties and responsibilities horizontally across government and sectors, and vertically between various levels of government and other key actors.

### 5. Long-term

ICZM has been predominantly characterised as a short-term, locally based project activity. National ICZM Strategies should put in place measures that ensure ICZM will be an on-going activity leading to sustainable development of the coastal zone. The National ICZM Strategy should set objectives within a 10-15 year time frame, but these will operationalise the aspirations of longer-term crosscutting strategies such as climate change or the provisions of shorter-term sectoral programmes.

## 6. Focus on Implementation

There is a consensus that ICZM should focus on implementation, delivering tangible results on the ground. Strategies and plans should be ambitious and prescriptive, but at the same time include realistic action plans for implementation. Capacity building and financial proposals should be integral. A Strategy's success or failure will depend on its ability to catalyze change. This is what matters - not the specific process, not the form of the strategy document - but whether or not it results in positive action.

## 7. Include Territorial Waters

National ICZM Strategies should extend to the seaward limit of the coastal zone, which shall be the external limit of the territorial sea, in accordance with Article 3 of the Protocol. This will require the involvement of the relevant marine government departments and sectors.

## 8. Fit for Purpose

National ICZM Strategies should use "fit for purpose" information and concentrate on key environmental, economic and social issues rather than attempt to be exhaustively comprehensive in collecting and analysing all sectoral data, or producing the new ones.

## 9. Time Scale and Review

Typically, National ICZM Strategies will establish governance mechanisms and priorities for the coast for a 10-15 year period with the provision for regular review during this period. National ICZM Strategies will include the facility for review over defined time period to reflect evolving conditions.

## 10. Accessible Style

Communication is the key – enabling partners and stakeholders to visualise the problems, potential futures, and to find solutions. Strategy documents should not be over-technical, be clearly written and in a widely accessible style and format.

## Relationship to Coastal Plans and Programmes

The expression of the National ICZM Strategies *in detail* at the sub-national and local scales will be in the form of coastal plans and programmes – the priority areas and themes which should be identified in the National ICZM Strategy.

**The concept is of the National ICZM Strategy within a hierarchy of international and national policies to plans and programmes at the local scale, "nested" within each other, and increasing in detail closer to the local scale (see diagram below).**

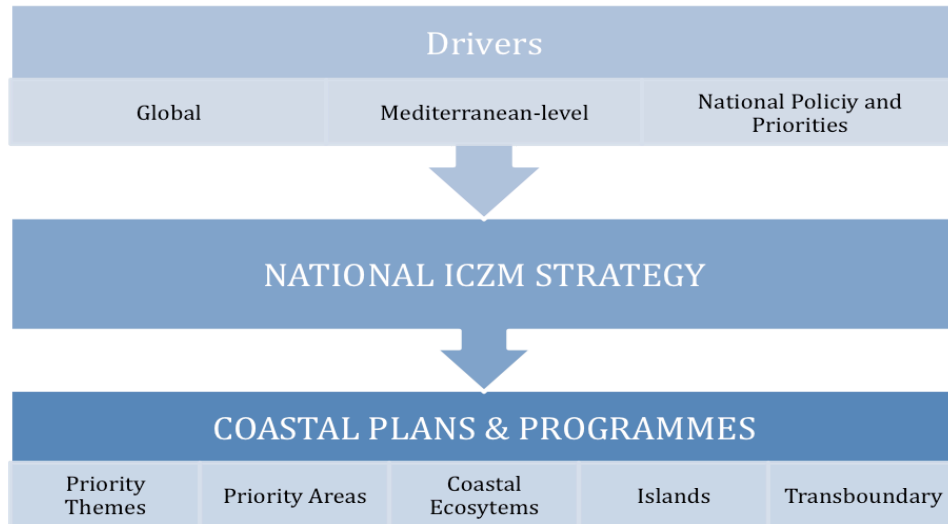
The coastal plans and programmes either self-standing, or integrated in other plans and programmes shall specify the orientations of the National ICZM Strategy and implement it at an appropriate territorial level.

The exact number and complexity of plans will depend on national circumstances, in particular the extent and variety of the coastal zone and its issues. In countries with relatively short coastlines, both strategy and plan could be combined into a single process.

Guidance for plans at the sub-national and local level is set out in the PAP/RAC general guide through the ICZM Process that can be utilised for this purpose too, available at:

[://www.pegasoproject.eu/wiki/ICZM Process](http://www.pegasoproject.eu/wiki/ICZM_Process)

*National ICZM Strategy Hierarchy*



## Aims and Objectives of the National ICZM Strategy

### Aim

**To create the preconditions and practical mechanisms to implement the provisions and the aspirations of the ICZM Protocol for the Mediterranean at the national level.**

### Objectives of the National ICZM Strategy

The National ICZM Strategy should:

- 1. Articulate an agreed, clear national vision for the sustainable development of the coastal zone.**
- 2. Establish through governance the integration and harmonisation of multiple interests in coastal zone.**
- 3. Identify both the priorities and the means to achieve the sustainable development of the coastal zone.**

## Format and Contents of the National ICZM Strategy

*“The national strategy, based on an analysis of the existing situation, shall set objectives, determine priorities with an indication of the reasons, identify coastal ecosystems needing management, as well as all relevant actors and processes, enumerate the measures to be taken and their cost as well as the institutional instruments and legal and financial means available, and set an implementation schedule.” (Article 18.2)*

The final National ICZM Strategy and associated material should be published in both paper and accessible on-line formats. The following contents based on relevant Articles of the ICZM Protocol are shown for guidance and consistency.

The contents of the National ICZM Strategy should consist of:

1. **Endorsement**

Copy of official statement or certificate of adoption or endorsement by the responsible national authority.

2. **Introduction**

- Justification and context - the ICZM Protocol;
- Territorial Scope – the terrestrial and marine boundaries of the coastal zone and its ecosystem;
- Timeframe – typically 10-15 years including provision for regular review.

3. **Governance Structures and Participation**

Identify responsibilities for co-ordination and implementation. Long-term governance structures and processes to ensure integration, co-ordination and public participation in the coastal zone consistent with Article 14.1 of the ICZM Protocol.

4. **Vision**

The national vision for the coastal zone, and its international context.

5. **Analysis & Objectives**

Brief analysis of the current state of the coastal zone, root causes of major problems, risks and potential future scenarios; The national objectives for sustainable development of the coastal zone reflecting environmental, economic and social priorities; Identification of the key indicators to measure the success addressing these priorities.

6. **Priorities for the Coastal Zone**

Statement of priorities for the coastal zone with an indication of the reasons. This statement should set out the national priorities and links to other relevant strategies including spatial planning, environmental, natural risks, in particular climate change (Article 22), economic development, transport, etc.

7. **Identify Specific Ecosystems and Themes**

Define the specific coastal ecosystems requiring management, in particular estuaries

and wetlands so to take into account their environmental, economic and social function (Article 10); Provide for the protection of coastal landscapes (Article 11) and cultural heritage (Article 13); Recognise the specificities of islands and the necessity to ensure interaction among them (Article 12).

## 8. Means of Implementation

### ▪ Policy

Integrated and harmonised policies across government to support the sustainable development of the coast.

### ▪ Legislative & Regulatory Framework

Legislative and regulatory framework, including existing and proposed legislation. In particular, the Strategy should include proposals to meet the requirements of Article 8 of the ICZM Protocol, "Protection and Sustainable Use of the Coastal Zone".

### ▪ Economic, Financial & Fiscal Instruments

Fiscal and other economic measures, such as investment orientation, financial incentives or penalties, to be used to achieve the Strategy's objectives (Article 21).

### ▪ Land Policy

Land policy instruments and measures, including the process of planning; Mechanisms for the transfer of land to the public domain or secure its use for public benefit (Article 20).

### ▪ Partnership and Awareness Raising

Identification of key partnerships and the plan for their active involvement; Proposals for raising wide awareness of the importance of the coastal zone and its sustainable development.

## 9. Action Plan

A supporting roadmap to achieve the Strategy, i.e. an action and finance plan to deliver the Strategy over a predetermined time period, typically 3-6 years.

## 10. Proposals for Subsidiary Coastal Plans and Programmes

Proposals and guidance identifying the priority areas and the hierarchy of coastal plans and programmes at the regional and local scale to implement the Strategy at sub-national and local level.

## 11. Transboundary & International Co-operation

Identify transboundary and international issues, and the co-ordination mechanisms (Article 28).

## 12. Monitoring & Evaluation process

The frequency and nature of the monitoring and evaluation process, including the appropriate indicators in order to evaluate the effectiveness of Integrated Coastal Zone Management Strategies, Plans and Programmes as required by Article 18.4.

The outputs at the various stages of Strategy preparation plus the Strategy document itself should be concise, clearly written and well illustrated.

### *Appendices*

Supporting and technical information should be published separately as appendices, including maps defining the terrestrial and marine boundaries of the coastal zone. On-line versions and supporting material including the SEA, where appropriate, should be also designed and published.

### *International Dissemination Summary*

A summary version in a template provided by PAP/RAC should also be provided for translation and publication. The purpose of the summary is to enable dissemination, comparison and facilitating reporting of the Protocol implementation and to share good practice between Contracting Parties.

## **A Comment on Style...**

- *Coastal issues in the Mediterranean are complex, but your Strategy need not be.*
- *Complexity confuses both partners and stakeholders - and if they feel confused, they will not fully engage with the process.*
- *Too often strategies and plans become absorbed in the collection and analysis of data and information for its own sake. Too often strategies are boxed into narrow sectoral agendas, losing sight of “real life” and the real forces at work on the coast. Instead, they should focus on setting the vision - and setting a shared course towards it.*
- *Identify, but do not try to over-communicate the problems, however tempting it may be. Instead, communicate the Strategy itself – the issues, potential scenarios, the opportunities, the vision, and the solutions you agree – and keep it simple.*
- *Each stage is a target or objective in itself. For example, you may need to get a critical level of awareness about the existence of a problem, or the buy-in of key decision-makers, before you can move on. But don’t take too long or your audience will lose interest and momentum will be lost. Set an ambitious timetable.*
- *Plan the Strategy as a series of steps, one leading to the next - like dominoes – each one building on the stage before. This process sets out the Strategy formulation and implementation process as a series of discrete steps – the “stepping stones”.*
- *Stages can be overlapped or changed according to local circumstances. But the real test of a Strategy’s success or failure depends on its ability to catalyze change. This is what matters - not the specific process, not the form of the strategy document, but whether or not it results in positive action and a more sustainable Mediterranean coast.*



## Preparing the National ICZM Strategy

Based on the experience of ICZM around the world, and the Mediterranean in particular, a brief description of a Strategy preparation process is set out below.

The Process is described in 5 key stages:

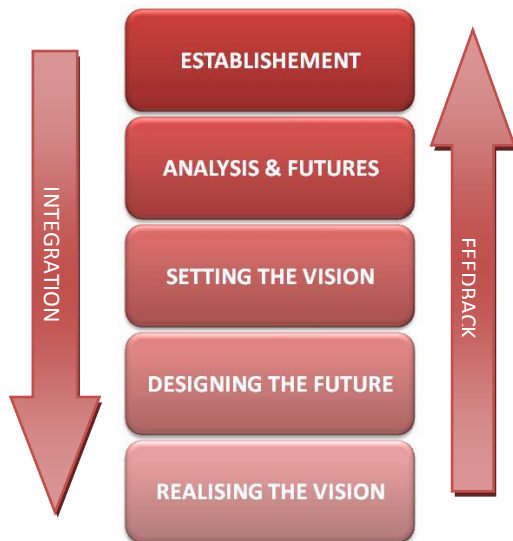
**Establishment ➤ Analysis & Futures ➤ Setting the Vision ➤ Designing the Future ➤ Realising the Vision**

These 5 stages provide convenient milestones around which to design the roadmap for Strategy preparation, consultation and reporting.

A more detailed elaboration of the ICZM Process is at: [://www.pegasoproject.eu/wiki/ICZM Process](http://www.pegasoproject.eu/wiki/ICZM_Process) This process will be continuously upgraded in depth in the frame of the EU FP7 PEGASO Project.

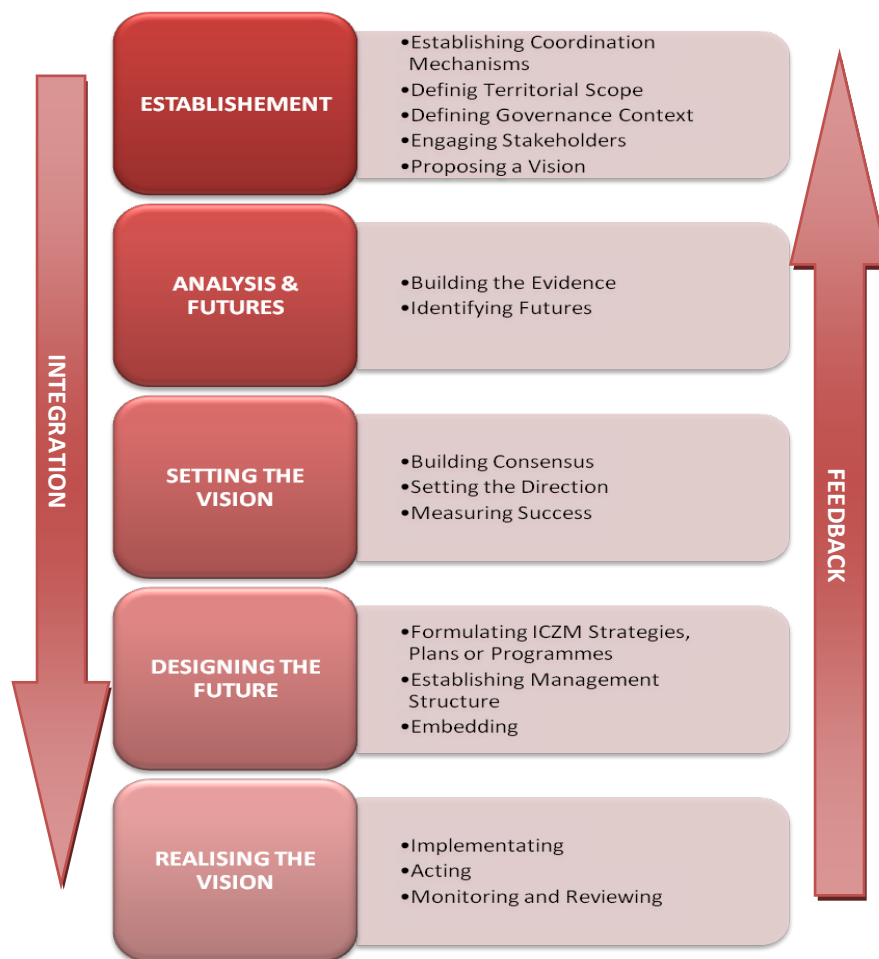
It is envisaged that the National ICZM Strategy process will take a maximum of two years from initiation to the adoption and publication of the final Strategy. Maintaining the momentum of debate and demonstrating sustained progress is a key component of engaging stakeholders on the process.

*However, it is important to note that the publication and approval of the National ICZM Strategy is not an end in itself – it is just the beginning of the achievement of sustainable coastal zone development through ICZM.*



The diagram illustrates the basic flow – the “stepping stones” - upon which to build a more detailed work plan for the preparation of the National ICZM Strategy.

## Key Points in the Process



*Deepening integration and continuous improvement*

### *Integration*

The process is as important as the outcome – the preparation of the Strategy should in itself deepen the integration.

### *Feedback*

The process of Strategy preparation and subsequent reviews should lead to a virtuous circle of improvement.

### *Elaboration*

The process may appear relatively simple, but each stage holds significant technical and political challenges. In practice, the process is hardly linear and firmly structured as this diagram represents. The stages have an open ending, where numerous tasks are to be reopened and revised.

*Simplified schematic representation used to illustrate the preparation process for the National ICZM Strategy for Egypt*

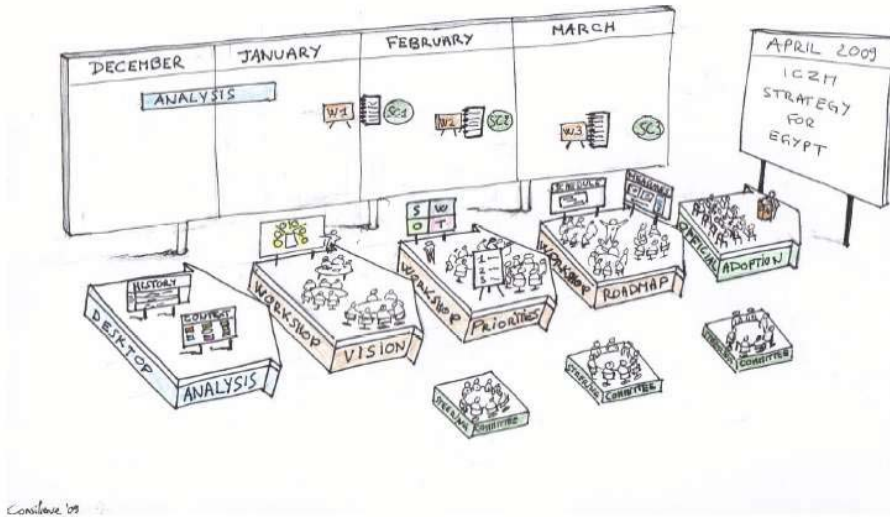


Illustration by Philippe MacClenahan

## Annex 1

### Lessons from Good Practice around the World

A review of ICZM implementation from around the world provides valuable guidance to assist Mediterranean countries in the development and/or revision of their national ICZM Strategy (full report available as separate document). The **critical success factors** for national ICZM Strategies are identified as follows:

1. *The strategy should provide a **national statement** of political intent that secures buy-in for an integrated multi-sector coastal management approach, mainly through an understanding of why the coast is important, in political and economic term.*
2. *The strategy should outline a **normative framework** including the vision, principles, goals and objectives for coastal and marine management.*
3. *The strategy should present a **Plan of Action** that provides clear direction for taking action to improve the co-ordination and integration of sectoral activities affecting the coast, as well as strengthening other policies and building capacity to implement the policy.*
4. *The strategy should not attempt to address all issues of concern but rather should focus attention on **agreed-upon priority issues** that are uniquely coastal and specifically require a coastal policy response.*
5. *The strategy should focus on issues that can be successfully addressed and its implementation must result in **tangible changes** that improve the livelihood of coastal population.*

Other specific issues identified by the review include:

1. **Coastal management efforts** may be single-issue initiatives focusing on a single or a limited number of coastal problems, more comprehensive with a cross-sectoral approach, or joint initiatives with integrated maritime policies as a crucial governance tool from the land-sea interface to offshore waters.
2. The particular context and experiences that generated each ICZM model appear to be **unique to that country** or region and are a function of a host of legal, political, social and cultural factors.
3. The **fisheries sector** is rarely included into ICZM planning. Notwithstanding the difficulties that may be involved, ICZM cannot be achieved without such an important sector being factored into the planning process.
4. Coastal management requires local action. **Local government involvement** is therefore essential to the successful implementation of the various economic development and environmental management policies and action plans forwarded by central government, but local governments are rarely involved in the design of the policies and programmes.

5. Disparities between capacities of central and local governments are another factor contributing to weak implementation. Most local governments do not have the **financial and human capacity** they require to implement the projects and programmes forwarded by central government. Often, there is a lack of legal requirement and incentives.
6. Investments in **capacity building** in support of coastal and ocean management since UNCED (1992) have been fragmented and failed to deliver the integrating knowledge, concepts and tools that are required<sup>1</sup>. Overall, fragmentation of efforts at multiple levels is the most important barrier that needs to be overcome to improve capacity building.
7. There is scant recognition of any role for **the market**. Yet, with the globalisation trend, experience tends more and more to demonstrate that it is typically market forces that dominate in shaping the trajectory of coastal change with highly variable roles for civil society.
8. To advance an understanding of the dynamics of socio-ecosystems, **sustainability science** is progressively emerging as a new academic discipline bringing together scholarship and practice, global and local perspectives from north and south, and disciplines across the natural and social sciences.
9. **Poor populations** often have a short-term vision where they focus on day-to-day pressures which are very high. Practical interventions for improving livelihood prospects for poor coastal communities should be included into the ICZM national action plan.
10. **Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)** management should be integrated into the ICZM framework in order to build on the strengths of ICZM and biodiversity conservation. A broad framework is therefore necessary to address transboundary issues affecting the protected area.
11. Marine or **Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP)** should be used throughout the ICZM process provided it may be applied well beyond local governments' area of interest, at a large marine ecosystem scale.
12. The **Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development** is particularly relevant to the existing or future national ICZM strategies since "Promoting sustainable management of the sea and coastal zones and taking urgent action to put an end to the degradation of coastal waters" is one of the priority fields of action across the four main objectives of the strategy.

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<sup>1</sup> National Research Council. 2008. *Increasing capacity for stewardship of oceans and coasts: a priority for the 21<sup>st</sup> century*. National Academy Press.

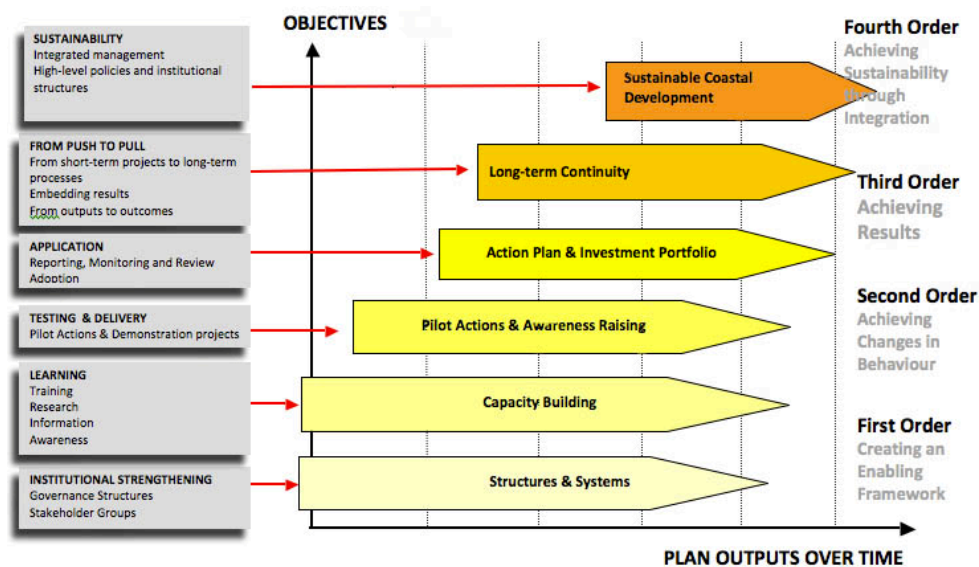
## Annex 2

### The Four Orders of Outcome

Orders of Outcomes framework (Olsen (2003)<sup>2</sup> and tested in several parts of the world provides a stepped approach to sustainable development through a sequence of tangible outcomes over time.

- The **First Order** of objectives creates an *enabling framework* - the preconditions required to successfully implement the plan of action for a coastal plan or programme. Generally these will be governance objectives e.g., whether the governance structures are in place, whether user groups affected by the program's actions understand and support its goals, management measures, and targets.
- The **Second Order** lead to *changes in behaviour* that occur during implementation: changes in the behaviour of target user groups, changes in the behaviour of key institutions and changes in how and where financial investments are made. These will be primarily about building capacity.
- The **Third Order** measures *practical results and benefits*. These Third Order Outcomes, e.g., improved water quality, justify financial investments and motivates the stakeholders and institutions to make the changes in their behaviour that sustained success requires.
- The **Fourth Order** looks at the appropriate balance between environment and human society – *sustainable development*. These are likely to be more long-term, high level in nature, embedding the outputs of the preceding as outcomes.

These are shown diagrammatically below:



<sup>2</sup> Olsen, S.B. (2003): Frameworks and indicators for assessing progress in integrated coastal management initiatives. *Ocean & Coastal Management* 46, 347-361.