

SUSTAIN

TRANSFERRING BEST PRACTICES IN SUSTAIN

Sustainable development is a key EU strategy and is vital for the future prosperity for member states. This is of particular importance on the coast, where more than one third of Europe's population live within 50km, exerting unique environmental, social and economic pressure.

In the SUSTAIN project, it was envisaged that each partner would host a meeting of the other partners in the project. This meant that twelve meetings would be held over the three year lifetime of the project. During these visits, apart from working on the policy tool which will help local/regional authorities to begin to assess their level of sustainability, the partners were shown different aspects of sustainability by the host. From these, the other partners may be able to implement that practice either directly or in a modified form. With the project now at the end of its second year, eight meetings have been held and the identification and transfer of best practice, together with the necessary policy improvements, is in full sway...



By Alan Pickaver,
SUSTAIN Project Manager

Converting organic, agricultural waste into material suitable for surfacing local footpaths - Mr. Christakis Miltiadous, President, Kouklia Community Council (CY)



The President of Kouklia Community and colleagues working with the wood shredders.

“Our community has made sustainability a standing agenda item on our agenda. Already more than 50% of our energy production is from renewable resources, compared to the overall EU Member State target of 20% by the year 2020. During my visit to the Netherlands entitled “Opportunities for new member states”, the partners were shown Dutch footpaths and cycle tracks made from local, natural products - in this case sea-shells - instead of asphalt. I discussed whether our green, organic, agricultural waste viz. trimmings could be used as an alternative viable footpath surface to the clay we currently use. Following a positive response and realising this would also improve our waste management policy, the community decided to invest €20000 in a wood-shredder earlier this year. After several months of operation, the shredder is producing ca. 4t/hr of shredded material.

This amounts to ca. 20t/day as it is only operated for about 6 hrs. It is also used only 2 days per week and so is producing 40t/week of material. This is already within the target set by the community at the onset of 300t/yr. The material is being used successfully on public footpaths, saving money on the purchase and upkeep of the traditional clay pathways. Furthermore, a surplus of material is being produced which is being used as a mulch for trees in public areas which is cutting down our water usage since less water is evaporating from the soil. Economically, the new process is also working well. Landfill for this specific waste costs us €8000/yr - 400 tonnes of this agricultural waste is usually put into landfill at a cost of €20/t. None of these costs are now needed which means that the wood-shredder will have paid for itself in 2 ½ years. Our community is now considering other options for other organic waste management schemes such as purchasing composters for domestic waste to convert waste into usable, agricultural compost. We will transfer this practice into our waste management policy. We are proud that our example has been chosen by the INTERREG IVC secretariat for presentation at the INTERREG IVC Good Practice Fair 2011 held in Krakow”.

Crossing a political divide - Ms. Caroline Salthouse, Sefton Borough Council (UK)

“The partners witnessed local organisations from across divided Turkish and Cypriot communities that have found ways of working together, building networks, co-operating on issues of common interest for positive change regardless of the political constraints, during a visit to Cyprus.



Nicosia, view of the buffer zone patrolled by the UN at the occasion of the inter-regional exchange visit to the occupied territory in Cyprus.

Sefton Borough Council recognised that the particular approaches used could be a key positive driver in North West England where marine planners across two of England's major estuaries will involve working with people and organisations who have a common goal but have differing national legislation constraints. Although the North West of England does not have divided communities, they do have land and/or sea boundaries with 5 national administrations - Wales, Scotland, Isle of Man, Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland. Only one of these is recognized by the EU as a separate nation but 2 of the major estuaries are split by administrative boundaries & the need to work across these boundaries with the different administrations is critical if an effective marine plan on both large national and small local scales is to be realised.

The UK government has delayed public trans-boundary working on the Irish Sea because of the complexity of working across administrative boundaries and differing legislative schedules. However, in the North West of England, local organisations are coming together to kick start trans-boundary working in preparation for strong stakeholder involvement in marine plans and other Irish Sea management activities. This time the approach will be a more stakeholder involved process at the outset, less top-down, and with more local stakeholders on board.”

A cross-cutting inter-departmental governance consortium to manage coastal areas Ms. Doriana Calilli, Province of Teramo (IT)

“During a visit to the Canary Islands, the partners attended a working session on how members of different local, regional and national administrations have come together to form a Consortium to manage the urban rehabilitation of the south of the island at Maspalomas.

Their Consortium is composed of 4 institutions: the Spanish Tourism Institute -TURESPAÑA- (national), the Autonomous Community of Canarias (Regional Government), the Gran Canaria Insular Government (provincial) and the Council of San Bartolomé de Tirajana (local Government). This Urban Consortium is a planning and land management tool and has developed the Plan for the restoration of the tourist areas. It integrates the interests of all the administrations with competences on tourism and spatial/urban planning and management.

It can develop specific planning or management proposals and agreements, collaboration between administrations, hard and soft constructions, etc. The effectiveness of the consortium has been high. In the first six months of existence: it has developed a Plan for the restoration of the tourist areas, the first (out of two) objectives to achieve. I felt very strongly that similar areas in Teramo Province can be served the same way and when I returned to Italy I immediately began to see if my colleagues from different departments and bureaus were interested to set up a similar instrument. The response I got was extremely positive and I have been given a green light to form a similar consortium to develop those areas in the province required regeneration”.



Maspalomas dunes natural reserve, Gran Canaria

Information distribution to lessen the contact of bathers with jellyfish
Dr. Gerald Schernewsky, Leibniz-Institute for Baltic Sea Research (IOW) (DE)



Medusa egg

“Large jellyfish aggregations are a recurring problem in Europe. They hamper coastal tourism and cause bathing prohibitions, can potentially cause a risk to human health, create practical problems for commercial fishing, reduce the available food (zooplankton) for fish, prey on fish eggs & larvae and reduce fish recruitment. Such problems were pointed out in the Mediterranean Sea in a visit to the French partner SIVOM in Cavalaire sur mer. Although there are no management solutions to excessive jellyfish explosions, it helps when this phenomenon is no longer perceived as a danger or a risk by the public. Therefore, information distributed by tourist authorities which improves the knowledge about jellyfish can be crucial.

In the Baltic Sea where dangerous jellyfish species are rare, information is an especially suitable measure. As a result, IOW collaborated with the local tourist board of Warnemunde. A co-worker took on the task of producing flyers which were subsequently distributed to tourists. She conducted an evaluation among beach tourists which showed that the additional information led to a reduction in the perception of the danger of jellyfish in the bathing waters. Significant numbers of flyers were sold to tourist boards of other seaside resorts as well and it is planned to repeat the exercise in future seasons”.

Displaying plastic degradation times at beaches and harbours - Mr. Patrick McCluskey, District Council of Co. Down (UK)

“During one of the presentations during the partner meeting in Cavalaire sur mer, I noted some of the measures being implemented by SIVOM Marine Observatory to curb human pressures on coastal ecosystems. Of particular interest is the use of awareness raising through signage at the harbour pointing out to users the length of time it takes for various types of garbage to degrade.

Since we have similar problems in Newcastle, the Council is now seeking funding so that we, too, can set up similar signage in order to try and reduce the amount of plastic at the sea-side whilst at the same time strategically conveying the message of sustainability”.



Litter Panel produced by SIVOM Marine Observatory and displayed in the Littoral des Maures, France

Certifying fish caught in maritime protected areas as an economic incentive
Ms. Margarida Nunes, ARH Tejo (PT)

“ Ten years of implementation of the Coastal Zone Master Plans at Tagus River Basin District Administration (ARH Tejo) coastal zone (which are now beginning a review process) have significantly contributed to a more sustainable use of the coast, the regeneration of the beaches and infrastructures connected with the public uses and bathing and recreational activity at the shoreline. ARH Tejo is currently preparing the first Spatial Master Plan for an estuarine area in Portugal - the Tagus Estuarine Master Plan. This will be an important policy tool for the management of this part of the coastal zone under our jurisdiction. The plan aims to zone this special territory in order to safeguard the main natural resources, while promoting a sustainable economic use of the Tagus Estuary. The pressures driven from the activities in the Estuary are being assessed and we are using a participatory process with the main stakeholders in order to define a common vision and define strategic courses of action. Of particular relevance for input into this process is the example that we heard in Teramo (IT), namely, the use of an economic tool to support a more sustainable fishery in the territory. We felt that the certification of fish caught in a buffer zone around a marine



Teramo Coastal landscape, Italy

protected area could be an important strategy for inclusion in the management of the Tagus Estuary. This will allow fishery activities in a buffer zone around a maritime protected area in a way that is attractive to, and will involve, the fishermen. At the same time that those fishermen using the territory, will respect, and themselves supervise, the protected area and its limits. The certification of the fish caught is an incentive because it can be sold in the market with a quality brand. We think that this can be a measure that will support us in the implementation of marine protected areas. This strategy also meets what we also plan to develop: a marketing brand for the Tagus Estuary, as a sustainability brand”.

Also, following the best practices shared, namely in Cavalaire sur mer meeting, in France, ARH Tejo has attended the discussion and presentation of the bathing water profiles and the work that was being carried on as presented by SIVOM Marine Observatory. Being ourselves preparing our own “beach profiles” (a demand from the EU Bathing Water Directive) this was of special interest! The way our French colleagues proceeded has, for sure, inspired our own work, and ARH do Tejo displayed, in the beginning of the bathing season of 2011, on the internet and on the beaches, the bathing water profiles of the 92 maritime beaches under its jurisdiction area, in a very similar way to SIVOM. Going one step further, ARH Tejo has developed an Alert system as part of a Pilot project that is being applied in some of our most urbanised beaches, in *Costa do Estoril*. This project includes a warning alert when the climatic conditions cause an extreme situation where the coastal streams, flowing through an urbanised basin, can create a short event of pollution of the bathing water. It also combines the information coming from a model that makes a daily forecast for bathing water quality and the risk for the bather, thus allowing necessary measures to be taken to safeguard the public health and also to control/eliminate the pollution situation.”



Bathing Water information panels produced by SIVOM Marine Observatory and displayed in the Littoral des Maures, France

Learn more about SUSTAIN and Keep Up to Date on Our Activities!

www.sustain-eu.net

SUSTAIN - Assessing sustainability and strengthening operational policy - is a 3-year, €1.8m, project part-funded by the INTERREG IVC Programme*. SUSTAIN results will contribute to the delivery of the EU Sustainable Development Strategy.

The aim of SUSTAIN is therefore to create a new policy tool to help coastal authorities and communities throughout Europe to deliver sustainability on the coast of all 22 coastal states of the European Union. It will be based on a set of easily measurable and fully tested sustainability indicators that will be developed and assessed during the lifetime of the project. The 12 project partners from across the EU will also increase the sustainability of their own areas through interchange of experience and transfer of practice on sustainability issues in the coastal zone, during the lifetime of the project which runs until December 2012.

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