



PRESS RELEASE

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Measuring coastal sustainability, a matter of SUSTAIN

LEIDEN, The Netherlands - Within the confines of a three year project, SUSTAIN has developed an innovative policy tool which allows a rapid self-assessment for local and regional Authorities to evaluate whether their sustainability goals and targets are being reached. Twelve European partners have cooperated and worked together, including eight regional and local authorities under the coordination of the Coastal & Marine Union (EUCC), to achieve this objective.

The SUSTAIN tool now ready to be used can be applicable to all 22 coastal states of the European Union. It is based on a set of easily measurable sustainability indicators that were developed and assessed during the lifetime of the project to enable Authorities to measure effectively the sustainability of our coasts.

Alan Pickaver, project manager of SUSTAIN concludes *"The SUSTAIN project had been ambitious from the outset: we had set out to develop an indicator-based methodology and scoring approach which would allow a self-assessment, through the attribution of a numerical value. Comparing past with future assessments will allow Authorities to determine whether they were reaching their strategic sustainability goals. No-one had come close to doing this before."*

With this tool, decision makers can predict how the existing situation can be changed, evaluate and assess a large range of actions within different policy options. It provides an important management tool that ensures that integrated management of Europe's coastal areas will be sustainable in a long term.

Mr. Hans Heupink, Coastal Programme Manager at the Province of South Holland, The Netherlands confirmed at the occasion of the SUSTAIN final event that *"The province of Zuid-Holland has high ambitions to develop its coastal region in an effective, climate proof and sustainable manner. However, measuring changes in sustainability on a regional level proves to be quite a difficult task. Our try-out with the scoring methodology of SUSTAIN have shown us where difficulties are, for example in terms of finding the right economic data, but most importantly has exposed our sustainability performance"*.

Visit www.sustain-eu.net where you can find more information, as well as the SUSTAIN Publications in 9 European languages!

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NOTES FOR EDITORS

Funded through the INTERREG IVC programme, SUSTAIN has been a 3-year project part-funded by the European Regional Development Fund. It was a Regional Initiative addressing environment and risk prevention (Priority 2 of the programme) and the sub-theme water management. The project budget was €1.8m.

The objective of SUSTAIN was to create a fully implementable policy tool to help coastal authorities and communities throughout Europe to deliver sustainability on Europe's coast. This tool will be applicable to all 22 coastal states of the European Union. It is based on a set of easily measurable sustainability indicators that were developed and assessed during the lifetime of the project to enable Authorities to measure effectively the sustainability of our coasts.

The SUSTAIN DeCyDe-for –Sustainability tool can ensure that integrated management of Europe's coastal areas will be more sustainable in the long term. It can contribute to delivery of Europe's renewed EU Sustainable Development Strategy which was adopted by the European Council in June 2006 and aimed at bringing about a high level of environmental protection, social equity and cohesion, economic prosperity and active promotion of sustainable development worldwide.

The project partnership was made up of 12 partner organisations from across the EU. The lead partner for the project was the Coastal & Marine Union – EUCC (The Netherlands). The partners are:-

The Service Observatoire Marin / SIVOM du Littoral des Maures, France

Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council, UK

The Leibniz Institute for Baltic Sea Research, Germany

Samothraki Municipality, Greece

Administração da Região Hidrográfica do Tejo (ARH-Tejo), Portugal

Down District Council, UK

Instituto Canario de Ciencias Marinas (ICCM) – Gobierno de Canarias, Spain

Provincia di Teramo, Italy

Regional Development Centre Koper, Slovenia

University College Cork (CMRC), Ireland

Kouklia Community Council, Cyprus (2010-11 only)

Together we provide representation from the North Atlantic seaboard, the South Atlantic seaboard, the Mediterranean and the Baltic.