

Introductory Statement - Romania



Ana Lucia Varga

- *State Secretary, Romanian Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, (2004-2008)*
- *Chair of the Romanian National ICZM Committee (2005-2008)*
- *Member of the Romanian parliament (2009-)*

Many valuable resources are concentrated in the Romanian Black Sea coastal zone. This makes the area attractive for living, working and recreation, with substantial economic and environmental value. There are two different sectors, the northern Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve and the southern economic zone.

The Romanian coastal area is under pressure from increasing population growth, urbanisation, marine transport, coastal erosion and pollution. As a result, the natural resources are adversely affected resulting in a deteriorating natural landscape, declining water quality and damage to sand dunes and dune vegetation, as well as to marine ecosystems.

Therefore, Romania began implementation of the EU Directives and Recommendations relevant to the coastal zone. The Government created a legal basis for Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) through the national ICZM Law (2003). Furthermore, the creation of a National Committee for ICZM provides a consultative group having responsibility for coordinating coastal zone management activities. Romania developed a draft ICZM Strategy, in line with the EU ICZM-Recommendations (2002) and EU Water Framework Directive (2000), as a part of a Dutch supported programme.

The National ICZM Strategy will contribute to the sustainable management and development of the Romanian coastal area. At present, this Strategy is under stakeholder consultation. This includes enlarging public support for the implementation of ICZM. The settlements are also in urgent need of a comprehensive infrastructure rehabilitation programme.

In conclusion

Although Romania has only recently joined the EU and still has a long way to go to increase its economy to the EU average level, it recognises the importance of the coastal zone and the need for integrated management for its future development. We also recognise that the increasing effects of socio-economic pressure, exacerbated by the impacts of the anticipated human induced climate change, may increase conflicts between development and the environment. We are therefore looking for ways to manage these pressures, whilst using our valuable resources in a sustainable fashion. The comprehensive nature of an ICZM approach provides a management framework for addressing present and future coastal challenges. We will continue to improve the ICZM process. Integrated physical planning in the Romanian coastal zone is one of the legally binding instruments used. Cooperation between Romanian Ministries, provincial and local authorities, applied scientific institutions and local stakeholders will be improved and focused on achieving a balance between necessary economic development and ecological sustainability. The lessons learned in other countries can be useful to Romania and vice versa. It is therefore with great pleasure that we contribute to this CCC-Production, which seeks to improve coastal cooperation through the exchange of international information and experience.