



Conclusions - Romania

As one of the more recent EU member states Romania is in a process of rapid economic development, increasing the pressures on its valuable resources in the Black Sea coastal zone, including the Danube Delta. Romania has recognised the importance of the coastal zone for its present and future development. It is aware of the threats imposed by uncontrolled socio-economic development and the impacts of climate change. As a result, Romania has undertaken a number of essential first steps in the ICZM process. Examples of recent achievements include:

1. Following the EU recommendation, the Romanian government has adopted the *ICZM Law in 2002*;
2. *Based on this law, a national, high level ICZM Committee* was established in 2004, chaired by the Vice Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development;
3. A *draft ICZM Strategy (2007)* including action plans was developed and is in the process of stakeholder consultation and should become part of the ICZM Law;
4. Within the framework of EU regional cooperation and specific bilateral arrangements, a variety of *coastal projects to support ICZM efforts* are being prepared: strengthening the management capabilities, the development of the data management infrastructure and the identification of coastal protection measures;
5. *Integrated spatial planning* of the wider coastal zone is an important legal instrument, which should be applied to ICZM in Romania. Within the framework of the EU-PlanCoast project (2008) maps for the use of the entire coastal zone (marine and terrestrial) have been produced, which are presently under consultation.



Danube Delta shore. (photo: Claudia Coman)

From early 1990 onwards, specific attention was paid to restoring and conserving the sensitive Danube Delta area, which at the end of the communist period had been brought to the verge of destruction through ongoing unsustainable developments. The realisation by Romanian scientists and policy makers, that the Danube Delta was one of the most valuable, surviving deltas of Europe resulted in the establishment of the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve (DDBR) in the early 1990s, under the auspices of UNESCO. The DDBR-Administration, responsible for the management of the delta, focussed on restoring and maintaining a natural

equilibrium and was internationally supported e.g. by the Netherlands. The DDBRA's activities have focused on:

- Monitoring and developing knowledge of the natural and socio-economic deltaic system, including the establishment of the Danube Delta National Institute for Research and Development;
- The spatial planning of the DDBRA territory, with strictly protected areas and areas of economic use separated by buffer zones;
- The sediment management in the coastal zone of the delta area in order to control coastal erosion.

From the above it follows that Romania has taken a number of important steps in the ICZM process. However, quite a number of critical aspects are still to be addressed in the further development and implementation of ICZM. These include the incorporation of the strategies and action plans in the ICZM Law and the strengthening of coastal monitoring programs, mechanisms for data exchange and dissemination of information to stakeholders. Successful international cooperation should be continued to strengthen the relevant Romanian institutions addressing the impacts of climate change and improving the management and quality of the coastal zone e.g. coastal towns and beaches, attracting foreign tourists in a sustainable way.