

Integrated Coastal Management, Marine Spatial Planning and Blue Growth: The Linkages

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Concern for deterioration of coasts and seas on one hand, understanding of the need for serious managerial efforts on the other started in late 1960s. The first national legislation, the Coastal Zone Management Act of USA dates back to 1972. The coast was defined from the very start as the land area (usually up to the coastal watershed limit) and the water area up to the territorial sea limit (12 nautical miles). Consequently, the understanding of coastal management included the managerial efforts over a substantial and usually the most important part of the marine area. However, due to limited capabilities of coastal nations for managing water areas, the marine component of coastal management could not be developed substantially compared to the land part. Integration of coastal and marine activities and development has always been a serious challenge and a difficult task for coastal management authorities.

Interest in marine conservation, protection and development accelerated growing in 1990s and the need for marine management became more apparent. The “Blue Growth” that indicates sustainable development of marine resources, facilities and activities for achieving high levels of socio-economic benefits became a fashionable phrase especially in Europe in 2000s. The European Commission adopted the Integrated Maritime Policy in 2007 and the Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) Directive in 2014. MSP is not anything more than a tool that is extremely essential for successful coastal and marine management. However, since marine and coastal management is divided to two different General Directorates in the European Commission, DG MARE and DG Environment, they have been dealt with as if they are two separate fields of activities. MSP has been substantially emphasized and supported by DG MARE through the Directive and various projects including the European MSP Platform. This has caused confusion in the professional community about the places of integrated coastal management (ICM), marine spatial planning (MSP) and the blue growth. This presentation aims to review historically ICM, MSP and blue growth, clarify the linkages and stress the necessity of integrated coastal and marine management.