Integrated Coastal Zone Management - The Croatian Case

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The Republic of Croatia became a party to the Barcelona Convention for Protection against Pollution in the Mediterranean in early 1990s. In 2010 it signed the Protocol on Integrated coastal zone management. The Croatian Parliament ratified the Protocol in 2012. It thus became the main piece of the national legislation concerning development policies in the coastal zone. The paper deals with implementation of the Protocol on ICZM in Croatia. Definitions of coastal zone, maritime public domain and coastal waters are discussed in view of integration of economic, environmental and social development management. The content of the Protocol is analysed in order to scope necessary adjustments of the existing legal framework. An overview of physical and economic planning on the Croatian coast is provided revealing an overinstitutionalized top down system of physical planning and a rather poor and insufficient management of coastal economic development. Changes that physical and economic planning underwent in transition period at the turn of the century and the current planning capacity are analysed in particular. An estimate of the institutional capacity required for the implementation of the Protocol is provided. Discrepancies between required and actual capacity and political will to implement the Protocol are discussed. Low level of monitoring and evaluation of coastal development policies is found to be the main obstacle to the implementation of the Protocol. In spite of extensive legislation on indicators the lack of adequate indicators is observed and discussed. A set of indicators that could be used as a basis of a monitoring and evaluation system adjusted to the existing institutional capacities for implementation of the Protocol is proposed in the end. Key words: Integrated coastal zone management, Physical planning, Sustainable growth, Sustainable development, Development indicators