Legal, economic and social issues

The Implementation Gap In Icm: Review Of Legal-institutional Barriers

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Despite the Protocol on Integrated Coastal Zone Management in the Mediterranean signed in 2008, the Mediterranean coastline is being eroded away day by day by real-estate development, infrastructure projects and pollution. Although implementation gaps are ubiquitous in all areas of public policy, they are especially difficult to bridge in ICZM. Along coastlines, the conflicts between lucrative development and environmental preservation are especially visceral. Considerable academic and practical attention has been devoted to the design of coastline management tools. However, too little focus has been placed on the deeper layer of property rights, laws and institutions. The 22 countries along the Mediterranean coast have diverse regimes of property rights, highly differing land-use planning and environmental laws, a variety of government institutional structures, and administrative cultures. They also differ greatly in one of the keys to good implementation - the capacity to enforce compliance with the regulations already in place. Existing and future ICZM programs and protocols targeted for Mediterranean countries should be tailored to the realities of major disparities and varieties in implementation capacity and in degrees of compliance. The proposed paper will present a critical review of existing academic knowledge about the legal-institutional implementation gap. Why do lofty policies encounter so many barriers? The review will be carried out on three levels: International law, national laws and policies globally, and Mediterranean-area laws and policies.