

Managing Enclosed Coastal Water Bodies and International Information Exchange

Jens Sorensen

Harbor and Coastal Center, University of Massachusetts-Boston, USA

This abstract derives from the introduction of a special publication edited by the author for the Proceedings of the Eighth Symposium on Coastal and Ocean Management (CZ'93). The title of the special publication is the Management of Coastal Lagoons and Enclosed Bays.

If we are to create an information exchange system as advocated by the paper, we need to agree on a typology that includes all forms of enclosed coastal water bodies. I have selected the term enclosed coastal water body or ECWB as an interim measure (until such time as a better term is adopted) to include estuaries, esteros, rías, fjords, firths, inlets, sounds, straits, passages, canals, delta mouths, harbors, ports, coastal lagoons, coral reef lagoons, bights, pools, salt ponds, salt rivers, sloughs, enclosed bays, semi-enclosed bays, open bays, gulfs and seas.

A general methodology of planning and managing ECWBs is needed to serve at least two purposes. A framework is needed to organize a training program that can be given anywhere in the world. Such a training program is particularly needed for policy makers from developing nations and the seven coastal nations from the Commonwealth of Independent States. A general methodology is also needed to provide a systematic structure for an international information exchange network.

If a consensus can be obtained on common methodology from the many experienced practitioners of planning and managing ECWBs, it is reasonable to expect that the methodology would be organized into discrete yet interdependent modules. The work conducted by my colleagues and myself over the last twelve years in the creation, preparation, implementation, and evaluation of integrated coastal zone management programs around the world suggest the following components:

- type of enclosed coastal water body and the physical processes that comprise the total system
- planning methodologies
- planning and implementation strategies
- issues that motivate program creation
- institutional or governance arrangement
- involvement of stakeholders in the process
- monitoring and evaluation methods

An interactive database and newsletter should be developed to complement and extend the generalized methodology for planning and managing ECWBs. At this time it is envisioned that each file in the ECWB database would include at least twelve fields of information.