

Sustainable Development and Integrated Management of Enclosed and Semi-Enclosed Coastal Seas

Biliana Cicin-Sain
University of Delaware, USA

One of the basic recommendations emanating from the historic Earth Summit (United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED)) held in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992 was that management of coasts and oceans should be "integrated in content and precautionary in ambit." This presentation discusses key concepts and challenges in achieving sustainable development and integrated management in the context of enclosed and semi-enclosed coastal seas.

The presentation first reviews the meaning of sustainable development and posits integrated management as an important avenue to sustainable development. Next, the meaning of the central concept of "integrated management" is discussed. Five major dimensions of integration are defined: integration among sectors, between land and water, among levels of government, between nations, and among disciplines.

The functions of an integrated coastal management system are reviewed in turn; these include: area-based planning function, arbiter-harmonization function, stewardship function, protection of public safety function, promotion of sustainable uses function.

Enclosed or semi-enclosed coastal seas around the world occur both within national contexts (e.g., Chesapeake Bay) and international contexts (e.g. Mediterranean). While the Law of the Sea Convention provides exhortations for nations "to cooperate" in the management of enclosed or semi-enclosed seas and Chapter 17 of the Earth Summit's Agenda 21 emphasizes national action and regional-level assistance, there is little specific guidance, however, either in international or national law for the integrated management of enclosed or semi- enclosed seas.

The presentation delineates which functions of integrated coastal management need to be performed at the "regional" multi-jurisdiction level (whether sub-national or supranational depending on the context of the enclosed or semi-enclosed sea) and which functions are best performed at the "local" level. Alternative mechanisms for performing these functions at "regional" and "local" levels are discussed with reference to the experience found in various enclosed and semi-enclosed seas' contexts.