

# Leasing and Licensing Policies in Coastal Marine Areas

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An important element of the management of the marine resource is the question of the leasing and licensing policies that are developed where these are necessary to enable coastal - and other - marine resources to be utilised. This area of management is significant in the governance of the coastal marine resource because the state is generally the majority owner of the absolute title to the sea bed. Pressures on the use of the coastal marine resource - and thus leasing and licensing activity - have been increasing at the same time as environmental stress in these areas has become more evident. This latter trend has been particularly apparent in enclosed and semi-enclosed seas.

The paper looks at the context in which such interests are granted and at the nature of the interests entered into. It goes on to consider the experience of a number of countries and states in their policies towards the identification and planning of the use of the resource and at how governance in the context of the state as "landowner" relates to governance in the context of the state as planner - as arbiter on use.

The paper addresses specifically issues that are currently under consideration in Bulgaria in the context of the Black Sea and its management. The Black Sea is under phenomenal environmental stress. Economic and governmental structures of many of the riparian countries, and many of their upstream neighbours are in a state of flux. The challenge of saving the Black Sea in perpetuity is an enormous one involving the establishment of fundamentally new regimes of governance both in terms of perceptions of resources and the implications of their ownership, and in terms of planning and decision-make on use. The Odessa Declaration of 7 April 1993 between the Black Sea riparian countries' governments has put forward a set of intentions at the regional level to provide policy guidance - with implications for both of these areas - for the implementation of Agenda 21 in the Black Sea region.

As the transitional economies move towards market orientation and towards more democratically accountable planning processes the urgent development of the state's governance in its "landownership" role and in its planning role are of vital importance in securing the future of the coastal and marine areas.