

Implementation of Integrated Coastal Management in Mediterranean Developing Countries

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The presentation refers to the experience in the implementation of MAP Coastal Areas Management Programmes in the period 1988 - 1993, completed, on-going or in preparation, covering selected coastal areas of Albania, Algeria, Croatia, Egypt, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey, and Greece. A scheme is presented of the process of Integrated Coastal and Marine Areas Management (ICAM) developed by PAP/MAP in cooperation with experts of almost all Mediterranean countries, as well as FAO and UNEP, used as methodological framework for those Programmes.

The coastal areas of the above countries are generally characterized by: uncontrolled, often very intensive development; population growth; haphazard development of tourism; pollution of ecosystems, especially of the coastal waters and freshwater resources, in many places far beyond tolerable limits; insufficient or inconsistent land- and sea-use planning; illegal housing and building of secondary homes; overbuilding and degradation of coastal landscape; coastal and soil erosion; priorities given to short-term effects of development; absence of internalizing of costs resulting from pollution and depletion of resources. Since most of the endangered areas are of a high, often exceptional national and global value, the damage done so far is great, in some cases even catastrophic. However, the authorities and general public of most of the countries have developed an awareness of the need of making radical changes in the present trends, which is one of principal triggering factors of ICAM.

The main problems encountered in the establishment of the ICAM process are: insufficient knowledge of the concept and practice of coastal management; need for adapting and improving the existing institutional arrangements, as well as the relevant legal and economic instruments; need to complete environmental knowledge and data; absence of long-term integrated programmes; securing sources of financing for ICAM and pollution abatement and control.

The main results achieved hitherto are briefly described. Particularly stressed is the fact that, through these Programmes, initial ICAM processes have been established, in some cases even at a more advanced level. The basic catalytic factors were: a) the international cooperation enabling transfer of knowledge and experience, and a limited external financial support; b) programmes adapted to the level of the local capacities as found, involving local expert teams in their preparation, including on-the-job training.