

EUCC Coastal News

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1. EUCC's Secretary General: "Climate change is biggest concern for the coastal zone"

Climate change may be the biggest threat to Europe's coastal zones and regional seas. Climate change is likely to have a broad range of impacts, affecting several sectors throughout Europe, in all regional seas, both on land and in coastal and marine waters. This was said by EUCC's Secretary General Albert Salman at the State of the Coast Conference, 9 March 2005 in Barcelona. This conference was organised by the European Environmental Agency (EEA) and the ETC-TE.

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Since 2004, coastal & climate change is one of EUCC's main policy issues. Mr. Salman's input to the EEA conference was based upon the advice of the EUCC Council Members and Magdalena Muir, Advisory Board Member, Climate Change; and upon the conclusions of the European Climate & Tourism Workshop (Genoa, November 2004) that was attended by EUCC's Council Member Mr. Foppe Seekles'.

In his address to the EEA conference, Mr. Salman referred to the following potential impacts of climate change as to the coast and marine:

- accelerated sea level rise (ASLR) and increasing storminess will increase coastal erosion problems, as recognised in the EUROSION project, and stressed by several delegates at the conference (especially from the Baltic and Black Seas, facing the largest impacts being microtidal environments);
- changing precipitation patterns will favour the creation of water retention reservoirs and buffers in order to prevent water shortages for irrigation and other water uses inland; this will increase the sealing of sediments within the catchment areas, thus enhancing coastal erosion problems and ultimately leading to the devastation of river deltas and the loss of strategic sediment reservoirs;
- concerns about global warming and the greenhouse effect result into an increasing – and even subsidised – development of hydropower stations (also contributing to sealing of sediments), coastal and offshore wind power plants and tidal bay barrages;
- serious climatic impacts are expected for coastal and marine biodiversity; see also the next contribution in this EUCC newsletter;
- we may expect increasing implications for water quality (eutrophication, algal blooms, anoxia, dead and toxic water bodies, acidification, risk of methane gas emissions from the sea floor) and fish stocks (see contribution on this issue for the UK State of the Seas report);
- an increasing occurrence of "heat waves" and water shortages in southern European destinations will influence the selection of destinations by tourists as well as investment policies of the tourism industry; even a limited decrease of accommodation occupation in a tourist resort may result into resort decline and lack of investment in existing resorts; tourism investments will be directed towards more stable, more predictable, and more temperate climatic regions; the combined result is an expansion of tourism urbanisation and possibly urban degradation;
- risks of salinisation of low lying coastal plains, delta's and polders due to increasing needs for water use and retention in river catchments upstream.

Several aspects have already been reported in earlier issues of EUCC Coastal News (2004, 2005). On the basis of this broad range of potential impacts, Mr. Salman suggested climate change to be included as a key cross cutting issue for the EEA State of the Coast reporting process that aims at publishing its final report in early 2006.

For information about the EEA State of the Coast reporting process:

<http://terrestrial.eionet.eu.int/activities/announcements/ann1107160179>

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2. Impacts of Climate Change on Europe's Coastal and Marine Biodiversity

The Committee for the activities of the Council of Europe in the Field of Biological and Landscape Diversity (CO-DBP) have just issued a paper, Conserving European Biodiversity in the Context of Climate Change. This paper is by Michael B. Usher, School of Biological and Environmental Sciences, University of Stirling. Michael Usher is also the lead author of the chapter, Principles of Conserving the Arctic's Biodiversity, in the Arctic Climate Impacts Assessment Scientific Report, (Cambridge University Press, 2005). Climatic aspects for Europe's coasts and seas will be summarized here by Magdalena A K Muir, who was a contributing author to the ACIA chapter, and who is responsible for any errors in summarizing this complex topic.

Biodiversity is not the easiest concept. On the biological side, biodiversity has to be considered at three scales – the variation within species (genetic diversity), the variation between species (species diversity)

and the variation amongst assemblages of species (habitat diversity). Whereas habitat diversity in Europe's land, fresh water and sea would probably be measured in thousands of habitats, species diversity would be measured in tens or hundreds of thousands of species, and genetic diversity would be measured in at least millions of genes. These can all be influenced by a changing climate. On the geographical side, biodiversity can be considered at many different scales, from that of the individual plant or animal and its immediate surrounds to the whole planet. Again a changing climate can affect each of these scales, and indeed the effects may vary at different scales.

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Whereas in the terrestrial environment, plants are often used to define habitats, in the marine environment it is the animal communities and the physical structure of the substrate (e.g. rock, sand, mud) that is used to define habitats. It is "climate-space" that is often used in developing predictive models. Such models make the assumption that the species currently occupies its optimal climate-space and also that the species will be able to move as the climate-space changes its geographical range.

These assumptions beg many questions about the suitability of areas to move through, and the lack of barriers to movement, such as the problems of moving from lake to lake or from river to river for freshwater species, or from sea to sea for a marine species. In some instances, the climate-space appears to vanish. More is known about the likely changes in the distribution of species with a changing climate.

For example, a poleward extension is predicted for many of the fish species of the northern Atlantic, including the herring, cod and some of the flatfish that are currently limited by bottom temperatures. At the same time the southern limits of colder-water fish species, such as polar cod and capelin, are expected to move northwards. The latter species tend to migrate so as to follow the southern limit of the Arctic ice cap, and as this recedes northwards these species are shifting their geographical distributions. Complexity arising from alterations to the density, distribution and/or abundance of keystone species at various trophic levels, such as the polar cod or the polar bear, could have significant and rapid consequences for the structure of the ecosystems in which they currently occur.

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There are five groups of habitats or communities that may be particularly prone to reduction in extent as a result of climatic warming, four of which are present in the coastal and marine zone:

1. The first group is any habitat of community for which there is a physical barrier to halt its movement northwards. The main barriers fall into two classes. One would be the Mediterranean Sea, the Arctic Ocean, and possibly other European seas such as the North Sea and English Channel. The other would be mountain ranges, especially those running from east to west in Europe.
2. With sea level rise, there will be a compression of the coastal zone. This will reduce the extent of salt marshes and sand dune systems, and on the extreme western fringes of Europe the machair will be squeezed between the sea and the higher ground. Coupled with a greater frequency of storms, this is likely to have considerable effects on all coastal communities, as demonstrated for the North Sea coast of the Netherlands and Germany, and along the Baltic coast.
3. Wetlands pose considerable problems. With predicted warming, leading to potentially greater evaporation, and predicted decreases in precipitation in much of Europe, many wetlands could dry up. This could affect the communities of peatlands, fens, shallow lakes and ponds.
4. Marine communities will also be affected. In the marine environment, seabirds show strong preferences for regions of particular sea surface temperatures, and are likely to respond to changes over large temporal and geographic scales. As well as temperature effects, there have been recent suggestions that the increased CO₂ being absorbed by the sea could affect many species, disrupting marine food webs and altering ocean biogeochemistry. (See UK State of the Seas report for more information on this latter point.)

How then can Europe's genetic diversity be conserved in a changing climate? Assuming that natural selection requires a genetic diversity for it to operate, conservation practice should try to find a surrogate for the almost unknown genetic diversity. This can be done by conserving each species over as wide a geographic range as possible and in as many habitats as possible, on the assumption that geographical and environmental features have structured genetic variation.

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There are at least three features of genetic variability that need to be considered in the conservation of the Europe's biodiversity:

1. The genetic structure of a species at the edge of its range, where it is often fragmented into a number of small and relatively isolated populations, is often different from that in the centre of the range, where populations can be more contiguous and gene flow is likely to be greater. It is these isolated, edge-of-range populations that are possibly undergoing speciation, and which might form the basis of evolution towards different species with different ecologies in the future, but it is equally these populations that are most threatened by climate change.

2. Hybridisation can both be a threat and an opportunity. For example, it can be a threat where two species lose their distinctive identities. There is a potential problem with the introduction into Europe of any non-native species that is biologically closely related to a native European.

3. There are suggestions that the genetic variability of populations is important in maintaining the full range of ecosystem services. Although this concept is little understood, it is intuitively plausible because, as factors in the environment change, individuals of differing genetic structure may be more or less able to fulfil that species' functional role in the ecosystem. Thus, with a changing environment, the ecosystem needs species whose individuals have a variable genetic make-up.

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One area of key importance for the coastal and marine environment is invasive species. With a changing climate, species are likely to move northwards, and some of these will establish themselves by forming reproducing populations. Northern European countries might become more species rich because there is an ability of species to move northwards to colonise them. On the other hand, because of the east-west orientation of the Mediterranean Sea (and desert/arid areas south of this), there will be limited scope for southern European countries to gain new species by a northward movement. In the freshwater environment, it is the introduction of fish species that can cause most problems. In the marine environment, one of the major potential problems is the discharge of ballast water. For the European Arctic, the magnitude of the threat of invasive species is unclear.

The need for precaution when there is a rapidly changing climate can apply to the whole of Europe, even although the temperature is likely to increase faster in the European Arctic than in more southern parts of the continent. The risk to the environment and to biodiversity of intentionally introducing any non-native species must be established before the species is introduced. Precautionary action is to stop the arrival of the invasive species in the first place because eradication later may be impossible.

Another area of key importance for the coastal and marine environment is migratory species. The example of geese demonstrates a number of features of migratory populations and their conservation in a changing environment. The geese require sufficient food resources to make two long journeys each year. The summer feeding grounds in the Arctic and the wintering feeding grounds in temperate Europe provide the majority of the geese's food requirements. Climate change could have an effect on these species. As habitats change, will the breeding grounds move northwards? How will the wintering grounds change? The staging areas are also likely to change, and it is possible that the distance between breeding and wintering grounds might become longer, requiring more energy expenditure by the migrating birds. This leaves a whole series of unknowns. At the present time, certain goose populations are increasing in size; will this continue as the climate changes?

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Another area of considerable uncertainty is the deep sea: in the Mediterranean, the Atlantic Ocean, the Arctic Ocean, and the seas connected to these. In the deep waters of the eastern Mediterranean, there was a 0.4°C decrease in water temperature between 1992 and 1994, which resulted in a significant decrease in nematode abundance but a significant increase in diversity. However, a recovery of the temperature after 1994/5 led to only a partial recovery of the previous biodiversity. Perhaps more interestingly, the cooling led to a greater similarity in the nematode biodiversity between the fauna of the eastern Mediterranean, and that of the colder deep Atlantic. This finding demonstrates how even small temperature changes can have considerable, and perhaps unexpected, impacts on biodiversity.

In general the establishment of protected areas has a scientific foundation. Three main facets of ecological thinking have affected the design of potential protected areas. The concepts of island biogeography, of fragmentation of habitats and the establishment of meta-populations, and of corridors, are related; and can affect views of protected areas in a changing climate. Island biogeography has been used to justify larger protected areas rather than smaller ones. With climate change, and with many European wildlife populations and their geographical ranges likely to diminish, the use of the precautionary principle would also suggest that larger rather than smaller protected areas should be established. Fragmentation of ecosystems has tended to be viewed as the "islandisation" of habitats. Although fragments cannot be thought of as real islands, the use of island bio-geographical concepts in the formulation of "rules" for the design of protected areas has been fashionable, with size and shape being the key factors. With fragmentation an integral part of modern development, corridors have appeared to be a useful concept, though their effectiveness is not proven.

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With climate change happening, it may be best to avoid the necessity for corridors by focussing on larger protected areas and a reduction of the processes that lead to habitat fragmentation. This will promote real connectivity, rather than an apparent connectivity, for both species and habitats. However, will the protected areas that exist today, even if they have been located in the best possible place to conserve biodiversity, still be effective in the future with climate change? Designations have been widely used, but they are based on assumptions of climatic and bio-geographical stability; sites are usually designated to

ensure the maintenance of the status quo. All the available evidence indicates that these assumptions will not be sustainable during the next century.

What can be done to make the network of protected areas more appropriate in the future climate of Europe?

1. Today's protected areas should also encompass land or water that will potentially be useful for biodiversity conservation in the future. Models of the changing distribution of species and habitats will be useful, and their outputs should be included in the design of protected areas. This means that designation should be on the basis of both the present value of the areas for biodiversity, as well as on the predicted future value (the potential value).

2. Boundaries may need to be more flexible. In general boundaries are lines on maps, enshrined in legislation, and hence difficult to change. Perhaps the present practices could be described as having "hard boundaries". What might be needed is that the boundaries could be changed in the face of a changing distribution of the flora or fauna being protected, or soft boundaries.

In other words, over time the location of the protected areas would shift geographically. This will need care so that developmental pressures do not destroy the value of the protected areas in safeguarding the biodiversity. More flexible systems of designation, adding areas which are or will become important, and dropping areas that are no longer important, would appear to be one of the possible ways forward. It appears that such a system of designations with "soft boundaries" has never been tried in the world.

Protected areas derive from a major policy imperative to conserve biodiversity, as well as to conserve historical and cultural artefacts. Climate change might cause priority habitats and species to move out of designated areas, whilst at the same time habitats and species new to the area will tend to colonise or visit, especially from the south. Assemblages of species without current analogues, might form as individual species respond to climate change at different rates and in different ways. It will therefore be necessary to adjust such concepts as "representative communities" and "acceptable limits of change" that are part of the mandate of Natura 2000 designations. The expected changes might include many surprises resulting from the complex interactions that characterise ecosystems and the non-linearity (or threshold effects) of many species' responses.

Magdalena A.K. Muir, London

EUCC Board Advisor on Climate Change

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3. Climate Change and the Marine Environment

In the long-term, the greatest threat to the planet, including the marine environment, could be the impacts of climate change. More generally referred to as global warming, climate change could significantly affect the physical, biological and biogeochemical characteristics of the oceans and coasts, modifying their ecological structure and functions. The study of the possible impacts of climate change in the marine environment is in its infancy and the picture is complicated by natural variations. Bearing this in mind, the following describes some of the possible impacts.

Increases in air and water temperatures are associated with global sea level rise. It is predicted that sea levels could increase by about 0.5m over the next century. The UKCIP scenarios also indicate that severe winter depressions are likely to become more frequent. Since these would increase the height of the storm surge, greater erosion and flooding risk along our coastline can be expected. Locally, this increased water depth would expose our coastal defences to greater impact of wave action, thus compounding the effects of more intense storms. These impacts affect not only human life in the coastal zone but the habitats and species there too. Coastal flooding and loss of salt marsh areas has potential consequences for ground nesting seabirds through loss of nesting sites, and for general loss of habitats and species diversity. Seabirds could also potentially be affected by increased storminess. Severe winter storms are known to cause large scale mortalities known as "wrecks" and a severe summer storm can wash whole breeding colonies from their cliff nesting sites.

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On a wider scale, higher temperatures would increase the amount of melt water from the ice caps. As noted in Chapter 3, this could reduce the salinity and thus the density of marine waters in certain areas. There is a small risk that this in turn could adversely affect global oceanic circulation patterns such as the Gulf Stream which regulates the UK climate. If storminess increases and rainfall patterns change, the altered supply of nutrients and sediment from the land may alter marine life.

As the climate alters, causing the physical parameters (temperature and salinity) of the marine environment to change, this will change the habitats available for marine species perhaps causing them to adapt or change distribution. Changes in sea water temperature is changing the species composition of phytoplankton, the microscopic plants which respond to temperature, light and nutrients and form the

lowest level in the food web. Such changes could also affect the life forms higher up the food web. More directly, sea temperature changes could affect the reproductive success of species at a given latitude and, thus, affect the abundance of animals and plants of any size.

The changes in plankton have been considered so large since around 1987 that they have been described as a regime shift. There has been increased primary productivity, merging of the spring and autumn blooms and a switch in the dominant species. This has been accompanied by the northward movement of plankton species by about 10 degrees of latitude.

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Most of the observed warming in the world's climate over the last 50 years is likely to have been due to the increase in greenhouse gas concentrations, including carbon dioxide (CO₂). The ocean acts as a sink for the gas by absorbing it at the surface and through a series of natural processes it is stored in the sediments at the bottom of the sea. However, increased levels of CO₂ may not be able to be 'processed' out of the water as quickly as it is being input; this could, over a period of centuries, significantly increase the acidity of marine waters. The surface layers would be the most affected. We have limited understanding of the effect acidification might have on marine biota, but coral reefs, calcareous plankton and other organisms whose skeletons or shells contain calcium carbonate may be particularly affected in the long-term, as could the ability of the sea to absorb further CO₂ and hence regulate climate. Acidity is also a key factor and in influencing chemical processes so the impact of pollutants on biota may change. The UK has proposed a variety of measures to address these climatic impacts. One of the most significant measures is the UK government and UK Climate Impacts Programme are establishing a Marine Climate Change Impact Partnership. The main purpose of the MCCIP is to raise awareness and understanding of impact of marine climate change.

Source: Report UK State of the Seas 2005 which can be found at:

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/water/marine/uk/stateofsea/>

– EU News and Initiatives –

4. PROTECT : Marine Protected Areas as a tool for ecosystem conservation and fisheries management

To enhance the use of Marine Protected Area's, MPA's, as tools for ecosystem conservation and fisheries management, a new advanced project - Marine Protected Areas as a Tool for Ecosystem Conservation and Fisheries Management (PROTECT) - was launched in January 2005, supported by a grant of €2 Million from the EU 6th Framework Programme. Seventeen European research institutes will be working together for the next 3 and a half years to provide policy advice and develop methodologies to assess the potential of different MPA regimes. The project includes three regional case studies: 1) A top-down controlled ecosystem (addressing cod fisheries) in the Baltic Sea; 2) A "wasp-waist" ecosystem (addressing Sandeel fisheries and sea birds) in the North Sea; and 3) Deep-water coral ecosystems (Lophelia reefs) in the North East Atlantic, as well as a series of work packages that will be developing a set of generic tools for the design, modeling, implementation and evaluation of MPA's.

The main outcomes of PROTECT will be an improved science base for the use of MPA's and tools for ecosystem conservation and fisheries management in EU waters. This includes better understanding of specific effects of MPA's on target species, habitats and ecosystems, including socio-economic impacts and fleet behaviour. The project is coordinated by the Danish Institute for Fisheries Research, Dept. of Marine Fisheries. For further details please contact the Scientific Coordinator, Erik Hoffmann (eh@dfu.min.dk) or the Scientific Project Manager, Ole Vestergaard (osv@dfu.min.dk).

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5. Commission to consult on future EU Maritime Policy

The European Commission announced its decision to launch a consultation process on a future maritime policy for the Union. In a communication presented jointly by President José Manuel Barroso and Commissioner Joe Borg, the Commission sets out the reasons behind this initiative. The communication says that the contribution that the sea makes to our livelihood and well-being is considerable as is the potential for economic growth. The challenge is to ensure that we make the most of this potential in a sustainable manner. An integrated approach would help avoid conflicts and optimise synergies between the various sea-based activities so as to boost their economic potential and safeguard the environment. It would also encourage greater stakeholders' participation and enable all the parties concerned to consider the sea as a whole as well as understand the implications of each set of activities thereon. A Task Force, made up of Commissioners responsible for sea-related policies and chaired by Commissioner Borg, will prepare a consultation paper on a future maritime policy for the Union. The publication of this document, scheduled for the first half of next year, will launch an extensive consultation exercise as to possible options for a maritime policy for the Union. The Commission will then examine all the

contributions and decide what shape and form the new policy should take before preparing proposals in this direction.

<http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/05/231&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

6. Thematic Strategy on the Protection and conservation of the Marine Environment

The Commission services are currently finalising a proposal for a Thematic Strategy on the Protection and Conservation of the Marine Environment, due for adoption later in 2005. This Strategy is one of seven being elaborated in the framework of the Community's 6th Environment Action Programme. These Thematic Strategies were conceived as a new way of approaching environment policy, looking at themes in a holistic way and emphasising integration of environment in other policies and programmes as the main route to achieving environmental aims.

The new Marine Framework Directive would be based upon Article 175 of the EC Treaty and applicable to all European marine waters under the sovereignty or jurisdiction of the Member States. The objective of the directive would be to protect, conserve and improve the quality of the marine environment in these marine waters, through the achievement of good environmental status in European seas within a defined time period.

http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/environment/water/consult_marine.htm

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7. Twenty PhD-grants for EUR-OCEANS Network of Excellence

EUR-OCEANS, the European Network of Excellence around Ocean Ecosystems Analysis, groups more than 60 research institutes from 25 countries. This project within the European 6th Framework Programme runs from January 2005 till December 2008. To support the research programme and the integration of it within the network, EUR-OCEANS offers no less than 20 PhD-grants of three year each. Applications are due 1 May 2005 at the latest. Selections will take place in June, after which recruitment will follow between July and December 2005. Persons interested can find all relevant information about this on the website <http://www.eur-oceans.org>

Source: VLIZINE Vol. 6 no. 1-2 (January-February 2005)

8. EU Ministers Reach Deal on Agency to Manage Fisheries

European Union member states clinched a deal on March 14 intended to protect cod and other threatened fish species from overfishing by setting up an agency to manage fisheries.

The once-common cod has long been a staple of European diets, but stocks have dropped dramatically in recent decades and increasingly tough catch quotas set by individual EU nations have failed reverse the trend.

Fishermen say the system of national quotas has too many loopholes, and the Community Fisheries Control Agency approved Monday is intended to improve and streamline controls considered key to EU efforts to build a sustainable fishing industry.

Fisheries ministers unanimously agreed to establish the agency, which will be based in the northern Spanish port of Vigo.

Last year, the EU rejected proposals to declare huge swathes of ocean off-limits for trawlers, settling instead for less drastic alternatives.

Scientists say North Sea cod stocks have shrunk to about a tenth of 1970 levels, and warned of depletion on the scale of eastern Canadian waters, where cod largely disappeared in the 1990s.

Source: Associated Press

<http://www.enn.com/today.html?id=7313>

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- Ecological Networks -

9. Petition: 17,000 world citizens voice their distress about Natura 2000 in Greece.

With both the nesting period for sea turtles and the tourist season due to begin in Laganas Bay in about 7 weeks, EURONATUR and MEDASSET have jointly delivered their 17,000 signature petition to the Greek Prime Minister, expressing intense concern and indignation, not only about the future of the National Marine Park of Zakynthos (NMPZ), but also about the other 26 EC "Natura 2000" Protected Areas in Greece. During the summer of 2004 the ecological destruction in Laganas Bay, the main nesting area of the endangered loggerhead sea turtle (*Caretta caretta*) in the Mediterranean, was enormous. Illegality prevailed in the chaos of mass tourism, with pollution of the Bay, illegal construction, and motor vehicles driven along the nesting beaches day and night. It is obvious that if for the second year no effective measures for protection and management of the nesting beaches are implemented, the appalling situation will continue.

The full text of the letter accompanying the signatures can be found at:

<http://tofino.ex.ac.uk/euroturtle/medas/priminister.htm>

10. HELCOM to develop an Action Plan for the Baltic Sea

The Chair of the Helsinki Commission announced that HELCOM will begin to develop an Action Plan based on Ecological Quality Objectives in order to achieve a healthy Baltic Sea. This decision was unanimously adopted by representatives of all the Baltic Sea countries at the 26th annual Meeting of the Helsinki Commission, which took place 1-2 March in Helsinki, Finland. The draft European Marine Strategy, now being elaborated by the EU, foresees a separate action plan for each of the European seas. HELCOM from now on will take the lead and play a key role, involving all stakeholders, in the development of the regional plan for the Baltic.

http://www.helcom.fi/press_office/news_helcom/en_GB/HELCOM26Outcome/

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11. Whale stranding cases increase, especially in the UK

Whale, dolphin and porpoise strandings have doubled in the UK over the last 10 years to 782, according to a new study. The Whale and Dolphin Stranding Scheme at the Natural History Museum blames an increase in fishing activity, which it says leads to more "by-catch".

This can occur when dolphins or whales chase fish into giant nets, where they then get entangled in the gear. Strandings of cetaceans (the group that includes whales, dolphins and porpoises) have increased from 360 in 1994 to 782 in 2004, the study finds. Richard Sabin, of the Natural History Museum, London, believes the soaring numbers of cetacean deaths can be attributed to an increase in a certain method of sea bass fishing, known as pair-trawling, where great nets are suspended between two vessels. The British government, which part-funded the research, hopes to reduce by-catch by restricting certain types of trawling. Its Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) is also testing new designs of "dolphin friendly" nets, which either have an escape hatch or acoustic devices to keep the mammals away. "I have always maintained that we must take firm action to reduce injury and death to dolphins from this fishery," said minister Ben Bradshaw. Acting further, he has asked the European Commission to investigate the problem of stranded cetaceans, particularly in the UK. The minister has also requested the Commission to prohibit pair-trawling in the western part of the Channel. This however might draw resistance from France and Spain who's fishers regularly use pair-trawling and are not well disposed to a prohibition. Cetaceans strandings are also on the increase on the Dutch coasts. Half of them can be attributed to fishing methods.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/sci/tech/4329629.stm>

12. Investigation Effects of Dolphin Savers

Bottle-nose dolphins and porpoises are regular victims of by-catch. The cause of this is the fact that cetaceans are coming too close to the fishing-nets and get strangled. This way the animals suffocate and in an attempt to break loose they damage the nets. The reparation of these nets is costing the fishermen much time and money. A solution for this problem is to keep bottle-nose dolphins and porpoises away from the nets. The Dutch company Save Wave (<http://www.savewave.nl/>) produces 'Dolphin Savers'; devices that (assembled on the nets) produce an ultrasound. This ultrasound must keep bottle-nose dolphins and porpoises away. In an investigation of CML (<http://www.leidenuniv.nl/cml/>) in cooperation with EUCC - The Coastal Union an effort is made to determine if the 'Dolphin Savers' are really keeping the bottle-nose dolphins and porpoises away. Furthermore it will be investigated if there are side-effects like habituation.

For any questions please contact Richard Franse (franse@cml.leidenuniv.nl).

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13. BirdLife International: "Fishing regulators are failing to protect species"

Many authorities set up to regulate fisheries are failing to take their responsibilities seriously, claims BirdLife International. The conservation group says that marine mammals and birds, especially the albatross, are suffering as a result. It wants Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs) to reduce accidental deaths on longline gear.

BirdLife has submitted a report to a United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization meeting in Rome, Italy. It hopes the UNFAO can bring pressure to bear on the RFMOs. The Birdlife report ranks the environmental performance of the world's 19 inter-governmental RFMOs and finds the performance of some of them to be woeful.

BirdLife's major worry is as mentioned the albatross. Nineteen of the 21 albatross species are officially classed as under global threat of extinction. The campaign to protect albatrosses received a welcome boost from Prince Charles:

"Will it take the complete dodo-like disappearance of this noble-winged creature to bring us to our senses, or are we to remain blind and deaf to the appalling tragedy unfolding out of sight, out of mind?" the UK royal said.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/science/nature/4325163.stm>

The BirdLife report can be found at:

<http://www.birdlife.net/news/news/2005/03/rfmos.html>

14. "Turkish Government Delegation lies to Bern Convention"

MEDASSET has investigated statements made by the Turkish Delegation (Mr Mustafa Akincioglu, Deputy General Director, Ministry of Environment and Forestry) at the 24th Bern Convention meeting at Council of Europe (Strasbourg/France) in December 2004. According to MEDASSET, Mr Mustafa's statement that "what remained of the Soda Chrome factory jetty had been demolished" is untrue. The foundations continue to accelerate erosion of the green turtle nesting beach, and contrary to Mr Mustafa's statement, no additional greenhouses have been removed from the dunes since those removed three years ago, MEDASSET explains. The decision of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism to release 23 million square meters of land in Seyhan- Kazanlı for 11 hotels and holiday villages (900 beds each), a camping area (660 beds) and two golf resorts (400 beds each), has been widely reported in the Turkish press. The decision was taken disregarding warnings from the Turkish Association of Biologists and other environmentalists worried about the destruction of a unique ecosystem. MEDASSET says it cannot check Mr Mustafa's announcement that the factory managers had been compelled to submit a plan for a permanent solution to the 1.5 million tons of highly dangerous toxic waste dumped on the nesting beach covered with plastic sheeting.

As Turkey is on a highly active earthquake zone MEDASSET has pointed at the risks to the whole Eastern Mediterranean Sea if in a natural disaster the whole 1.5 million tons would end up in the sea, and at the risk to the 11,360 proposed tourist beds nearby.

<http://www.medasset.org>

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- International news in brief -

15. UK: National Centre for Ocean Forecasting

Marine experts from around the UK have pooled their knowledge on how the world's ocean systems work, to launch the National Centre for Ocean Forecasting (NCOF). This centre of excellence, forecasting the 'weather in the oceans' was opened in Exeter, Devon on 4 March 2005. NCOF is a collaboration between the Met Office, Plymouth Marine Laboratory, Proudman Oceanographic Laboratory, Southampton Oceanography Centre and the Environmental Systems Science Centre.

Oceans cover three quarters of the world's surface and in setting up NCOF at the Met Office's headquarters, the aim is to establish ocean forecasting as part of our national infrastructure of marine services. The centre will co-ordinate the nation's ocean forecasting activities, building on world-class research and development that is already well established in the UK. The plan is to provide as much information on the conditions in the oceans as is currently available about the weather.

The focus of NCOF will be short-range (5-10 days) predictions of surface waves, storm surges, sea ice, ocean temperatures, salinities, currents and ocean ecosystems for both the deep ocean and shelf and coastal seas. The predictions will be used to provide support for oil slick responses, search and rescue, defence, management of water quality, ecosystems and fisheries, wind farms, oil exploration, responses to coastal flooding, safety of shipping and improved weather forecasts.

<http://www.nerc.ac.uk/publications/latestpressrelease/2005-13ncoflaunch.asp>

16. UK: Marine climate change impact partnership launched

The interim Marine Climate Change Impact Partnership (MCCIP) has started work. The main purpose of the MCCIP will be to raise awareness and understanding of the impact of marine climate changes with policy advisors, decision makers and other parties involved. Between now and May 2005, an interim Secretariat will develop a business plan and work programme for MCCIP. A steering group has been formed, with representation from: DEFRA, UKCIP, Scottish Executive, English Nature, Environment Agency and Scottish National Heritage. Its first meeting will be in late January.

Source: Coastline Scotland - The Newsletter of the Scottish Coastal Forum Issue No. 29 February 2005

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- Publications -

Publication - Life Focus/Life for Birds, 25 years of the Birds Directive: the contribution of LIFE Nature Projects

By Alberto Zocchi (2004, 48 pp.), European Commission, Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications on the European Communities, Web <http://europa.eu.int>, ISBN 92-894-7452-1, ISSN 1725-5619

The Birds Directive is still, 25 years after its adoption, the main legal reference for the protection of Europe's avifauna. The aim of this report is to give an overview of the results achieved by LIFE-Nature for endangered bird species in the European Union and how it has contributed to achieving the objectives of the Birds Directive. Selected success stories will be used to introduce the scientific ecological, socio-economic issues addressed and give some insights into the diversity of solutions that have been identified by LIFE project managers.

Coastal and estuarine managed realignment

Managed realignment is currently in fashion but no one has clearly defined what it is and how it can be implemented. This informative publication examines these issues and many more. Part I outlines the concept and part II covers important factors such as where and when, design, and implementation and monitoring. The book draws on the extensive experience of the authors and steering group from other similar projects to provide a comprehensive guide to best practice.

For further information and a sample chapter visit: <http://www.ciria.org/acatalog/C628.html>

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Development and flood risk

Recent flooding events have highlighted the lack of consideration of flood risk at the planning stage of projects – the consequences of which can be devastating. For development to be sustainable, planners and the construction industry should assess flood risk whether caused by rivers, the sea, estuaries, groundwater, overland flow, artificial drainage systems or infrastructure failure. This book is a vital tool which will enable professionals to plan and design developments more efficiently.

For further information and a sample chapter visit <http://www.ciria.org/acatalog/C624.html>

Our coasts and seas – making space for people, industry and wildlife

This strategy highlights the need for action across a range of issues from the loss of coastal habitats due to coastal squeeze to the damage to our marine ecosystem caused by over-exploitation of fisheries. It highlights the need to adapt to coastal change by completing the shift from coastal defence to coastal management, and advocates the establishment of a marine spatial planning system and a coherent network of Marine Protected Areas. It sets out actions to achieve these aims using different spatial scales ranging from local through regional to national and international.

The report can be downloaded at: http://www.english-nature.org.uk/science/coasts_and_seas/default.asp

Crossing Borders: Natura 2000 in the light of EU-Enlargement

This report contains the proceedings of the international workshop organised jointly by the European Centre for Nature Conservation (ECNC) and its network partner the Leibniz Institute of Ecological and Regional Development – IOER (Dresden, Germany). The workshop addressed almost all aspects of cross border cooperation in designating Natura 2000 sites: striving towards border crossing consistency in site designation, establishing connectivity between Natura 2000 sites and international scale, data management, and the dynamics of decision making processes regarding Natura 2000. The report can be found at: http://www.ecnc.org/CrossingBorders/Index_460.html

Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA) Synthesis Report

The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA) Synthesis Report, conducted by 1,300 experts from 95 countries, is the first in a series of seven synthesis and summary reports and four technical volumes that assess the state of global ecosystems and their impact on human well-being. Although evidence remains incomplete, there is enough for the experts to warn that the ongoing degradation of 15 of the 24 ecosystem services examined is increasing the likelihood of potentially abrupt changes that will seriously affect human well-being. This includes sudden changes in water quality, creation of "dead zones" along the coasts, the collapse of fisheries, and shifts in regional climate.

For more information please visit: <http://www.maweb.org/en/article.aspx?id=58>

– **Newsletters and new websites** –

Küsten Newsletter 1/2005

At <http://www.eucc-d.de/> "Aktuelles" you can find the latest edition of the German Küsten Newsletter.

KIMO International

KIMO International has a new website. Furthermore, a new subpage has been added to the Netherlands and Belgium page to cover all the latest news from the network.

The new website can be found at: <http://www.kimointernational.org/>

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– Events and training, 1st Announcements –

This list only includes the 1st Announcements of conferences and training courses.
For a complete overview of conferences please visit: <http://www.coastalguide.org/meetings>
EUCC related conferences are added in boxes.

April 17-20, 2005 - Tavira, Algarve, Portugal

International CoPraNet Conference: Coastal Conservation and Management in the Atlantic and Mediterranean (ICCCM)

Info : ICCCM2005 Secretariat, Tel: 351 966055637, E-mail: icccm2005_as@aeiou.pt

Internet: <http://www.fe.up.pt/ihrh/icccm>

May 31 – June 3, 2005 – Brussels, Belgium

Green Week: Get to grips with Climate Change

http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/greenweek/index_en.htm

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May 31 – June 3, 2005 – Brussels, Belgium

Marine Data and Information Systems Conference (IMDIS)

<http://www.ifremer.fr/sismer/program/imdis>

June 1-7, 2005 – Lisbon, Portugal

ECO-IMAGINE Training Course: The Waterfront Management and GI

<http://www.gisplanet.org/>

July 6, 2005 – London, UK

Conference: Offshore development – new frontiers of opportunity

<http://www.coastnet.org.uk/>

August 31 – September 2, 2005 – Kiel, Germany

International Conference and Exhibition Maritime Technologies

<http://www.inwatertec2005.de/>

September 5-12, 2005 - Katowice, Poland

8th EMAPI Conference (Ecology and Management of Alien Plant Invasions)

<http://www.emapi.us.edu.pl>

May 2-4, 2006 – Porto, Portugal

1st International Conference on the Application of Physical Modelling to Port and Coastal Protection

<http://www.fe.up.pt/~lpneves/coastlab06>

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– Colophon –

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Deadline for submitting contributions to EUCC Coastal News No 2005/04 : 25 April 2005.

Established in 1989, EUCC - The Coastal Union is an association involving the largest coastal network in Europe with 2500 members and member organisations in 40 countries. For more information please contact EUCC International Secretariat, POB 11232, NL-2301 EE Leiden, the Netherlands, tel.: +31-71-5122900, internet: <http://www.eucc.net>



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