

Activity Report 2017

Coastal & Marine Union (EUCC)

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Brief Presentation of the Organisation

The Coastal & Marine Union – EUCC is a stakeholder and network association with expert members and NGO member organisations in 40 countries. Founded in 1989 with the aim of promoting a European approach to coastal conservation by bridging the gap between scientists, environmentalists, site managers, planners and policy makers, it is the largest network of coastal & marine practitioners and experts in Europe, with five international offices and focal points and national branches in ten countries. Our working area is Europe, the Mediterranean and Black Sea.

EUCC is dedicated to conserving and maintaining healthy seas and attractive coasts for both people and nature. To this end, EUCC seeks to:

- ✓ promote integrated marine and coastal management;
- ✓ work to limit the impacts of climate change;
- ✓ provide advice, information, communication and policy instruments;
- ✓ partake in coastal and marine research projects;
- ✓ raise awareness of environmental issues;
- ✓ develop partnerships with stakeholders.

EUCC promotes a specifically European approach to marine and coastal management and has become a European expert and NGO-network on Marine strategy issues (especially marine litter and underwater noise), Maritime Spatial Planning, Integrated Coastal Zone Management (Land - Sea Interaction), and Sustainable coastal and maritime tourism. We try to provide integration to as well as a focus on aspects that are so important in nowadays EU environmental policies, notably in the field of: sustainable development, nature conservation, climate change, overall water quality, and waste (marine litter).

EUCC has always tried to provide continuity as the focal point of a European NGO-platform for sustainable management of coastal regions and waters. Having been involved in numerous European programmes and projects since the 1990s, EUCC tries hard to ensure the continued availability of information, lessons learnt and best practice experience after the end of these projects. In this sense EUCC is the main “institutional memory” for the European coast and coastal waters. Maybe this explains why EUCC has developed into the centre of a network of NGOs linking with authorities at local and regional, trying to improve the implementation of EU environmental policies by regional and local authorities in 10 EU member states, through the QualityCoast initiative.

Five international offices exist: the EUCC International Secretariat in Leiden (The Netherlands), the EUCC Eastern Europe Office in Klaipeda (Lithuania), EUCC Germany/Baltic Office in Warnemunde (Germany), Centro Mediterraneo EUCC in Barcelona (Spain) and the Atlantic Office in Biarritz (France).

Summary

EUCC activities in 2017 highlights include the following:

- ✓ The EUCC-team actively participated in the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) Coordination Group and its technical groups on Marine Litter and Underwater noise (Good Environmental Status GES descriptors nrs. 10 and 11).
- ✓ We have joined as Observer the EC MS Expert Group (MSEG) – on Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) group led by EC DG MARE and have attended its 11th Meeting on 2-3rd March 2017 in Hamburg and the 12th Meeting on 14th June in Malta and are now regularly informed about progress. EUCC also actively participated at the MSP Conference – Addressing Land Sea Interactions (Presentation: Participatory engagement in MSP: lessons from Integrated Coastal Management, by Natasha Bradshaw, EUCC) 15-16th June 2017 in Malta.
- ✓ Cooperation with NGOs, local and regional authorities throughout Europe, through the QualityCoast network. With the help of NGOs, implementation and awareness of European environmental policies is assessed at local authority level, esp. re: biodiversity and Natura 2000, MSFD priority topics (e.g. marine litter and underwater noise), sustainable fisheries, ICZM, and climate change adaptation and mitigation. Elements included (a) monitoring and benchmarking local and regional performance in the implementation of EU environmental policies and legislation; (b) drafting recommendations; (c) promoting and facilitating the exchange of experiences and good practices. Participating regions include app. 100 coastal regions, towns and islands, including the Azores and the Canary Isles.
- ✓ Cooperation with ECNC, and also with ECOTRANS, EDEN, Alpine Pearls, and FEE on the development of a wider European network of NGOs and local authorities focusing on biodiversity and sustainability, especially in relation to tourism.
- ✓ Active cooperation with fishermen organizations for innovation contributing to sustainability.
- ✓ We promoted MSFD topics and EU ICM-principles in publications, exhibits and visitor centres.

Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) and MSP

EUCC has built an extensive experience in international projects, in particular ones related to coastal best practices and ICM, in which wide engagement of coastal stakeholders and organisation of international events have taken place and EUCC has played a central role. Other projects in which EUCC implemented activities to support bridging the gap between policy makers and science include SPICOSA, CONSCIENCE, IMCORE, KnowSeas and ENCORA. Furthermore, EUCC is member of various EU working and technical groups such as the ICM Expert Group and coordinates both the MSFD Underwater Noise and Marine Litter Technical Groups, which have been set-up to provide guidance and recommendations to the MSFD-GES Working Group in respect to these two descriptors. At the Regional Seas level, EUCC has been following and contributing to the work as observer of the OSPAR and HELCOM Conventions, as well as following closely the Black Sea and Mediterranean regional seas developments. Its Mediterranean Centre is UNEP MAP Partner.

Since February 2017, EUCC is observer of the Member States expert Group on Maritime Spatial Planning (MSEG on MSP) based on our strong position to support Member States and the EC by providing access to knowledge & experience to help implement aspects of the MSP Directive. It is a key time to enable EUCC to share lessons from 25 years of ICM leadership to support:

- a. methods to link MSP processes with already established terrestrial planning systems in order to facilitate consideration of land-sea interactions;
- b. transboundary MSP implementation across regional seas (which will help to deliver Good Environmental Status under the MSFD); and
- c. approaches to stakeholder engagement and public participation which ensure efficiency and continuity for societal engagement in the process across boundaries, including Member States' borders

The follow-up of our involvement in this field led to further involvement of our team to support the development of new project proposals and ideas expected be materialized in the next years.



Coastal & Maritime Tourism (QualityCoast)

With the QualityCoast programme, the Coastal & Marine Union - EUCC aims to establish a worldwide network of coastal communities that share similar values on sustainable development, nature and biodiversity, cultural heritage and identity, and social responsibility, at the same time maintaining high standards in the quality of their tourism. QualityCoast has been developed in the EU INTERREG IIC project Coastal Practice Network (CoPraNet) by 21 partners from 11 countries under the lead of the Coastal & Marine Union – EUCC. The QualityCoast programme was the result of the development of success indicators of Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) at local level, in connection to the implementation of the EU Recommendation for ICZM (2002). QualityCoast provides new ways of cooperation between coastal communities. Communities join a network of like-minded communities and share their experiences and best practices in order to improve sustainability and social responsibility in tourism. Their performance in these fields is connected to international tourism marketing through certification under the supervision of an independent international jury issuing QualityCoast Awards. In the QualityCoast Award programme EUCC cooperates with approximately 100 coastal and island destinations.

In 2017, EUCC has been implementing the QualityCoast assessment and awards programme involving ca. 30 destinations, all European.

EUCC completed the Green Deal for sustainable tourism, together with the Dutch government and ten other organisations, including ECNC, TUI Benelux, Corendon.com, Booking.com affiliate BookDifferent.com, and Green Destinations. This was the result of a strategic cooperation with the tourism industry that EUCC and ECNC had initiated in 2013. As part of the Green Deal, all information on QualityCoast destinations was included in the Green Destinations Database, along with many more data on ca. 800 European destinations. These data are since early 2014 displayed to consumers by BookDifferent (www.bookdifferent.com/en/green-travel-destinations).

www.qualitycoast.info

Main financing Agency: Participating local and regional authorities, European Union

EU Marine Strategy – MSFD

Regarding the **implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD)**, EUCC has been actively involved from the beginning on the issue of Marine Litter and Underwater noise. Member States were expected to design and implement their monitoring programmes; in respect to these Descriptors 10 – Marine litter and 11- Underwater Noise they rely until a great extent on the recommendations of the technical groups, that EUCC has also been an expert member and has supported the activities of both TG Marine Litter and Underwater Noise under a specific contract (see list of ongoing projects). The main activities during 2016 were to provide technical support to the technical groups: the MSFD-Technical Group on Marine Litter (TG- ML) and MSFD Technical Group Underwater Noise (TG Noise).

During 2017, EUCC continue to support the preparation of technical documents related to these topics and disseminated key documents and our work continue -:

- To contribute to the implementation of the MSFD, in respect to Descriptor 10 – Marine Litter; bridging and disseminating other relevant initiatives;
- To contribute to the implementation of the Marine Litter Regional Action Plans for the North East Atlantic (particularly North Sea sub-region) and the Mediterranean;
- To increase public awareness regarding the ecological, socio-economic and human health impacts of our consumption and disposal behaviour and promote a more responsible behaviour, following the hierarchy proposed by the Waste Framework Directive: prevention>re-use>recycling>disposal;
- Facilitate the bridging among stakeholders and different sectors in order to promote a more circular economy, prevent and re-value waste and its impacts;
- To contribute to the implementation of the MSFD, in respect to Descriptor 11 – Underwater Noise; bridging with other relevant initiatives.

The follow-up of our involvement in this field led to further involvement of our team to support the development of new project proposals and ideas expected be materialized in the next years.

Project INITIATIVES

Project - Administrative, organizational and technical support for the Technical Sub-Groups on Marine Litter and Underwater Noise (2015-ongoing)

EUCC lead the execution of this service as part of the Framework contract ENV.D.2/FRA/2012/0025 for services related to “Emerging pressures, human activities and measures in the marine environment (including marine litter)”. The overall objective of this contract is to address the emerging pressures and emerging human activities and related measures in the marine environment with the view to informing and assisting Member States in the preparation of their national programme of measures to achieve or maintain good environmental status, as provided for by Article 13 of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD: 2008/56/EC).

The objective of the service contract was to provide administrative, organizational and logistic support to the Technical Groups on Marine Litter and Underwater Noise, which included:

- i) organizing and providing secretarial services for the periodic meetings of the technical groups on Marine Litter and Underwater Noise;
- ii) supporting the technical groups in their reporting obligations to the Working Group on GES, including coordinating input from group members and editing of the Guidance Reports for MS and assisting the exchange of information on on-going activities in the TGs;
- iii) organizing workshops for Member States on the monitoring underwater noise and iv) maintaining a clear and effective web-based working platform for each of the two TGs, to support communication activities within the groups.

Financing Agency: European Commission DG ENV

25 innovative solutions to combat plastic marine litter

The EUCC team has been requested to prepare a public publication identify existing innovative solutions to prevent the generation of plastics ending up as Marine Litter, which could be replicated in the Mediterranean Region by companies and Civil Society Organisations.

This result in the production of the “25 innovative and inspiring solutions to combat plastic marine litter in the Mediterranean Region” publication is conceived as a practical tool for entrepreneurs and CSOs to identify the best solution for their context and be guided toward its successful implementation.

Financing Agency: UN Environment/MAP - SCP/RAC

Young Professionals Coastal Community (YPCC)

An example dealing with academic educations is the recent Climate of Coastal Cooperation initiative with young professionals, which has followed the publication of the “Climate of Coastal Cooperation” (www.coastalcooperation.net) production by the EUCC and the workshop held in LITTORAL Conference 2012. Since then at the Littoral Conferences of 2014, 2016 and in 2018 will host a workshop to present and engage with the young community. This initiative aims to establish a Young Professionals Coastal Community (YPCC), based on the principle that innovative, resilient, no/regret adaptive options should involve young professionals at an early stage through familiarizing them with the concepts and tools of ICZM. During 2016, a renew website has been produced (www.ybcc.eu) and a second brochure dedicated to this initiative, that can be downloaded at the website. Furthermore, a programme on how to join the YPCC community is also available. These products aimed to promote and communicate with the schools/universities for the development and preparations needed to set-up a tailor-made capacity building programme. This programme has been developed running since 2011.

www.ybcc.eu

COASTLEARN - LONG DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAMME

In terms of capacity building, the EUCC and the Mediterranean Centre lead and maintain the multidisciplinary international partnership which developed the first on-line, free of use distance training programme on ICZM, CoastLearn. This self-learning tool targets primarily coastal managers and planners working at local, sub-national, and national levels and is accessible on-line free of charge.

The programme aims at making ICZM accessible to professionals in the Eastern Mediterranean, the Black Sea and Baltic Sea. Experts from educational and planning institutes in several (pre-) accession countries (including Turkey, Slovenia, Croatia) and NIS countries ensure that the package is tailored to the needs of the target audience. The training programme is presently available online, free accessible in English, Polish, Turkish, French, Russian, Latvian, Romanian, Estonian, Lithuanian, Bulgarian, Albanian and Arabic (one module available) versions.

More info: www.coastlearn.org

Financing agency: several, including European Union

Recovering Marine Litter

Healthy Seas a journey from waste to wear (ECNC group) (2013 - ongoing)

The Healthy Seas initiative is a joint venture of a non-governmental organization (ECNC Group) and two businesses (the Aquafil Group and Star Sock) in its journey from waste to wear. Healthy Seas recovers abandoned fishing nets that pollute our seas and coasts and regenerate the nylon into high-quality yarn which is turned into brand new sustainable textiles. Healthy Seas non-profit activities include the recovery of fishing nets by volunteer divers and their storage in special facilities, in addition to educational and prevention programs. In 2016 the fishing net recovery took place in Belgium, United Kingdom, Malta, Greece, Italy and The Netherlands. 75 volunteer divers and 650 fishing boats recovered and collected a total of 152 tons of fishing nets. For preventing marine litter, we collaborate with fishermen, fish farms, local communities and other stakeholders to prevent waste nets from ending up in the sea. Together we work on measures to dispose of nets in a responsible yet affordable way. We also work on raising public awareness of the environmental damage caused by ghost fishing gear and promote the ecological and economic importance of healthy seas.

<http://healthyseas.org>

Main Financing Agency: Aquafil Group, via ECNC Land & Sea Group EEIG , Adessium Foundation and partners like Star Sock, Desso, Interface and Kaufland.

North Sea Fishing Nets Free (Noordzee Netten Vrij) (2017 -ongoing)

The EUC as part of the Healthy Seas initiative cooperates with the Dutch North Sea Foundation and KIMO Netherlands & Belgium in this project to achieve the goal of freeing the North Sea from abandoned fishing nets. As in other maritime sectors, it used to be the most normal thing that waste (including old fishing nets) were thrown overboard. That habit is changing rapidly in The Netherlands. The fishing sector is on the move and is committed to improving waste management on board and in ports, for example by participating in Healthy Seas and by participating in KIMO's Fishing for Litter project.

Main publications in 2017

25 innovative solutions to combat plastic marine litter

This publication released by UN Environment/MAP - SCP/RAC, was developed by the Coastal & Marine Union (EUC), intends to inspire and provide practical indications to implement marine litter solutions in the Mediterranean region.

The “25 innovative and inspiring solutions to combat plastic marine litter in the Mediterranean Region” publication is conceived as a practical tool for entrepreneurs and CSOs to identify the best solution for their context and be guided toward its successful implementation.

English version: http://www.cprac.org/sites/default/files/otherfiles/25_solutions_en.pdf

French version: <http://www.cprac.org/fr/archives-des-nouvelles/generiques/25-innovative-solutions-to-combat-plastic-marine-litter-a-unique-t-1>

Kust&Zee Gids (the Netherlands)

Our free annual magazine in Dutch. Published in May 2017: 60 pages, 200,000 copies, with information on sustainable tourism destinations, nature, coastal protection and management for the general public. <https://www.kustzee.nl/publicaties/kustzee-gids>