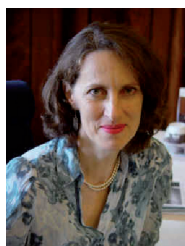


Introductory Statement - Europe



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Coastal zones are valuable and highly productive areas in economic and environmental sense. The coastal zones are however also vulnerable to non sustainable uses and impacts of climate change. Integrated coastal zone management is directed towards sustainable development and is addressing these challenges in a comprehensive way. Managing the coastal zones requires knowledge of the socio-economic and natural, coastal processes. Good management is the base for well balanced and informed decision making.

It is the mandate of the EEA to assist European Commission and the NGO community, in: “Making informed decisions about improving the environment, integrating environmental considerations into economic policies and moving towards sustainability”.

Increasing the knowledge base of coastal systems is especially important in addressing the serious challenges dealing with the functioning of ecosystems and their resources.

We strive to build up profound insight on the coastal dynamics, to decrease its vulnerability, to increase its flexibility and its resilience.

The EEA facilitates this building up of knowledge through assisting in monitoring capabilities of member states, to assist in data base management, to disseminate information in Europe and in EU related countries. Our support to the **Asia-Europe Environment Forum** shows that we also reach out to Asian countries, many of which have strongly developing coastal zones. We facilitate countries in their efforts to manage the narrow and densely populated and economic vibrant coastal zones in a sustainable manner.

The present day challenges are complex. The future challenges will be more pressing. Increased knowledge on impacts of global climate change for planning and designing measures to mitigate and to adapt is highly needed, as illustrated by our participation in: “One degree matters” (www.eea.europa.eu/cop15/bend-the-trend/one-degree-matters-movie).

Collecting data and transferring into information are essential activities. It is important to ensure proper data management and dissemination of knowledge to international, national, provincial and local authorities and coastal stakeholders and managers. The EEA facilitates monitoring of coastal processes and assists in creating information systems: example EUROSION data base can be consulted even after this valuable EU project finished. The EEA's hosting of such important data base provides continuation in data gathering, and data storage and information dissemination for EU coastal countries and beyond. Thus, it brings together key aspects of national and international research outputs including those from the Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES) initiative in order to strengthen the link between science and policy.

EEA is an open structured organisation and will also in the future facilitate such important services directed at analysing the functioning of ecosystem and natural resources.

The European Commission and EEA strongly support integrated coastal management approaches as can be read in the following chapters of this “Climate on Coastal Cooperation” publication.