



# NW Europe Schools of Excellence in ICZM

## Training Impact Review

December, 2007



# ENVISION



Sefton Council

## Summary

1. The COREPOINT project has run four schools of excellence in ICZM hosted by partners from Cork (March, 2005), Cardiff (July, 2005), Gent (February, 2006) and Ulster (June 2006).
2. The schools were attended by a total 108 delegates.
3. Each school was presented by a core group from the COREPOINT project partners led by Envision with contributions, principally in presentation of case studies, from CMRC, Cork; MACE, Cardiff, Sefton, Ulster; and Gent.
4. The training provision for each school centred on case studies to illustrate each of the EU ICZM principles of best practice. However, over the courses of the 4 schools there was a considerable evolution of the overall structure and presentation of the schools in the light of comments made by delegates and which were captured in an evaluation exercise implemented at the end of each school. Changes primarily focussed on shortening formal presentations and increasing opportunity for delegate participation and discussion.
5. Each school included one or two field visits that were used to demonstrate 1 or 2 of the ICZM principles. The conduct of these also evolved over the course of the project to make them more clearly relevant to delegates.
6. 6 to 9 months after each school the impact of the training provision was evaluated with a questionnaire sent to up to 10 delegates who had attended: 21 questionnaires were returned and form the basis of this report.
7. The post-school evaluation reveals that the Schools had had a significant impact regarding personal appreciations of the role and methodology of ICZM, influence on work practices and understanding of the opportunities provided by adopting ICZM approaches.

## **Introduction**

The COREPOINT project has a focus on specific issues that are currently barriers to the successful implementation of practices of integrated coastal zone management (ICZM) within planning strategies for coastal zones in Europe: These include;

- Lack of integrated planning and management to achieve sustainable development of the NW Europe coastal zone.
- Lack of engagement and open communication with stakeholders, including political representatives and the general public.
- Poor links between researchers and policy makers.
- Lack of sustained capacity and expertise within local authorities.
- Disproportionate levels of progress on ICZM in Northwest Europe.

Because ICZM is often considered as a non-core or luxury activity within local authorities, it is dealt with on a project basis. Experts are temporarily recruited to oversee and implement specific projects. On completion of the project, this expertise is lost to the authority. There is a need to ensure the long-term integration of ICZM within Local Authorities by strengthening the capability of permanent staff directly involved in the coastal management process (e.g. planners, engineers, conservation officers); and by achieving the support of local and regional politicians for the development and implementation of ICZM initiatives.

One activity of the COREPOINT project, within Theme 6 - Excellence in ICZM for NW Europe, was to hold ICZM schools targeted towards Politicians, Local Authority employees and coastal practitioners to increase their knowledge of the benefits of ICZM. The objective of this action was to educate decision makers and strengthening links between local authorities and university research centres.

### **NW Europe School of Excellence in ICZM structure**

The purpose of the ICZM schools were to provide training to coastal management practitioners, delivered by a team of trans-national experts, with a focus on teaching the principles of best practice to coastal practitioners, including local authority staff and councillors. The Aim of the training was to increase awareness and expertise within Local Authorities towards ICZM and thereby be a direct benefit to LA employers. The intent of this approach was to promote the COREPOINT objective of sustainable management of coastal areas and to harmonise understanding of the principles for common implementation in NW Europe.

The overall design and implementation of the schools was managed by Envision who organised a series of lectures and case study presentations that drew on the wealth of experience from other project partners. This integrated approach pools expertise in NW Europe to deliver a state of the art course with maximum relevance and case study content for practitioners whose job role includes elements of ICZM.

Over the course of the project, four schools have been held. All were evaluated immediately post-delivery through a mixture of scoring for Relevance; Content; Structure; Presentation style and Interest and fun, as well as specific comments on best and worst features of the course and how the course could be improved. Scoring for all categories at all schools was well above a medium score and comments indicated a high level of satisfaction for the content and structure of the courses. However, assessment from within the COREPOINT project and suggestions from delegates from each school led to a continuous process of evolution of the course structure and content between the first school, held in Cork, and the fourth school, held in Coleraine (Table 1). This evolution led:

1. To a progressive reduction in formal lecture-style content of the school and an increase in opportunity for discussion and delegate participation, and
2. Towards a more uniform and systematic style and structure to presentations – in particular the case studies illustrating the 8 EU ICZM principles of best practice.
3. To embedding the ICZM principles and European perspectives of coastal management within the context of the work environment.

Table 1: Final overall structure and sequence of course content for NE Europe School in Excellence in ICZM.

Title	Comments
Introduction to ICZM and European approaches	Presentation
Building the jigsaw of ICZM – an interactive exercise including coffee break	Group exercise Discussion
Implementing coastal management at the local level: The management of Sefton Coast	Presentation Discussion
Case Study Presentations – ICZM Principles (x3)	Presentation Discussion
Fieldtrip 1 – Demonstrating 1 of ICZM principles	Fieldtrip Discussion
Case Study Presentations – ICZM Principles (x3)	Presentation Discussion
Fieldtrip 2 – Demonstrating 1 of ICZM principles	Fieldtrip Discussion
Implementing coastal management at the regional level	Presentation Discussion
Conclusions	Discussion

### Outcomes from ICZM Schools

A questionnaire was sent to a representative sample of attendees to each of the Schools in Excellence in ICZM to ascertain the impact the school had had on both perceptions and understanding of ICZM as well as whether attendance had had any influence on work practices. The full responses are given in the following tables. Attendees found the case studies in particular, illustrating real examples of coastal issues, a useful experience, and the opportunity to exchange ideas and experiences from across Europe beneficial. Another interesting outcome is a realisation that the principles and practices of ICZM can be used for other planning processes and methodologies. The responses provide a clear indication that the approach to professional training provision adopted within the COREPOINT project has had a distinct influence on attendees in three linked areas:

1. ***Personal understanding of ICZM in a work context*** – Attendees gained an insight and have taken back to their workplace ideas of how principles and practices of ICZM can:
  - a. An ICZM approach is relevant to many existing management processes and helps in finding workable solutions to coastal issues;
  - b. Demonstrate the need to work with natural processes and inculcate strong connections and links between marine- and land-based spatial planning, as well as the need to recognise the intricate and interconnected relationship between human and natural dimensions to coastal issues and activities; and
  - c. Provide an awareness for the need of a policy framework that explicitly includes combined marine and land spatial planning in the context of ICZM with inclusion vertically and horizontally of all actors.

2. ***Influencing approaches to work practices*** – Attendees found that the Schools had given them a better understanding of the obstacles, conflicts and consequences of a lack of integration within management efforts to address coastal issues.

In addition, attendees found that they were attempting to work in a more inclusive manner across sectors and departments, and build new and more inclusive local networks.

3. ***Understanding the opportunity presented by ICZM principles and practices*** – Discussion structured around the principles and practices of ICZM provide:

- a. A strong mechanism for promoting a more open and clear need to widen involvement of all actors in activities.
- b. A framework for providing advice and informing others.
- c. A strong drive for adopting a longer term perspective for planning.

All the participants found that the School would be relevant to other colleagues and would be keen to participate in further training opportunities in ICZM.

The following tables gives the verbatim responses to the questionnaire that was sent out to participants who attended the schools.

**Which of the above aspects have had an influence on your work since the course?**

Little direct influence, however the course highlighted potential obstacles in the decision making process and how decisions can be made for political or economic expediency rather than out of due regard for the available evidence and expertise. It also improved my general awareness of the risks and dangers to the coastal environment of conflicting or irreconcilable interpretations of a given situation.

Soft engineering approach preferable for managing erosion. Sediments should be retained in systems, for example by re-nourishment.

Keeping the key ICZM principles in mind when developing management frameworks is probably the most significant, since much of my work involved developing current management approaches through international co-operation. Since the key theme of the Corepoint workshop was "participation" this is appropriate. However, I realise that participation works on many levels and involves different stakeholders at different stages in the process. The first, involves the scientific experts to fulfil (as comprehensively as possible) the requirement of "knowing your resource". This we are working towards as part of the AquaReg CZM project – developing tools for use in ICZM.

From a Planning perspective, informing colleagues and other interested parties as to the changes this will bring to our work in preparing development plans that include coastal stretches. Strategically, there has to be a change in the mind set within Planning to now take on board the 'wet-side' as opposed to the traditional 'dry-side' on which Planning Service has concentrated.

Site visits & depth product knowledge this brought to my area of work.

All of the above

As a newcomer to ICZM, I have made use of all of the above.

Coastal processes – I am establishing a network of coastal care groups throughout our local authority and the knowledge gained at the course has increased my level of understanding as well as being able to provide basic tutoring to others. Knowledge of the principles of ICZM is helping me in managing a local coastal partnership and to develop a coastal strategy. I have used the format of the case studies to hold local coastal change seminars. Using some of the contacts made at the course as partners in the development of a transnational EU project.

The different case studies and seeing comparisons or differences between Ireland and Europe. Plus the talk on ICZM in Europe and how it is been applied

The need to consider different perspectives/expertise, in relation to project planning and development. Having both short term and longer term perspectives and goals

Coastal zone management is not related to my day to day activity but the principles have been applied in my dealings on other areas.

None – not working directly in the area at present.

The most important thing I learned is that a good and open communication with all the different partners that are involved in each project is needed/crucial for the success of each project and this from the beginning of each project.

It's always good to look abroad how are certain problems are handled

All of them

These aspects were already part of our work, so no big changes there.

The networking opportunities were very useful, meeting others who are working in similar fields. The sharing of information was very useful. The resources (field guides) provided have been useful in developing my Coastal Education programme

Although I am not currently employed in this field, I attended the course as part of my PhD research in ICZM. The course highlighted all of the above. Furthermore, the course also highlighted the fact that the management of cultural heritage is still largely missing from ICZM approaches. This has made me even more determined to highlight its importance and vulnerability through my research.

All of them

All – an understanding of the ICZM process adds real value to existing coastal management arrangements.

**Was the course useful and was it relevant to your job?**

Yes. Perhaps less so in a day-to-day sense, more so in terms of general outlook and consideration of broader issues.

Yes, very useful and relevant.

Fundamentally, the principles we learned are applicable to all coastal management approaches. It highlighted the need for local specificity, inclusion of all stakeholders, and the need to consider the long term implication of the approach taken. I did find the practical examples were biased towards the "dry side" however. In many ways management of fisheries and aquaculture is more complex in terms of administration & licensing, legislation, conflicts & spatial planning, monitoring and identification of resources.

The course was eye-opening with regards to the work ahead, the participative and integrative approach required and the urgency with which we need to be making informed policy now.

Yes – my involvement with coastal issues has expanded. I can now voice opinions and make recommendations based on factual knowledge.

Absolutely. Provided opportunity to see management approaches elsewhere.

Very useful and all relevant to my job.

It was very useful to learn about all the different projects at our coast and abroad.

It was useful, to develop a broader view

Yes the course was very useful & put our efforts in "wet " CZM into a broader context.

Yes, as ICZM is my every day business.

The course was useful and relevant in part to my job of raising awareness of coastal environments.

It was very useful and relevant to my research as it highlighted many new developments in the field through both the lectures and through personal contact.

The course also gave me the opportunity to highlight my own research – the integration of coastal cultural heritage in an ICZM framework. This lead to a 5 week placement/exchange programme for me which was made possible through Corepoint funding, the CMRC and the University of Cardiff.

Very useful and highly relevant – particularly highlighting the need for the integration between the built environment and the natural environment sectors.

Yes

**Would more and/or other members of your organisation benefit from this type of course?**

Probably, meeting and interacting with practitioners from such diverse but related backgrounds would be helpful to anyone working in a relevant post.

Yes, particularly regional management and field staff.

With practical examples from the wet side, yes.

I am confident that staff from PS, both at HQ and those at Divisional level operating / /preparing plans with coastal stretches, would find this course extremely useful.

Perhaps if it could be pitched at a more senior level to actively influence policy etc going forward.

Yes, particularly if the organisation was better resourced with respect to coastal management.

Yes. I had hoped to hold a training course locally but the deadline for extension funding was too tight.

Yes, it would be useful if some more of the engineers or planners who would have work or projects at, near or affecting the coastal zone were involved.

Yes -

All Local Authority engineers that have an interest in the coastal area would benefit from an abridged version of the course in order to gain an appreciation of the issues involved.

Forward planners/Development control planners/Engineers/Environmental Scientists/Managers

It is necessary to know what kinds of projects are currently being carried out so that one can realize on which different levels management projects are developed. I think that our organization is rather well informed on this. A newsletter would be a good alternative to inform other colleagues.

Yes

Yes, we have a team working on bay management issues related to aquaculture & they would all benefit.

Yes, but our team is very small.

Not sure.

Yes – selected, elected members and key staff.

Yes

Tourism Officers

Coastal Protection Officers



Can you give specific examples of what you have done as part of your job differently following the COREPOINT training course?

Not really, except perhaps a more conscious attempt to become better informed of the reasons and motives of those with differing opinions or who disagree with the practice and policy of the organisation.

Proposed Harbour Dredging, Magheraroarty, County Donegal: Advised Donegal County Council to re-nourish beach within Natura SAC site rather than proposed dumping at sea, or removing sand landward.

Much of my work has involved a process for developing current initiatives. The focus has been on proper identification of resources (seabed mapping, hydrographic info and core monitoring data), PARTICIPATION at the early, data integration level and development of GIS to provide tools for more informed decision making.

Briefed the Division and the Development Control Staff as to the driving aims of ICZM and ensured that it is considered in coastal related applications.

Briefed the Dev Plan team as to how our priorities will have to change with regards to the marine / land interface.

Using Rathlin, as an example, I implemented a better scheme for advertising Planning Applications to the Island. The list of weekly applications is emailed directly to the Island keeping the small population in the loop with regards to what's happening on their island planning wise.

Sustainable and affordable development that encourages islanders and their relatives / children to live on the island is encouraged, in the hope that the population will start to rise. A healthy population will be able to take advantage of the economic and environmental potential of the Island in the years to come.

Again I can speak more confidently re coastal matters since attending the course.

Looking at a phased approach to management of the beach. Key elements repeated every year including seasonal staff, servicing the site, planning events through out the year etc. Looking at long term planning to raise awareness about the resource, educate all users why area is special, about activities, look for long term funding/partnership opportunities that will benefit the site management.

I was new into the job, so the course provided guidelines as to how I now operate.

I was meeting representatives of Schull Harbour Development as part of pre planning discussions for a Harbour and Marina Development. From here I discussed with the Assistant County Manager that while the planning application should proceed by the local group Cork County Council should look at its role in the Marine Leisure Sector in West Cork and draw up a Marine Leisure Strategy or policy. We are working on that currently

Use of a field-trip to initiate interest in a project that involves multiple partners and sectors

Enhance public consultation in my roads functions and project proposals as a result of the training course.

A greater appreciation for the complexity and value of the foreshore and coastline.

No.

In my work about the status of conservation of birds in the special protection areas it is important to involve all possible actors for assembling information of any kind. One can find a lot of information in literature but the finesses on the spot for a specific region can best be find via local expert judgement.

No

We have refocused our efforts on working towards tools for CZM and making data available to stakeholders in a user friendly way.

Nothing in particular

Although I have not applied the knowledge gained from the course to a 'job' situation, it has made me a lot more pro-active in the field. For example, I now take part in regular work-shops e.g. the Cork Harbour Forum.

Contributed to a regional ICZN stocktake and promoted its value. Actively involved in the current SMP2 process for Tyne to Flamborough Head. Now Vice Chair of Coastal Partnerships Working Group (an emerging coastal partnerships support group). Positively included the user community in coastal issues.

As the sustainable planning, management and use of the resources within the coastal zone depends on informed decision- making, an understanding of the nature and extent of these resources is crucial to this process. Therefore, I have attempted to develop a sound knowledge base about all aspects of the coastal zone which underpins my decision making

**Would you like opportunity to participate in further training?**

Yes, meeting the same / similar group of people again would be both interesting and beneficial.

Yes

Yes, again if there were more examples from the wet side.

Yes

Yes

Would welcome any further training opportunity.

Yes, the course was well organised and run and the practical/theoretical approach helps the learning process.

Yes, it would consistently keep one up to date in the latest trends, methods and different practices.

Yes

Not currently, but a course directed to local government engineers that have an interest (job description involving the coastline) would benefit from the course.

Yes

I would like to be kept informed about future training programmes.

Yes

Yes I would.

Yes, always interested to learn from other examples in ICZM and transnational working.

Possibly if it was related to my work.

Yes, very much so.

Yes, very much so.

Yes