

From Baltimore to Durban – The Wadden Sea in an International context

Jens Enemark, Secretary,
CWSS

Observations from international conferences.

The 5th IUCN World Parks Congress was held in Durban, South Africa, 8–17 September 2003. The World Parks Congress' are held every 10 years and is the major global event for policy makers, managers and scientists of national parks and nature reserves world wide. The theme of the 5th Parks Congress was "Benefits beyond boundaries". It reflected the current world wide shared understanding that protected areas can only be managed effectively within a broader social and economic context. At the World Parks Congress in 1992 in Caracas the world looked somewhat different. The emphasis was much more on the management of the protected areas and on the preservation of pristine nature areas.

Much more emphasis was also laid on the protection and management of coastal areas and oceans in Durban compared to the Caracas meeting where this aspect was only dealt with to a very limited extent. On the initiative of the of the IUCN World Commission of Protected Areas-Marine the whole complex of protection and sustainable management of coastal areas and oceans was a cross cutting theme in the workshops organized in Durban. The driving forces behind this initiative were Charles Ehler, director, International Program Office of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), USA and vice chair of the IUCN Commission and Biliiana Cicin-Sain, director at the Center for the Study of Marine Policy at the University of Delaware, USA.

Starting in Baltimore

A key workshop within the marine theme was the discussion of the principles and guidelines to incorporate marine protected areas (MPAs) into integrated coastal and ocean management. These principles and guidelines had been prepared at a workshop in Baltimore in July 2003, held in advance of the biannual Coastal Zone Management conference. The workshop was held on the initiative of NOAA and the University of Delaware and encompassed presentations of case studies from marine protected areas world wide. I was invited to present the Wadden Sea as an example of a trans-boundary management in relation to protecting and managing a coastal area.

Not surprisingly there were large differences in the conservation and management issues be-

tween areas of the developing and the developed world. Presentations from the developing world included case study presentations from a.o. Mexico, Kenya and the Philippines. Not surprisingly but important to be reminded of is the fact that the management issues in these parts of the world are very much related to securing food for an ever increasing population which produces such goods in an environment in which there is a lack of financial resources, knowledge and good governance, while at the same time conserving ecosystems.

The case studies from the developed world included the Florida Keys, the Great Barrier Reef and the Wadden Sea. In comparison there is hardly any lack of resources, knowledge and governance. The Great Barrier Reef and the Wadden Sea are among the world's largest and best managed ecosystems. For both areas an important issue is how to manage such marine protected areas in a larger context and how to appropriately address the external impacts on the area. The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority has just lately been able to introduce a new government policy on improving the water quality on the Reef by a new watershed management, a policy that has not existed so far.

Ending in Durban

In Durban, the exercise in Baltimore was more or less repeated, but for a larger and much broader audience. The Great Barrier Reef and the Wadden Sea were again given the opportunity to demonstrate their world-wide uniqueness and comprehensive management approach as a model for other areas. On the basis of the input of the Baltimore workshop, three overarching principles associated with a number of guidelines were discussed in Durban:

- strengthening the linkages between the MPAs and the wider coastal and marine area,
- developing governance arrangements to incorporate MPAs into the broader framework of coastal management and,
- fostering implementation of MPAs through enhanced policy and management tools.

The principles were lively discussed by the audience. It was agreed that on the basis of the input in Durban the principles and guidelines should be elaborated further in the framework of the IUCN Commission.



A 50 meter broad public beach in Connecticut – public, if you have a permit (Photo: Enemark).

The discussions in Durban on this issue and other marine themes have clearly demonstrated that there is a need to focus on the state and management of our coastal areas and oceans. Undoubtedly, they are currently the most endangered ecosystems because of in many cases unsustainable impacts and uses. The management of oceans and coastal areas are furthermore complex in terms of the available instruments and competencies. The challenges are great but it is necessary to meet those in time and within the next generation.

And further across the USA

I also participated in the Coastal Zone 03 (CZ 03, pronounced "seeset" by insiders). Since the adoption of the Coastal Zone Management Act in 1972, the world's first coastal zone management act, coastal managers in the most broadest sense from primarily the states but also from abroad meet biannually to exchange information and discuss issues related to coastal management. The CZ is an information market place with many interesting, but also uninteresting, workshops and plenary meetings. This time it was about coastal management through time. An excellent example of coastal and estuary management in the States is the Chesapeake Bay, the largest estuary in North America. Since Baltimore is located at the estuary it was natural to present progress and future plans. The Chesapeake Bay Program is the most advanced and costly estuary program in the USA using more than 50% of the estuary programs in the States. The Chesapeake 2000 Bay program which is an agreement between the federal government and the states in the watershed aims to further protect and restore the Bay and its rivers by address-

ing 5 key areas, e.g. improving water quality and encouraging sound land use. The Chesapeake Bay Program has an excellent website <http://www.chesapeakebay.net>. CZ, an inspiring and motivating event.

I further visited the internationally renowned Coastal Resources Center (CRC), University of Rhode Island in Narragansett, Rhode Island and gave a lecture on the Wadden Sea "program" as it is mostly depicted in the states. The CRC are conducting coastal management projects world wide but primarily in the developing countries and educating new coastal managers. Its inspiring director Stephen Olson informed me that CRC is currently carrying out a comparative study of the management of three large coastal ecosystems that have evolved to be able to successfully address the issues they are facing in their ecosystems, namely the Chesapeake Bay, the Great Barrier Reef and the Wadden Sea. The study will be available in 2004 and is meant to also be an inspiration for coastal managers world wide. An interesting piece of information at the end of an interesting journey.

And I finally understood why the issue of public access to beaches in the states is such a big issue amongst coastal managers. Practically the whole coast is private property up to the mean low water mark. I only found one public beach on a 200 mile travel along the coast, and access was only possible with a specific permit and a huge parking fee.

Jens A. Enemark

Common Wadden Sea Secretariat

Virchowstr. 1

D-26382 Wilhelmshaven

enemark@waddensea-secretariat.org