Coastal Communities Network
Workshop Three - Summary Report
June 2004

CoCoNet (Coastal Communities Network) is an INTERREG IIIA funded project, implemented by project partners in the CMRC (Coastal & Marine Resources Centre, University College Cork) and MACE (Marine & Coastal Environment Group, Cardiff University).

Aims of the CoCoNet Project
CoCoNet aims:

- To facilitate networking and communication among coastal communities.
- To explore mechanisms to provide coastal communities with a real sense of participation and involvement in the future management of the coastal and marine area.

By carrying out a series out of Workshops, CoCoNet will help to improve awareness of local ICM issues, increase understanding of marine and coastal environments and provide opportunities for stakeholders to share experiences.

The third CoCoNet workshop was held in Wexford, Ireland on the 17th June 2004. The workshop was jointly hosted with the CZMNet (Coastal Zone Management Network) project. This workshop was preceded by workshops held in Aberystwyth, Wales (2nd and 3rd April 2004) and in Howth, Co. Dublin, Ireland (30th and 31st January 2004). The full reports and presentations for all Workshops are available as a pdf download from the CoCoNet website at http://coconet.ucc.ie.

CZMNet Project
The CZMNet (Coastal Zone Management Network) project is also funded under INTERREG IIIA. The CZMNet project aims to develop a network of Local Authority planners. In doing so, CZMNet aims to encourage and facilitate closer co-operation between Local Authorities in Ireland and Wales in the area of coastal zone management. CZMNet will provide a mechanism for the sharing of experiences and knowledge on coastal zone management.
The project partners are Enterprise Ireland and Camarthenshire County Council.

The final CoCoNet/CZMNet workshop provided an ideal opportunity to bring representatives from Local Authorities and community groups together and facilitate discussion on progressing ICZM in the Southern Irish Sea region.

<u>Workshop Three</u>

The third CoCoNet Workshop was held in Wexford, Ireland on the 17th June 2004. The aims of the workshop were to

1. Evaluate the role of networks to help Local Authorities and coastal communities to better manage their coasts.
2. Examine the relevance of existing coastal networks in the Southern Irish Sea region.
3. Facilitate the development of new project ideas for achieving sustainable coastal development in the southern Irish Sea region.
4. Produce recommendations on ICZM to influence policy development in Ireland and Wales.

The structure of the workshop included informative presentations followed by participatory sessions involving sub-group and plenary discussions. As with previous workshops, a good cross section of key coastal stakeholders attended including representatives from community groups, coastal partnerships, Local Authorities from the Southern Irish Sea region, non-governmental organisations, statutory agencies, and academic institutions. The programme consisted of sessions devoted to *Food for Thought*, *Potential of Coastal Networks*, *Future Projects* and *Recommendations.*

Session One consisted of two presentations. The first speaker provided the audience with information on the likely direction of ICZM in Europe. The second presentation focussed on community approaches to ICZM and provided examples of community initiatives in the US and Europe.

Presentation Topics: Session One
• The Future of ICZM in Europe
• Lessons Learned in Community Based Approaches to Coastal Management in the US and Croatia

Session Two - In this session presentations focussed on coastal networks with speakers providing examples of, and information on, networks operating at sub-national, national and European levels. The presentations were followed by plenary discussions on the future role of networks in coastal management.

Presentation Topics: Session Two
• CZMNet Status and Achievements
• CoCoNet Status and Achievements
• Networks in Integrated Coastal Management
• Coastal Practitioners: Building on Regional Experiences from Across Europe
• The Need for Coastal Partnerships and the Role of the CoastNet UK Network

Abstract summaries of presentations from Sessions One and Two are contained within the full workshop report, additionally the speaker's PowerPoint presentations are available from the CoCoNet website (http://coconet.ucc.ie).

Session Three - An opportunity for discussion of future initiatives amongst delegates was an important component of the workshop. For this reason, a dedicated session focussing on future projects was run in the afternoon. During this session the delegates were split into four sub groups, each group had a facilitator to direct and focus discussions, whilst a scribe recorded the main discussion points and reported back to all delegates in the plenary session.

One group was assigned to discuss each of the topics listed below.
- Development of a proposal to raise awareness of marine Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and coastal biodiversity issues
- Towards a coastal network for Ireland
- How to facilitate public involvement in ICZM at the local level
- How to inform national policy development

Session Four - During the workshop participants were given a list of suggested recommendations on ICZM for their consideration. Delegates were asked to rank their three most significant recommendations. Following the workshop, the selections made by participants were analysed. Key recommendations to emerge focussed on *integration*, *capacity building* and *education*. The day closed with plenary discussions on the draft Wexford declaration. This allowed input to be gained from delegates on the specific wording of the Declaration and its dissemination.

In conclusion, the final CoCoNet/CZMnet workshop provided a successful end to both projects. The main outputs from the workshop were threefold:

1.   A plan for a new project to succeed CoCoNet emerged from the workshop. A proposal will be submitted to the INTERREG IIIA programme to develop a pilot project to raise awareness of marine SACs and coastal biodiversity issues. This project will involve Local Authorities on either side of the Irish Sea (Fingal County Council and Gwynedd County Council) working with local community stakeholders. The vision for the project embraces the linkages between local authorities and coastal community groups encouraged by the joint CZMNet/CoCoNet workshop.

2.   Participants were unanimous in their recognition of the importance of networks for furthering coastal management initiatives and in their support for the creation of a coastal network for Ireland. It was agreed to pursue the establishment of a national network with the objective of promoting the delivery of the sustainable development of the Irish Coast. It was agreed that a core working group would take discussions forward during the forthcoming summer months.

3.   Consensus was achieved on the content of the Wexford Declaration (http://coconet.ucc.ie) and on the appropriateness of using the Declaration to inform coastal policy makers of the priorities for coastal management identified from the CoCoNet and CZMNet projects. It was agreed that the Declaration would be disseminated widely following the workshop to raise awareness and to focus attention on ICZM within the Southern Irish Sea INTERREG region.