

PEER REVIEW OF CASE STUDIES -1

Peer review of available methods for the SEA of the development projects and ICZM in TW areas Altogether 20 case studies were produced specially for ARTWEI and another 10 case studies were quarried and supplemented from the OurCoast project database. The 30 case studies provided a well-balanced geographical approach:

- 5 case studies from the Curonian Lagoon
- 4 case studies from the Vistula Lagoon
- 4 case studies from the Odra Lagoon
- 4 case studies from the Sound
- 4 case studies from Irish estuaries (NI-IE)
- 3 case studies from the Wadden Sea (NL-DE-DK)
- 2 case studies from Scheldt estuary (BE-NL)
- 1 case study from Riga Bay (LV-EE)
- 1 case study from Great Britain (SC-EN)
- 1 case study from the Liguria Sea (FR-IT)
- 1 case study from the Passamaquoddy Bay (CA-US).

Policy Objectives and Themes of the 30 case studies are comparatively well balanced in terms of subjects (although Objective 1 and Themes 1-3 are less covered), providing good chances for a comprehensive thematic scope of Good Practice Code of Conduct (Fig. 1 and Fig. 2).

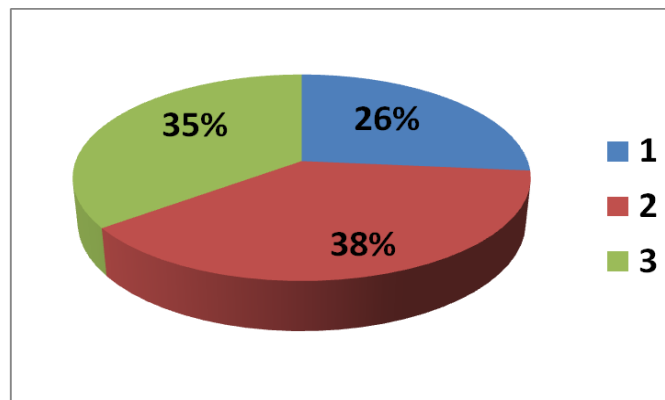


Fig. 1. Variety of the case studies according to the policy objectives

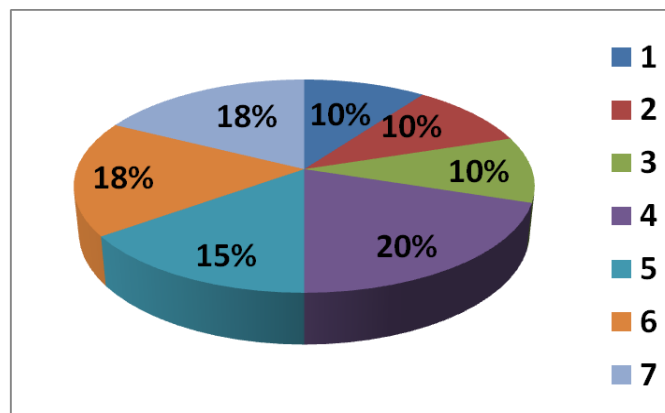


Fig. 2. Variety of the case studies according to the themes

Approach and Specific Tools of the 30 case studies are not so well balanced in terms of subjects (Fig. 3). **Approaches 5-6 – Socio-economic and Technical**, and **Tools 5-6 – Economic Instruments and Innovation** are less applied.

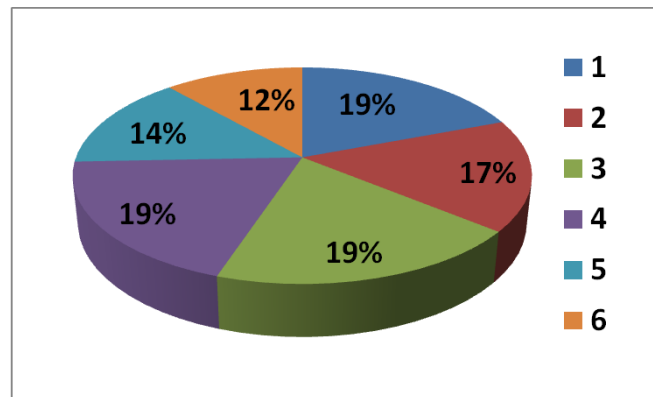


Fig. 3. Variety of the case studies according to the approaches and specific tools

Themes, approaches and tools form thematic clusters (Fig. 4).

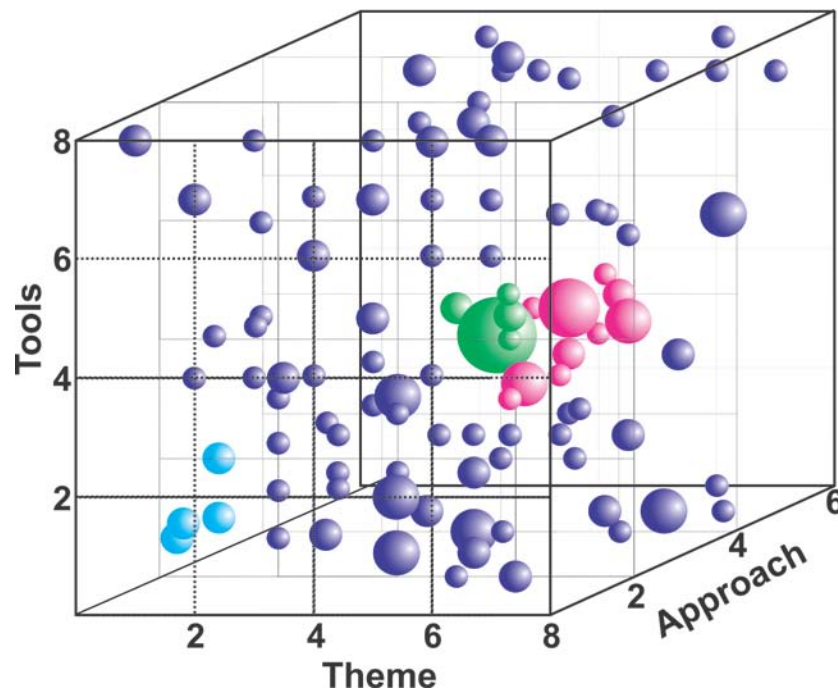


Fig. 4. Clusters of themes, approaches and tools of the case studies

The most common (“clustered”) combinations of themes, approaches and tools for the 1st Policy Objective are:

- 1. Managing impacts of climate change – Integration – Planning
- 1. Managing impacts of climate change – Participation – Strategies
- 2. Preventing and managing hazards – Integration – Planning
- 3. Integrating risk mitigation strategies – Integration – Planning

The most common (“clustered”) combinations of themes, approaches and tools for the 2nd Policy Objective are:

- 4. Preserving TWs and adjacent habitats – Eco-systems based – Coordination mechanisms
- 5. Sharing sound use of resources – Eco-systems based – Coordination mechanisms
- 5. Sharing sound use of resources – Knowledge based – Knowledge/information systems
- 5. Sharing sound use of resources – Knowledge based – Economic instruments.

The most common (“clustered”) combinations of themes, approaches and tools for the 3rd Policy Objective are:

- 6. Developing sustainability – Knowledge based – Strategies
- 6. Developing sustainability – Eco-systems based – Coordination mechanisms
- 6. Developing sustainability – Eco-systems based – Knowledge/Information systems
- 7. Balancing development from river basin perspective – Eco-systems based – Coordination mechanisms
- 7. Balancing development from river basin perspective – Knowledge based – Knowledge/Information systems

Overall assessment

Competent experts produced relevant case studies. There are good chances to provide valuable materials for the development of the Good Practice Code of Conduct. Proper thematic selection provides good possibilities for the elicitation of the good practice in various fields. Well defined and apt guiding questions provide good starting point for identification of directions for further analysis leading to the Good Practice Code of Conduct. BUT: there is a need to make the descriptions of the case studies more explicit and incisive. Although all studies are chosen appropriately and objectives are well highlighted in most cases, yet clear-cut evidences for the choice of the case as an example of the good practice are largely missing. The description of the main problems and challenges for establishing a trans-boundary cooperation framework and leading to important results and to meeting some good benchmarks is needed, yet nearly always missing.

It should be made clear, what were the concrete needs, pre-conditions, demands and reasons which had led to trans-boundary cooperation in this field. The in-depth description of cross-border cooperation, co-ordination of efforts and development of coherent solutions is largely missing. What specific tools have been applied to ensure smooth cross-border cooperation on various levels – regional, sub-regional, local?

More key insights and analyses into the management structure and principles of the cross-border cooperation are critically needed:

- Is there regular coordination and cooperation between both jurisdictions of the discussed issue?
- Are there any legally binding agreements and permanent cooperation bodies established?
- Which institutions in both jurisdictions are involved into the cross-border cooperation? How do they communicate? How exchange data and information? How do they overcome language barriers?
- How the outreaching towards the target groups comprising national networks is managed?
- Last but not the last, how EU regulations are made coherent with RF regulations, in the case of the Curonian and Vistula lagoons?

Effectiveness

The effectiveness of the cross-border cooperation for qualifying as a good practice is the assessment of the success of the cross-border cooperation approaches, methods and tools in achieving the stated objectives.

The main question to be answered and well justified is whether the description of the effectiveness of the chosen approach is convincing enough to be qualified as the good practice and as such exploited for the Good Practice Code of Conduct? And in which way?

Description of bottlenecks and breakthroughs is needed. We need to illustrate the effectiveness by highlighting quantitative targets and benchmarks against which the effectiveness of the chosen approach is measured. What is the cross-border cooperation effectiveness of actors and stakeholders on different levels in both jurisdictions? Analysis is needed!

- Is the cross-border cooperation framework (both, in terms of legal background and institutions) efficient?
- How efficiently the underlying EU regulations and international agreements are addressed and applied in the trans-boundary context?
- In most case studies, the positive experience is aptly described on the general level, but the insights should be illustrated with appropriate examples.

The critically important questions to be answered are:

- WHAT is the best way for partners in both jurisdictions to work together for the reinforcement of the transitional waters' environmental integrity?
- WHAT cross-border cooperation approaches and tools proved to be the most effective?
- HOW the problems and/or conflicts of the cross-border cooperation are solved?
- HOW the support of the target groups and stakeholders on various levels is secured?
- WHO appears to be the most reliable partner and the most interested stakeholder? And why?
- WHO caused the most trouble? And how?
- WHY the chosen setup of cooperation objectives, tasks and methods proved to be successful?
- WHY this way of distribution and allocation of the (always scarce) financial resources is chosen?
- Last but not the least, documentation and illustrations of positive experiences in many cases are missing.

Success factors

- Close cooperation among pair-partners in both jurisdictions (research institutions, regional and local authorities, environmental control institutions, NGOs).
- Explicit legally-binding regulations with clear schedules, that stipulate mutual commitment.
- Clear-cut trans-national cooperation programmes and long-term projects serving as an umbrella.
- Unequivocal mandate to regional decision makers from national authorities to advance cross-border cooperation.
- Decent financing of cross-border cooperation measures, particularly in the follow-up phases of initial projects.

Failure factors

- Differing administrative and legal systems as well as economic interests and priorities in both jurisdictions.
- Cultural, economic and social differences and language barriers between both jurisdictions
- The public awareness on the need of the reinforcement of environmental integrity of transitional waters is poor.
- Terminated financing and commitments of the cooperating parties after the end of a project.
- Future threats, like climate change and sea level rise, and their potential consequences are not well perceived.
- Changing staff and loss of key-persons, decreasing motivation due to slow development of concrete projects.

Concluding remarks

The case studies are some of the best examples of the early trans-boundary cooperation for the reinforcement of the TW environmental integrity. Yet, technical details and insights describing concrete cross-border cooperation are missing. There are too many unanswered questions. There is too much theory and too little good practice. Some key problems are ignored or played down. More explicit information on management and analysis of the effectiveness and positive experience is needed.