

Integrated Coastal Zone Management
STRATEGY FOR GEORGIA

2010

Draft

**Ordinance of the Government of Georgia # ____
dated “ _____ ” “ _ ”, 2010**

“On Integrated Coastal Zone Management Strategy for Georgia”

The integrated coastal zone management strategy for Georgia was elaborated with financial and technical assistance of European Union in 2007-2009, as well as with coordination of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Natural Resources and the Ministry of Economic Development of Georgia, in order to provide for the sustainable development in Georgia’s coastal zone, rational use and protection of the natural resources, economic development, establishment of the safe conditions for the health of the human population as well as to support the fulfilment of international obligations of Georgia in the field of protecting the Black Sea environment.

Taking into account the above mentioned:

1. The Integrated Coastal Zone Management Strategy for Georgia (attached) is hereby endorsed.
2. The Ministries of Environmental Protection and Natural Resources, and Economic Development of Georgia shall establish the intersectoral working group and within six months upon entry of the Ordinance in to force shall submit the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Integrated Coastal Zone Management Strategy for Georgia, in which, together with the stages, indicators and other programmatic aspects, based on appropriate financial and economic calculations shall be reflected the modalities of providing necessary financial resources toward the implementation of the Strategy.
3. The Ordinance shall enter into force upon the date of its signing.

The Prime-Minister of Georgia **Nikoloz Gilauri**

Integrated Coastal Zone Management STRATEGY FOR GEORGIA

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Integrated Coastal Zone Management STRATEGY FOR GEORGIA



1. Introduction

The entire length of Georgia’s Black Sea coastline is approximately 315 kilometres, stretching across two autonomous republics, twelve administrative districts and three major coastal port cities of Batumi, Poti and Sokhumi.

Much of Georgia’s coastal zone is subject to significant anthropogenic pressures, causing the pollution of marine waters, degradation of wetland and other coastal habitats, decline of fish populations and decrease of forest areas. Waste and wastewaters are not being managed sufficiently, which is due to inadequate planning of human settlements and absence of adequate standards and facilities.

Average household income along the coast is relatively low. This not only increases pressures on coastal environmental resources (e.g. for fuel and food) but severely restricts the availability of finance to undertake necessary investments (e.g. in infrastructure, coastal defences and sustainable business development). However, the coastal zone is still significant not just because of its environmental assets; it is important to national identity and to links with Europe, and has the potential of playing again an important role in the national economy, with tourism development rapidly picking up.

Georgia’s Tourism Development Plan and Strategy of March 2008 states that nature-based tourism in rural areas has great potential as a source of job creation and income generation for local communities and that

consequently the protection of environmental assets can be regarded as protection of job-creation and income-generating assets. It concludes, however, that “without planning for environmental impacts and pressures on infrastructure of tourism, a destination can easily become a victim of its own success. The attractiveness and aesthetic appeal of the destination is diminished, thus driving down the value and quality of the place”. The document furthermore warns that the current fast-paced development on the Black Sea Coast is overwhelming the infrastructure capacity, particularly the sewage system and water supply.

Integrated Coastal Zone Management is being promoted by the European Union as an approach to achieve sustainable development along the coast, thus profiting both nature and people. An evaluation of ICZM activities since the European Council and Parliament issued their ICZM Recommendation in 2002 concluded that the approach indeed contributes to reconciliation of economic, social, environmental interests and improves livelihood of coastal citizens. The EU/Georgia Action Plan¹, developed in the framework of European Neighbourhood Policy, also refers to the need for the implementation of the national ICZM program.

Georgia has signed the Convention on Biodiversity and the Ramsar Convention. Both put particular emphasis on integrated policy and legislation development for coastal and marine areas. While Ramsar recommends general ICZM approaches, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) refers to the Integrated Marine and Coastal Area Management (IMCAM) concept, which is similar to ICZM but also covers areas beyond the immediate coast, and puts a stronger emphasis on biodiversity conservation.

Georgia is signatory to the Convention on the Protection of the Black Sea Against Pollution (Bucharest Convention, 1992) as well as the Odessa Declaration, a ministerial declaration on the protection of the Black Sea, signed in April 1993, which recognised the need to elaborate and implement national coastal zone management policies, including legislative measures and economic instruments, in order to ensure the sustainable development in the spirit of Agenda 21.

As for the international/regional cooperation context, until recently Romania was the only Black Sea country that had an ICZM Law, a draft ICZM Strategy and a National Committee for ICZM, which coordinates coastal planning and management. Bulgaria has also adopted its national ICZM legislation (January, 2008). In Ukraine, an ICZM Law

¹ EU/Georgia Action Plan, http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/action_plans/georgia_enp_ap_final_en.pdf

is under preparation. Several pilot projects have been implemented around the Black Sea.

Georgia has policies for the development of various sectors: transportation, tourism, agriculture, etc. Decree #15 of April 2004 issued by the Government of Georgia “On the measures to facilitate well-regulation of land use and construction activities at the Black Sea coast of Georgia”² was adopted, followed-up by the preparation of the draft ICZM law³. All of these initiatives support introduction of ICZM approaches in Georgia. What is lacking, however, is an overarching ICZM strategy that integrates these policies and fills the gaps.

The extent and definition of the Coastal Zone for this ICZM Strategy (introduced in order to illustrate the location and extent of this zone) is based largely on boundaries of administrative units to aid interpretation, but also taking account of those habitats and ecosystems that are directly affected by the marine environment – such as coastal dunes or wetlands, and other key environmental assets in the coastal area (see an illustrative map provided in the Appendix 3).

². There is a long list of other laws and regulations that need to be taken into account when managing coastal resources such as the above-mentioned Government of Georgia Ordinance No 15 of April 2004, the Law of Georgia on Recognition of Titles to Land Plots of Natural and Legal Persons Owning (Managing) Such Plots, and the Ordinance of President of Georgia No 525 of September 15, 2007 on Approval of the Rules for Recognition of Titles to Land Plots of Natural and Legal Persons Owning (Managing) Such Plots and Form of Certificate Confirming Ownership.

³. Available at <http://www.ICZM.ge>



2. The ICZM process in Georgia

The overarching goal of Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) is to achieve sustainable use of the coastal zone through a close cooperation between public and private stakeholders. 'Integrated' in this context means integration of the terrestrial and marine components of the target territory (spatial integration)⁴. It also requires cooperation of all actors in the decision making process that implies integration of all relevant policy areas and sectors (horizontal integration), and all levels of administration (vertical integration).

ICZM seeks, over the long-term, to balance environmental, economic, social, cultural and recreational objectives, using technical, legal and administrative instruments, all within the limits set by natural dynamics. The approach uses the informed participation and co-operation of all stakeholders to assess the societal goals in a given coastal area, and to take actions towards meeting these objectives.

ICZM is a dynamic and multi-disciplinary process which covers the full cycle of information collection, planning (in its broadest sense) and decision making, management and monitoring of implementation. The ICZM process in Georgia can serve as an example.

⁴ Communication 2000/547 from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council and the European Parliament on Integrated Coastal Zone Management: A Strategy for Europe. <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2000:0547:FIN:EN:PDF>

ICZM – an iterative, circular approach

As illustrated in this graph, the stages of ICZM (initiation/information collection; planning/decision making; implementation/management; monitoring/evaluation) must be considered as an iterative and circular approach. Iterative because during any stage it may become clear that the former stage was not done properly. Circular because over time the policy objectives may change and/or the understanding of the coastal system will improve and new tools and techniques become available. These will have to be addressed through all stages again. Such a new cycle might be a 'project' handled within the existing ICZM process, or a 'policy' if the scope of the existing ICZM program must change, or anything between.



2.1. Initiation

The origin of Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) in Georgia can be traced back to the initiation of the regional Black Sea Environmental Programme (BSEP) in 1993, sponsored by the United Nation Development Program (UNDP). In 1995 Georgia responded to the recommendations of the BSEP and initiated the national integrated coastal zone management program. In implementing the provisions of the regionally agreed Black Sea Strategic Action Plan (BS-SAP, 1996), Georgia has committed to producing an ICZM strategy and action plan and this was mandated by Presidential Decree 608 in 1998. The Strategic Action Plan for the Environmental Protection and Rehabilitation of the Black Sea was updated and signed at the regional level in 2009.

2.2. Planning

Above described developments were followed-up by the Georgia Integrated Coastal Management Project (GICMP), which was initiated in 1999. The GICMP was funded by the World Bank and the Global Environment Facility. It included generic components aiming at the development of an ICZM data base, the preparation of a spatial plan for the coast and draft act for the management of the coastal area. Moreover it addressed more specific issues such as oil spill mitigation, coastal erosion and urban water man-

agement, as well as wetland management. Presidential Decree 608 also established the State Consultative Commission (SCC) for ICZM, to manage the process of ICZM development in Georgia, which stopped functioning in 2006.

2.3. Implementation

Management plans that have been prepared for the Kolkheti Protected Areas (the Kobuleti Managed Reserve and Natural Reserve and the Kolkheti National Park) are now being implemented.

2.4. Monitoring and evaluation

The ICZM Working Group for Georgia was reinitiated in 2007 by the EuropeAid project “Environmental Collaboration for the Black Sea”, aiming to continue the work of the SCC. It has coordinated the process of evaluating the results of the ICZM process over the past years and initiated a new cycle by facilitating the development of this ICZM Strategy for Georgia.



3. Assessment of the natural & socio-economic factors related to the coast

In order to understand the coastal system, one has to analyse the natural system (“ecosystem”) and how humans interact with it (“user system”). These two systems are strongly interdependent and interact with neighbouring coastal areas and rivers. Priority issues have been defined for the coastal systems (natural and user systems, see 3.1 and 3.2, respectively), that need to be addressed by the ICZM Strategy for Georgia.

3.1. Natural factors related to the coast (The ecosystem)

3.1.1. Coastal erosion and flood risk

The Georgian coast was developed in the past 20 000 years by the interaction between the sediment supply of rivers and the wave and currents in the Black Sea. Nowadays the extreme waves, severe storms and high river floods occasionally endanger life and property of the inhabitants and cause erosion of the coast and loss of infrastructure, a recent example being the devastating storm of September 2008.

The effects of the predicted climate change and related changes in sea level, rainfall and increased probability of extreme storms should also be taken into account.

Several significant areas of erosion have occurred over time along the Georgian coastline. Much of the erosion that has occurred or is still occurring is due to man made influences as well as natural processes. These include rerouting of the Rioni River system at Poti, construction of the port facilities at Batumi, siting of the rail line too close to the coastline, and extraction of building material from river beds. Considerable efforts have been made to redress the effects of these changes including very large-scale coastal defence and beach replenishment projects.

Recent studies have examined coastal erosion issues at Poti and Batumi and analysed river morphology and sediment transport in the Rioni and Chorokhi rivers. Modelling of coastal processes was also undertaken in the context of development proposals on the coast (e.g. yacht-club development in Natanebi mouth and Poti port expansion).

Coastal erosion and flooding issues affect all coastal residents and businesses in low-lying areas and are likely to get worse over time with long term climate changes and sea level rise. Surveys of the shoreline are taking place with intermittent periodicity and extent. There are records of flood events (e.g. at the Coastal Dynamics Institute and in satellite images) but no current topographic surveys and maps of flood prone areas. Land and property is damaged by flooding, human life is endangered and livestock and crops are destroyed. Conversely, regular flooding of wetland areas is necessary to maintain traditional habitats and species. Coastal engineering is likely to remain the responsibility of the Coastal Dynamics Institute (currently incorporated into the National Environmental Agency of the Ministry of Environment Protection and Natural Resources) but it will have to be undertaken after careful analysis and thorough evaluation of all the environmental implications.

ICZM has a key role to play in the prevention of increased flood risk through definition of flood plains in undeveloped areas and appropriate coastal set backs for development or exclusion of development, even more so in times of climate change.

3.1.2. Biodiversity

A large proportion of the coastal zone consists of wetlands that include considerable areas of peat bog, mire and marsh. These are the most ecologically significant habitats on the coast, in particular for migratory birds, but other important habitats include coastal dunes, rocky shorelines and pine groves. Internationally renowned and most valuable and unique peat bog habitats enjoy a degree of protection and are included within the Kolkheta National Park and Kobuleti Nature Reserve, but important environ-

mental assets exist outside these areas which are not protected.

Human activities have caused great changes to natural ecosystems; areas of forest and vegetation have significantly decreased, correspondingly areas of secondary meadows and agricultural land have increased, peatlands degraded in many areas. More than three quarters of the Kolkheti Lowland and surrounding foothills have changed completely, mostly due to the drainage of wetlands for agriculture. The main reasons for loss of biodiversity and negative environmental impacts are drainage, deforestation, peat extraction, overfishing, solid and liquid waste disposal, urban expansion and ad hoc development pressures. At present, illegal fishing of endangered migrating fish species (notably sturgeon) in river deltas is the most urgent problem from a biodiversity point of view.

Preserving coastal nature – a matter of culture and survival

On the territory of the coastal community of Tskaltsminda in Guria, some natural treasures remain. The oak-alder forest which used to dominate the Georgian coastline of that region has nearly vanished and Tskaltsminda features one of the very few patches that remain. Local people have used it as a source of firewood due to a lack of alternative and knowledge of its natural and historical value. When informed of its value and promised alternative fuel sources, local people showed great interest in not only preserving what is left but also regenerating this habitat. Furthermore, near Tskaltsminda beach, a small pond has survived surrounding development, featuring vegetation once abundant along the coast. It is playing an essential role as resting ground for migrating birds in spring and fall. The forest further inland, which shades village houses, is another natural treasure worth preserving, not only for rarity, but also because it protects local drinking water sources that once gave the village its name: Clean Water!

3.2. Socio-economic factors related to the coast (The user system)

3.2.1. Agriculture and fisheries⁵

Traditional economic sectors on the coast include agriculture and fisheries. Both have been impacted by the serious recession experienced in Georgia after independence. Despite the general decline in agricultural production, agriculture remains the predominant land use in the coastal area and plays a vital role in livelihood security.

⁵. Based on SWOT findings of The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization report Review of the Current Status of Fisheries Resources and Utilization in Georgia, Tbilisi, 2004, available at http://www.fao.org/world/georgia/review_fisheries_Georgia.doc

The fisheries sector is suffering from years of illegal fishing. There is neither a national fishery sector policy and legislation, nor a satisfactory regulatory framework that assist the fisheries sector in its sustainable development. The division of responsibilities with regards to fishery related matters, between various governmental agencies, is not streamlined. This leads to insufficient management of the sector. There is limited scientific knowledge of the state of the marine and inland water resources. The collection of fishery statistics is not coordinated at present; the responsibility over data collection and analysis is not determined; this affects decision making in a negative manner.

The marine fishing fleet, fishing ports, fish landing and fish processing facilities are mostly old, badly equipped and lack proper safety and quality measures. The increase of the fleet fishing for anchovy in the waters near the Turkish-Georgian border and coast is a serious threat for the anchovy resources. Furthermore, pollution, bottom-trawling, absences of national fishery policy and anthropogenic influence have resulted in decline of fish biodiversity and biomass. Recent analysis of widespread fish species showed that some stocks are depressed. In recent times, however, there are some signs of ecological improvement.

Aquaculture is considered to have a good prospective for development in Georgia, but is currently underdeveloped due to a lack of investment and know-how.

3.2.2. Tourism in the coastal zone

The sub-tropical climate of the coastal zone, the beaches and the other natural attractions, led to the development of a successful tourism industry on the Georgian Black Sea coast. During Soviet times, numerous resorts, hotels and sanatoria were constructed, but most of it has fallen into disrepair. However, recent trends are positive; private investment is returning and small scale guest-houses are an important means of income generation for coastal residents, albeit this income is highly seasonal, generally limited to only two months of the year, and lacks forward looking planning. Tourism was one of the four sectors targeted for growth in the National Poverty Reduction Strategy and is a high priority for the Government of Georgia and the authorities of the Autonomous Republic (AR) of Adjara.

Tskaltsminda's tourism development needs integrated planning

In the village of Tskaltsminda on the Gurian coast, some families have started opening guest houses and would like to develop more. However, there is currently no plan how to develop tourism. The biggest obstacles to tourism development are currently

- a) the lack of municipal infrastructure, in particular a functional sewage system and provision of drinking water to people's homes. Infrastructure established during Soviet times has deteriorated beyond repair;
- b) litter, which is only partly collected due to a private initiative, but mainly burnt or deposited illegally. Plastic bottles, waste and other forms of non-biodegradable wastes is being transported downstream by River Supsa, washed up on Tskaltsminda beach and floating in nearshore waters – a common picture all along the Georgian coast and certainly a problem to be solved if tourism is to develop;
- c) no public access to the beach due to insufficient planning and short-sighted privatisation of near-shore property;
- d) coastal erosion, managed in an ad-hoc, unprofessional manner;

While individual citizens can do little or nothing to solve these problems, forward looking, integrated planning could focus resources on solutions and provide opportunities for everyone.

3.2.3. Infrastructure and services⁶

There has been very little investment in municipal infrastructure during the past decades. Inadequate infrastructure not only leads to a poor quality of life for coastal residents, but increases pressures on the environment – e.g. from pollution and from fuel wood gathering. The major coastal settlements are served, in principle, by sewage and wastewater treatment facilities but lack of investment and deferred maintenance has meant that pipelines have deteriorated and silted up, many pumping stations are out of commission and treatment facilities have fallen into disrepair. The release of sewage into the streets represents a considerable threat to public health. Some progress has been made with funding provided by the Municipal Development Fund and foreign donors, but much more remains to be done.

⁶ In compliance with the new Action Programme of President of Georgia – Sufficient Quantities of Adequate Quality Drinking Water for Every Village and Settlement.

3.2.4. Ports and harbours

The ports of Batumi, Poti and, to a much lesser extent, the Oil Terminal at Supsa, are important local employers and the ports sector plays a considerable role in the national economy. Further port development is likely, while the establishment of a Free Economic Zone is decided for Poti.

Much of the traditional port activity (e.g. ship building, fish processing and naval operations) has declined since Georgian independence. However, since 1998 the port sector has recovered and the growth of turnover is mainly related to the handling of transit cargoes, notably oil that is transported to the port terminals by rail and pipeline. Georgia's ports sector is becoming highly competitive with internal competition between ports (and pipeline alternatives) as well as other regional port locations – for example in Turkey.

If present plans for the construction of new ports do not take environmental and economic impacts on other sectors and other coastal areas sufficiently into consideration, there is the risk that investment will cause more harm than benefits in the medium to long term.

3.2.5. Coastal development

Spatial-territorial planning is a critical instrument in ICZM. In Georgia, it is a central government responsibility (currently part of the Ministry of Economic Development)⁷ while most detailed planning controls are exercised by Municipalities and other agencies of local self government. Local level institutions are usually poorly resourced and often lack experience in fulfilling these duties.

There are many examples of insensitive and unsuitable developments in the coastal zone resulting from these shortcomings. These include poorly sited and abandoned physical infrastructure projects, unsightly apartment blocks in resort areas and widespread development of illegal dachas, particularly in Guria Region.

Uncontrolled development in Ureki

The pine forests and coastal hinterland in the area south of Ureki to Natanebi are rapidly being developed. At Ureki itself unplanned tourism development of bars/restaurants and tourism accommodation, as well as the lack of beach and coastal setbacks, are beginning to detract from the area's environmental qualities.

⁷ Law of Georgia on Spatial Planning and Urban Development.

Kulevi Oil Terminal construction

Another example is the development of the Kulevi Oil Terminal, which was sanctioned by Presidential Decree in 1999 without prior Environmental Impact Assessment. This led not only to the destruction of valuable wetlands protected under the Ramsar Convention, but also to negotiations about considerable compensation payments. Proper planning could have avoided both the loss of valuable habitat and of financial resources.

Illegal and unplanned development encroaches onto the beach, increases the risk of human accidents from flood events, hinders, and in some cases physically blocks public access to the coast and adds to the general pressure on rare and endangered species as well as important coastal habitats. It is clear that effective management of natural resources must be combined with proper controls over land use and planning in the coastal zone.

3.2.6. Waste management

River/stream and nearshore born litter is a pervasive issue throughout much of the coastal zone and increases considerably during the tourist season. In 2007, the coastal regions of Adjara AR, Guria, and Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti generated about 350.000 m³ of solid household waste, a substantial portion ended in illegal landfills. Both the Batumi and the Poti landfills are of outdated technology and situated next to a river, causing severe surface water pollution. Eroding and/or improperly sited and/or improperly maintained landfills are also a major source of litter pollution of beaches. At least for Batumi and Kobuleti areas, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development is financing the construction of a new landfill and rehabilitation of the old ones in order to stop the ongoing pollution of the valuable wetlands and the sea.

Litter has a negative impact on a wide range of coastal interests including tourists and visitors to the coast, who value the visual appearance of the coast – particularly the beach and nearshore waters. Litter pollution of nearshore waters adversely affects the recreational enjoyment of swimmers and visitors to the coast, and degrades marine species and populations.

3.2.7. Coastal Pollution

Pollution of coastal waters may derive from a variety of sources including industrial outfalls, sewage, storm water, chronic oil spills, runoff from agriculture, dredging, and discharge of ballast water from ships. Inadequate or non-existent industrial and municipal wastewater treatment is clearly a major source of pollution, particularly for organic matter. The use of pesticides and fertilizer is widespread throughout the coastal zone, and the agriculture sector is a major contributor to non-point source pollution and high nutrient loadings. Coastal pollution has significant adverse impacts on the tourism industry and degrades marine and coastal resources and environments. Consistent and reliable pollution monitoring data do not exist, which makes it difficult to identify priority measures and assess progress. The environment of the coastal zone is also impacted by the airborne pollution originating from marine and land based sources.

3.2.8. Governance

Decision making in Georgia is still quite centralised, which means that it is difficult for coastal stakeholders to shape decisions of relevance to the coast. The policy basis for decisions on coastal issues is lacking and policies that apply to the coast are insufficiently coordinated and often poorly enforced.



4. Vision

This ICZM Strategy for Georgia aims to make the following vision come true:

Land and water resources of Georgia's coast are being used in a sustainable manner, creating a more prosperous economy and a healthy and safe environment for the benefit of present and future generations.



5. Goals and Objectives

5.1. Goals of the Strategy

The ICZM Strategy has the overall goal of creating a solid framework for decision making which ensures that development along the coast is sustainable and that investors feel confident.

Rational resource use is to be ensured by avoiding the duplication of facilities and wasteful practices. Land for (necessary) coastal development needs to be allocated in suitable locations, while infrastructure and services (including community facilities) are to be provided in parallel. The Strategy also aims at identifying and protecting important environmental resources, including biodiversity. Development in hazard prone areas (e.g. lands prone to flooding or coastal erosion) is to be prevented. Responsibilities between central and local authorities are to be harmonized further and shared equitably.

In particular, the ICZM Strategy has the following aims:

- a) Provide a logical and rational basis for decision making which will give investors confidence, and help protect the value of existing investments;
- b) Facilitate efficient use of resources;
- c) Ensure sufficient land is available for development, particularly

coastal development, in suitable locations;

- d) Ensure infrastructure and services (including community facilities) are provided prior to necessary development;
- e) Identify and protect important environmental resources;
- f) Prevent or control development in hazard prone areas (e.g. lands prone to flooding or coastal erosion), taking the effects of climate change into consideration;
- g) Create a framework for achieving sustainable development and use of resources in the coastal zone (e.g. sustainable tourism development and a rational framework for shoreline management) by improving the coordination between central and local authorities;
- h) Neutralize resource- and land use conflicts between humans and nature and between various user categories and establish a proactive coastal zone policy and programs that prevent these conflicts to occur in future;
- i) Develop a consistent set of enabling mechanisms and instruments to facilitate ICZM.

5.2. Managing the natural system

The specific strategic objectives of Georgia's Integrated Coastal Zone Management Strategy with regard to natural systems are as follows:

5.2.1. Coastal erosion and flood risk

- 5.2.1.1. To reduce the risk of flooding to coastal residents and businesses from all sources;
- 5.2.1.2. To control sand and gravel extraction and dredging in river beds and nearshore waters;
- 5.2.1.3. To ensure that the potential impacts on coastal erosion and deposition processes of coastal and river engineering structures and other coastal interventions are thoroughly assessed prior to the issuance of a construction permit;
- 5.2.1.4. To take predictions about the effects of climate change into consideration;
- 5.2.1.5. To introduce systems of shoreline planning and management;

- 5.2.1.6. To assess coastal hazards and to introduce relevant zoning instruments taking account of all aspects related to hydrological, geomorphological, climatic, ecological and socio-economic conditions in an integrated manner.

5.2.2. Biodiversity

- 5.2.2.1. To map, protect, and rehabilitate rare, endangered, and important habitats and species;
- 5.2.2.2. To create whenever appropriate new protected areas, protected landscapes and buffer zones;
- 5.2.2.3. To develop and timely revise/update proper management for coastal protected areas and monitor their enforcement, identify and correct weaknesses;
- 5.2.2.4. To achieve levels of natural resource use that is within environmental capacities in order to maintain sustainability;
- 5.2.2.5. To undertake the restoration of relict Kolkheti forests, where degraded or destroyed due to logging or fire, in particular, in and around the coastal protected areas;
- 5.2.2.6. To undertake, where appropriate, the restoration of degraded hydrology and vegetation of coastal peatlands by managing the water table and by stimulating the growth of peatland vegetation;
- 5.2.2.7. To prevent and control as far as possible invasive alien species that have, or could have, adverse effects on coastal environments and resources;
- 5.2.2.8. To promote the application of integrated marine and coastal management approaches in support of the conservation and protection of biodiversity with particular emphasis on the implementation of the provisions of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

5.3. Managing the human component

The specific strategic objectives of Georgia's Integrated Coastal Zone Management Strategy with regard to human component are as follows:

5.3.1. Agriculture and fisheries

- 5.3.1.1. To increase fish stocks in order to attain a sustainable yield level as well as protect critical fish spawning, nursery areas and migratory routes;

- 5.3.1.2. To re-establish fishing as a viable and attractive source of income for coastal residents;
- 5.3.1.3. To ensure that fisheries are managed on a sustainable basis in accordance with strategies and plans that are based on sound environmental, scientific and economic policy principles;
- 5.3.1.4. To promote low impact aquaculture and mariculture;
- 5.3.1.5. To promote sustainable, including biological (organic) agricultural practices in the coastal zone, aiming at supplying coastal settlement and tourist destinations with high quality produce, as well as minimising pollution from agricultural run-off;
- 5.3.1.6. To introduce sustainable grazing practices around the coastal protected areas and in areas with high potential for habitat restoration and reforestation, with due regard to carrying capacity and with protection of planted trees from grazing;
- 5.3.1.7. To stimulate in deforested areas and in degraded agricultural lands the establishment of community and public-private cooperation based forest plantations of diverse local tree species for utilisation as fuelwood and/or timber production, both for sustainable commercial use and the enhancement of coastal biodiversity;
- 5.3.1.8. To support research and development in the field of sustainable peat moss (Sphagnum) farming on Kolkheti Lowland outside the protected areas.

5.3.2. Tourism

- 5.3.2.1. To provide suitable and attractive public and private recreational facilities and development in the coastal zone;
- 5.3.2.2. To promote the application of green design and sustainable construction practices in the coastal zone, with particular emphasis on provision of low impact facilities in the tourism sector;
- 5.3.2.3. To protect and provide for open and unhindered public access to and along the shore-land and near-shore areas;
- 5.3.2.4. To support specific forms of sustainable tourism, such as those based on cultural heritage and traditions, rural, sports and recreation tourism, and eco-tourism, in order to diversify tourism products and extend the season for local

revenue generation; provided that carrying capacity is not exceeded, coastal ecosystems, natural resources and landscapes are protected and cultural heritage and local traditions respected.

5.3.3. Infrastructure and services

- 5.3.3.1. To ensure that reliable and affordable drinking water⁸ and electrical supplies are available to all coastal zone residents;
- 5.3.3.2. To apply integrated approaches while implementing infrastructure projects (both nationally and donor funded) at all levels of implementation, by imbedding coastal zone planning and management components into such infrastructure projects;
- 5.3.3.3. To assure that new infrastructure measures (e.g. roads) can cope with present and future flood events and other coastal hazards;
- 5.3.3.4. To ensure that all sewage is collected and treated according to international standards, prior to disposal at a suitable location.

5.3.4. Port and harbour development

- 5.3.4.1. To ensure that the adverse environmental impacts of port and harbour development and operation (and related infrastructure) are prevented or mitigated to the maximum extent that is technically feasible;
- 5.3.4.2. To secure appropriate economic benefits of port and harbour development and utilisation for coastal businesses and residents;
- 5.3.4.3. To ensure that the new port and harbour facilities are only constructed after thorough assessment of impacts on other sectors as well as on coastal environments and resources;
- 5.3.4.4. To ensure that the planned Free Economic Zone for Poti will promote sustainable development.

⁸. This objective (with regard to the drinking water) will facilitate the implementation of the Order of the Minister of Health, Labour and Social Protection of Georgia number 349/n dated December 17, 2007 On Approval of the Technical Norms of the Drinking Water (published in Georgian Legislative Gazette on 18.12.2007, issue no. 179, article 1973)

5.3.5. Coastal development

- 5.3.5.1. To ensure that all development is sited, designed, and operated according to best international practices;
- 5.3.5.2. To ensure that land privatisation takes place in accordance with transparent and agreed plans and procedures, and does not generate adverse environmental or socio-economic impacts;
- 5.3.5.3. To avoid, as far as possible, the privatization of the shore-land area except for the purpose of redeveloping land that has already been developed;
- 5.3.5.4. To protect the scenic qualities of undeveloped coastal landscapes, particularly in the shore-lands, e.g. through establishment of marine and coastal protected areas, such as protected landscapes and buffer/support zones;
- 5.3.5.5. To actively promote and facilitate the demolition of derelict structures and removal of debris within the shore-land area;
- 5.3.5.6. To prevent conflict between mutually incompatible or mutually detrimental uses of the coastal zone's environment and resources, planning documents shall provide for appropriate zoning so that compatible activities can be carried out together and incompatible activities kept separate;
- 5.3.5.7. To provide maximum long-shore and cross-shore public access to shore-land and near-shore areas and to encourage the provision of public recreational facilities, consistent with sound conservation principles and no significant conflicts with existing private property owners;
- 5.3.5.8. To the maximum extent feasible, create a Black Sea trail that provides long-shore access all along the shore-lands area;
- 5.3.5.9. To improve livelihoods, incomes and the quality of life for coastal residents by providing qualified policy and managerial advice, or by introducing various forms of economic incentives and stimulation packages, such as affordable loans and grants for sustainable income generating activities.

5.3.6. Waste management

- 5.3.6.1. To reduce to the greatest possible degree solid waste and litter pollution of shore-lands and coastal waters;

- 5.3.6.2. To support sustainable waste management practices, involving waste reduction, reuse and recycling;
- 5.3.6.3. To ban disposal of toxic and other hazardous waste into the shore-land and near-shore areas, to plan for and implement site remediation measures in areas already polluted with hazardous waste;
- 5.3.6.4. To speed up the development of waste management policies and legislation at the national level.

5.3.7. Coastal pollution

- 5.3.7.1. To reduce point and non-point pollution of coastal waters to comply with international standards or to levels which no longer pose a threat to coastal environments or human health;
- 5.3.7.2. To ensure that bathing, fishing and drinking⁹ water quality standards comply with international standards and are harmonised among all relevant government bodies;
- 5.3.7.3. To introduce a scheme of awards for the environmental quality of public beaches based beach management criteria such as bathing water quality, environmental information and education, provision of facilities and public safety;
- 5.3.7.4. To site non-coastal dependent facilities (or relocate existing ones) at inland locations in order to avoid impacts on the coastal zone environment (including impacts of airborne pollution originating from marine and land based sources);
- 5.3.7.5. To mitigate risk factors and negative environmental impacts associated with the forthcoming substantial increase in oil shipments (both across the land and the sea).

5.3.8. Governance

- 5.3.8.1. To establish based on the objectives and policy principles of integrated coastal zone management in this Strategy an effective institutional and legislative framework for integrated coastal zone management, with better enforcement of decision making;
- 5.3.8.2. To encourage integrated and rational decision making amongst all sectors and levels of government with a significant involvement in coastal issues and, to

⁹ To support the enforcement of the Decree on Technical Regulations for Drinking Water of Minister of Labour, Health and Social Security of Georgia No 349/n dd. December 17 2007



that aim, strengthen inter-sectoral and inter-agency coordination mechanisms;

- 5.3.8.3. To support transparent processes and involvement of local and national stakeholders and resource users in coastal decision making;
- 5.3.8.4. To establish the long term sustainability of integrated coastal zone management through revenue generation, application of donor support, and cross sector support;
- 5.3.8.5. To encourage, where appropriate, decentralised governance approaches;
- 5.3.8.6. To collaborate with other countries on ICZM;
- 5.3.8.7. To promote the sharing of ICZM experience with institutions and experts of Apkhazeti AR;
- 5.3.8.8. To ensure that integrated coastal zone management activities are properly integrated with, and take full account of all relevant integrated river basin management programmes and activities;
- 5.3.8.9. To undertake and integrate spatial-territorial planning in the coastal zone with land use planning under the legislation of Georgia in the field of spatial-territorial planning;
- 5.3.8.10. To further the development of the spatial information system capabilities for improved management of coastal zone environments and resources.

6. The ICZM Principles

To help achieving the goals and objectives outlined in the previous chapters, four sets of principles have been developed. These principles are based upon the experience with ICZM in various parts of the world and reflect the recommendations of most international agreements and covenants regarding ICZM that were signed by Georgia.

6.1. Basic principles

The following are the basic principles of ICZM:

6.1.1. Sustainability principle – Integrated coastal zone management shall be carried out in a sustainable manner so as to meet the needs of both present and future generations and in order to preserve or enhance essential ecological processes and biological, landscape and cultural diversity.

6.1.2. Precautionary principle – Absence of scientific certainty shall not prevent authorities from acting to prohibit or regulate activities whose impacts could possibly cause serious or irreversible damage to coastal environment or resources.

6.1.3. Forecast principle – Forecast shall be made of the short and long-term changes and trends in global warming and sea level rise and of natural and human induced calamities.

6.2. Planning and management

The following are the principles of ICZM related to planning and management:

6.2.1. Principle of vertical integration – Policies and enforcement at all levels (national, regional, local) of government and non-government organisations which significantly influence the planning and management of coastal resources and environments shall be harmonised.

6.2.2. Principle of horizontal integration – Coherence shall be achieved among separate economic sectors and the associated units of government which significantly influence the planning and management of coastal resources and environments.

6.2.3. Principle of land-sea integration – For an effective management, initiatives shall include both the seaward and the landward portion of the coastal zone.

6.2.4. Principle of integrated river basin management – Linkages between river basins and the coastal zone's environment and resources shall be taken into account and it shall be ensured that pollution of coastal waters from riverine sources is minimised, as well as that the activities and developments in watershed lands which are likely to have a direct and significant adverse effect on the coastal zone's environment or resources shall be planned and regulated in accordance with the objectives and principles of integrated coastal zone management.

6.2.5. Information for the public and public participation principle – Government bodies shall facilitate access to information on the status and use of the coastal zone's environment and resources, coastal economic development and the spatial-territorial planning, and shall promote broad public participation in the planning and decision-making processes.

6.2.6. International co-operation principle – International co-operation arrangements for the monitoring, management and protection of the coastal zone's environment and resources shall be developed, particularly in the context of cooperation with the countries of the Black Sea region and the European Neighbourhood.

6.3. Coastal protection and conservation

The following are the principles of ICZM governing the coastal protection and conservation:

6.3.1. Dynamic preservation principle – a set back zone should be enforced along the land-water interface as a buffer for seasonal and transient erosion and the beach nourishment will be the preferred option to combat coastal erosion.

6.3.2. Principle of protection of the shore-land area – The shore-land area shall be used for public purposes only (such as parks or nature reserves) except in situations when privatisation is required to provide for a necessary coastal-dependent development. The subdivision of lawfully privatised land shall not occur in the shore-land area except for the purpose of redeveloping land that has already been developed.

6.3.3. Biodiversity protection principle - Areas that have exceptional biological or landscape diversity and therefore constitute a part of the country's common heritage shall be preserved by special protection or management measures, including through establishment and strengthening of protected areas. Fragile areas, ecosystems, habitats and threatened species shall be similarly protected.

6.3.4. Aquaculture and mariculture development principle – aquaculture and mariculture de-

velopment in the coastal zone shall be promoted by supporting research and demonstration projects of sustainable production practices.

6.3.5. Scenic protection principle – In scenic areas, no new development shall be allowed that is visually obtrusive or not subordinate to its setting. Development shall be sited so as not to interfere with coastal views from coastal roads, trails and public recreation areas. Development shall be sited, designed and landscaped in order to soften its visual impact, and construction materials shall be used that blend with the natural setting or adjacent structures.

6.4. Land and resource use

The following ICZM principles are employed in coastal land and resource protection and rational use:

6.4.1. Principle of restitution (*restitutio in integrum*) – Degraded natural environment shall, to the maximum extent feasible, be rehabilitated and restored to their former condition with a view to regenerating the ecosystems.

6.4.2. Polluter pays and user pays principle – Expenses to repair or restore damage to the coastal zone's environment and resources shall be born by those responsible for causing the damage. In addition, government bodies shall endeavour to promote the internalisation of the costs incurred in conserving the coastal zone's environment and resources by charging those costs to public and private investors and users.

6.4.3. Principle of best available technology and best environmental practices – The most advanced and most effective technology and environmental practices shall, to the extent feasible, be used in order to mitigate or prevent adverse impacts on coastal resources, environment and communities.

6.4.4. Principle of socio-economic assessment – Proposals for coast-dependent development in the coastal zone shall be subject to a Total Economic Value assessment and cost-benefit analysis of a with and without situation.

6.4.5. Equitable distribution and sustainable management of common resources principle – Common environment and resources, including marine and terrestrial flora and fauna and ecosystems, shall be sustainably used and managed in a manner which takes account of habitat fragility and guarantees their equitable distribution for the benefit of local communities.



7. Monitoring and Revision of the ICZM Strategy

7.1. The ICZM Strategy shall be reviewed within 5 years of its commencement and at least every five years thereafter, and shall be amended or replaced as necessary in order to ensure that it is effective, efficient, equitable and up to date. The amendment or replacement of the national ICZM Strategy shall be subject to the same procedures as the preparation and approval of the initial ICZM Strategy.

7.2. The amendment or replacement shall be undertaken on the basis of the results of the application of the ICZM Progress Indicators adopted by the Advisory Group on ICZM for the Black Sea Commission as well as annual progress reports prepared by Georgia. Revisions of this Strategy should furthermore be based on the results of an increasingly rigorous monitoring programme providing data on the state of the natural environment (biodiversity, coastal dynamics, coastal water quality etc) and the economy of the whole Georgian coast.

7.3. Ex-situ tools (such as remote sensing of marine and coastal environments) will be used to cost effectively monitor and assess conditions along the Black Sea coast of Georgia, including remote or inaccessible locations, such as the off-shore marine environments or coastal zone of Apkhazeti AR.

Appendix 1. Defining the Coastal Zone

An environmental and socio-economic assessment has been used to help define a coastal zone boundary. The coastal zone may be defined by a variety of different criteria, including land use, topography, ecology, sedimentary conditions and geomorphology, water quality, hydrodynamic conditions and coastal processes. No single criterion is adequate to deal with all of these varied components of coastal systems and invariably the boundaries of these sub-systems do not coincide. The definition of the coastal zone therefore involves judgments and a combination of different factors. After various different iterations and widespread consultations, the recommended coastal zone boundary has been drawn tight in to the coast and has been based largely on administrative (municipality and community) boundaries to aid interpretation, but also taking account of the following factors:

- a) In ecological terms the inland boundary includes all those habitats and ecosystems that are directly affected by the marine environment – such as coastal dunes, wetlands etc.
- b) The inland boundary extends inwards to include all key environmental assets in the coastal area – therefore the boundary encompasses all protected areas adjoining the coastal zone.
- c) In Poti and Batumi the inland boundary is defined as the shore-land area, which effectively limits the definition to a maximum distance of 500 metres inland. This has been taken as a proxy for that area within which human activities may significantly affect coastal resources, particularly in terms of drainage, pollution and discharges to the environment, whilst leaving discretion to the relevant authorities to deal with other non-coastal issues in these settlements. The division of responsibilities between coastal and non-coastal issues in these urban areas is not straightforward and the relationships between the various stakeholders will need to be managed with care. In Poti in particular, it is difficult to separate coastal and environmental issues from wider urban planning policies since the town is situated on an eroding coastline, is very low lying and prone to fluvial and marine flooding and is surrounded by the National Park. Within these developed areas close consultations would be needed with the relevant municipalities and agencies responsible for urban planning. Similar consultation arrangements will be required for defined watershed areas in river basins.
- d) The inland boundary includes those areas for which management is necessary to control uses that may have direct and significant impacts on water and coastal resources. It therefore extends 5 km into the river valleys draining to the coast. Where no Community exists, or where the boundary of the Community boundary extends inland for a greater distance, the inland boundary of the coastal zone has been set at 3 km. The coastal boundary extends outwards to the territorial sea's 12-mile limit.

Appendix 2. Coastal Zone boundaries

1. The coastal zone shall comprise the following areas:

- a) the “seaward coastal planning area”, which shall extend seaward from the mean high water mark to the outer limit of the territorial sea and shall include the whole of Lake Paliastomi;
- b) the “near-shore area”, which is part of the seaward coastal planning area, shall include the whole of Lake Paliastomi. Elsewhere, the near-shore area shall extend seaward from the mean high water mark to a minimum distance of 25 metres and a maximum distance of 500 metres, the extent of which shall be determined according to the characteristics of the coastal environment and in accordance with the objectives and policy principles of integrated coastal zone management in this Strategy;
- c) the “shore-land area”, which is part of the landward coastal planning area, shall extend inland from the mean high water mark to a minimum distance of 25 metres and a maximum distance of 500 metres, the extent of which shall be determined according to the characteristics of the land and adjacent waters and the state of existing development, and in accordance with the objectives and policy principles of integrated coastal zone management in this Strategy;
- d) the “landward coastal planning area”, which shall comprise:
 - d.a) the self-government administrative-territorial units (or coastal districts in places where there is no self-government administrative-territorial unit) to a maximum distance of three kilometres inland from the mean high water mark;
 - d.b) the cities out of jurisdiction of districts, to the inland extent of the shore-land area;
 - d.c) the coastal protected areas (Kolkheti National Park, Bichvinta-Miusera Nature Reserve, Kobuleti Nature Reserve and Restricted) within the boundaries defined in accordance with the legislation of Georgia.

2. In the case of rivers flowing into the sea, the seaward coastal planning area, the near-shore area, the shore-land area and the landward coastal planning area shall be measured from the mean high water mark along both banks for a distance of five kilometres upstream from a line drawn across the mouth, except that in the case of the Rioni river the distance shall be 10 kilometres from the mouth.

3. The boundaries of the coastal zone, the seaward coastal planning area, the near-shore area, the shore-land area and the landward coastal planning area shall be determined and shall be depicted on maps that are readily available to the public.

Appendix 3. Illustrative Map of the Coastal Zone



Explanatory Note

to the Ordinance of the Government of Georgia

“On Integrated Coastal Zone Management Strategy for Georgia”

Legal power of the draft Ordinance

The legal justification for the adoption of this draft Ordinance is the Law of Georgia on the Structure, Powers and Modus Operandi of the Government of Georgia (article 5, sub-article “p”).

The goal of adapting the draft Ordinance

The goal of draft Ordinance is to provide support for the sustainable development of Georgia’s coastal zone, protection and rational use of its natural resources, stimulate economic development, establish safer environment for population as well as to support the fulfilment of Georgia’s obligations towards the protection of the Black Sea environment.

Main characteristics of the draft Ordinance

The draft of the Ordinance consists of three clauses. The first clause serves to endorse the attached Integrated Coastal Zone Management Strategy for Georgia.

The 2nd clause deals with the need to elaborate of the programmatic document for the implementation of the Integrated Coastal Zone Management Strategy for Georgia, namely the related Action Plan. This particular clause, together with the precise prescriptions for the achievement of the strategic goals, stages, indicators and other programmatic aspects, shall reflect the modalities of providing necessary financial resources toward the implementation of the Strategy. In accordance with this clause the Ministries of Environmental Protection and Natural Resources and Economic Development of Georgia within six months upon entry of the Ordinance in to force shall jointly submit the Action Plan for the approval by the Government of Georgia.

The 3rd clause defines the modality of the entry of the Ordinance into force.

The Integrated Coastal Zone Management Strategy for Georgia consists of seven chapters and three appendixes. The Strategy was prepared with financial and technical assistance

extended by the European Union in the period of 2007-2009 within the framework of its regional project (entitled “Environmental Collaboration for the Black Sea”). The Strategy was elaborated by the Working Group activated by the project and coordinated by the Ministries of Environmental Protection and Natural Resources and Economic Development of Georgia.

The origin of Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) in Georgia can be traced back to the initiation of the regional Black Sea Environmental Programme (BSEP) in 1993, sponsored by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). In 1995 Georgia responded to the recommendations of the BSEP and initiated the national integrated coastal zone management program. In implementing the provisions of the regionally agreed Black Sea Strategic Action Plan (BS-SAP, 1996), Georgia has committed to producing a national ICZM strategy and action plan and this was mandated by Presidential Decree 608 in 1998. These developments were followed-up by the Georgia Integrated Coastal Management Project (GICMP), which was initiated in 1999. The GICMP was funded by the World Bank and the Global Environment Facility. It included components aimed at the development of the system for integrated coastal management, as well as to achieve at the national level various tasks set under the regional BS-SAP. Presidential Decree 608 also established the State Consultative Commission (SCC) for ICZM, to manage the process of ICZM development in Georgia, which stopped functioning in 2006. The ICZM Working Group acting under GICMP was reinitiated in 2007 by the EuropeAid project “Environmental Collaboration for the Black Sea” to coordinate and facilitate the development of this ICZM Strategy for Georgia.

The Integrated Coastal Zone Management Strategy for Georgia aims to support achieving sustainable development and conservation in the coastal zone along the Black Sea by implementation of the process of integrated coastal zone management, which implies more uniform and coordinated application of the fragmented legal responsibilities within the updated framework for the strategic and regional planning system. The Strategy serves also to protect and maintain the coastal environment and resources allowing for the development activities which are appropriate for and dependent on the coast.

The Strategy reflects on the international obligations adopted by Georgia by signing the Convention on the Protection of the Black Sea Against Pollution signed in Bucharest in 1992, as well as its protocols. It is in compliance with the European approaches towards ICZM (Communication 2000/547 from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council and the European Parliament on Integrated Coastal Zone Management: A Strategy for Europe).

The main aim of the ICZM Strategy is to stipulate in general terms the goals, objectives and principles of strategic importance for the rational use, protection and conservation and the management of the coastal zone and its resources. The Strategy is prepared for a 5 year time span and contains principal guidelines to deal with the issues relevant to the developments, investments and decision making in the coastal zone. The Strategy represents the basis for subsequent development and detailing of the state policy applicable to integrated coastal zone management within both landward and seaward domains.

The structure of the ICZM Strategy consistency follows the thematic issues in relation to integrated coastal zone management:

Chapter 1 (Introduction) explains why integrated coastal zone management is needed to assure sustainable development of Georgia's coast and to fulfil its national and international obligations.

Chapter 2 (The ICZM process in Georgia) defines the Integrated Coastal Zone Management process and provides an overview over the present ICZM practice in Georgia.

Chapter 3 (Assessment of the natural and socio-economic factors related to the coast) makes an assessment of the natural environment of and the socio-economic activities taking place along the coast.

Chapter 4 (Vision) defines the vision this Strategy is guided by.

Chapter 5 (Goal and objectives) spells out goals and management objectives of the Strategy.

Chapter 6 (The ICZM principles) provides main principles of integrated management.

Chapter 7 (Monitoring and revision of the ICZM Strategy) calls for a periodical revision procedure based on an indicator based monitoring programme.

Appendix 1 (Definition of the coastal zone) provides criteria for defining the coastal zone for the territory of Georgia.

Appendix 2 (Coastal zone boundaries) defines the boundaries of the coastal zone in Georgia.

Appendix 3 (Illustrative map of the coastal zone) contains the illustrative map of the coastal zone in Georgia.

Financial justification of the draft Ordinance

The adoption of the draft Ordinance will not have financial implications.

The author of the draft Ordinance

The draft of the Ordinance was prepared by the European Union supported Project Environmental Collaboration for the Black Sea, together with the Ministry of Environment Protection and Natural Resources of Georgia.

The submittal of the draft Ordinance

The draft of the Ordinance is submitted for endorsement by the Ministry of Environment Protection and Natural Resources of Georgia.