

PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVES INFORMATION SHEET

Name of the Partnership/Initiative: Integrated Framework of Tools for Implementing Sustainable Development in Small Islands (SUSTIS)

Expected date of initiation: mid-2003

Expected date of completion: mid-2007

Partners Involved:

The majority of partners in the proposed project are academic institutions, small and medium sized research institutions and government authorities. The following partners have expressed interest to participate in the consortium:

Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece
ASVIM - Agency for the Development of Small Islands, Lipari-Sicily, Italy
Atlantis consulting SA, Nicosia, Cyprus
Centre de Cooperation Internationale en Recherche Agronomique pour le developement (CIRAD), Reunion, France
Centro de Tecnologias Ambientais, Portugal
Corsecologie Research Consultancy, Corsica, France
Cranfield University, UK
CSA Group Limited, Dublin, Ireland
EKOTEK Ingeniería y Consultoría Medioambiental, S.L., Spain
Energy for Sustainable Development (ESD) Ltd, UK
Federazione Eni Enrico Mattei (FEEM), Italy
Forest Enterprise, Forestry Commission, Edinburgh, Scotland, UK
ICCS/National Technical University of Athens, Greece
Intercollege, Nicosia, Cyprus
Islands and Small States Institute, University of Malta, Malta
ISIS, Rome, Italy
Joint Research Centre – IPTS (Institute for Prospective Technology Studies), Spain
Lancaster University, UK
LT Consultants Ltd, Finland
Mediterranean Institute for Advanced Studies (IMEDEA), University of the Balearics (CSIC-UIB), Mallorca, Spain
Municipality of Kalithea Rhodes, Greece
National Institute for Research and Development in Informatics, Romania
Technical University of Denmark
Trama Tecno Ambiental (TTA), Barcelona, Spain
Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Spain
University of Cambridge, UK
University of Genoa, Italy
University of Greenwich, UK
University of Southern Pacific, Fiji
University of the Aegean, Greece.

Governments:

Regional Development Agency of Samos, Greece
Regional Energy Agency of Crete, Greece
Ministry of the Aegean, Greece

Intergovernmental organizations:

INSULA – International Scientific Council for Island Development

Major groups:

The major groups involved are academia, SMEs and local governments. The other major groups will be involved in the process through participation in the testing of the tools.

Other:

Leading Partner: Malta Environment and Planning Authority

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Main objectives of the Partnership/Initiative

The aim of this partnership is to undertake international research to **develop an integrated framework for assessing and selecting policy tools and technological options necessary to implement sustainable development in small islands**. A secondary objective of this proposal is to ensure the involvement of stakeholders in the research process and to transfer this framework to policy-makers in government, in order to ensure the quality and implementation of the research carried out.

It is increasingly recognized that islands and island regions exhibit ecological, geographical, social and economic constraints that demand particular attention. At the same time, while it is generally recognized that a coordinated, integrated and ecosystem approach is needed to address sustainability issues in islands, there is a lack of well-developed policy tools to facilitate this. This project aims to fill this gap by providing integrated tools and policy approaches for implementing sustainability in island regions.

Relationship of the Partnership/Initiative with the objectives of Agenda 21 as well as relevant goals and objectives of the United Nations Millennium Declaration:

This proposal is directly in line with the principal objective of Agenda 21, which is to provide a comprehensive response to General Assembly resolution 44/228 of 1989, on the need for a balanced and integrated approach to environment and development questions, and for national plans, policies and processes and international cooperation to support and supplement such efforts.

Agenda 21 specifically draws attention to the special circumstances of small island states, to which this partnership proposal is directed. In Chapter 17, Section G, it notes:

“17.123 Small island developing States, and islands supporting small communities are a special case both for environment and development. They are ecologically fragile and vulnerable. Their small size, limited resources, geographic dispersion and isolation from markets, place them at a disadvantage economically and prevent economies of scale. For small island developing States the ocean and coastal environment is of strategic importance and constitutes a valuable development resource.”

Agenda 21 puts forward the following objectives for small island states:

- a. To adopt and implement plans and programmes to support the sustainable development and utilization of their marine and coastal resources, including meeting essential human needs, maintaining biodiversity and improving the quality of life for island people;
- b. To adopt measures which will enable small island developing States to cope effectively, creatively and sustainably with environmental change and to mitigate impacts and reduce the threats posed to marine and coastal resources.

Among the activities proposed are:

- the study of the special environmental and developmental characteristics of small islands, producing profiles and inventories of environmental resources;
- the development of techniques for determining and monitoring the carrying capacity of small islands under different development assumptions and resource constraints;
- the preparation of medium- and long-term plans for sustainable development;
- the integration of environmental considerations with economic and sectoral planning and policies;

- the adoption of coastal area management techniques, such as planning, siting and environmental impact assessments, using Geographical Information Systems (GIS);
- the review of existing institutional arrangements with a view to institutional reforms essential to the effective implementation of sustainable development plans, including intersectoral coordination and community participation;
- the implementation of sustainable development plans, including the review and modification of existing unsustainable policies and practices;
- Based on precautionary and anticipatory approaches, the design and implementation of rational response strategies to address the environmental, social and economic impacts of climate change and sea level rise, and the preparation of appropriate contingency plans; and,
- the promotion of environmentally sound technology for sustainable development within small island developing States and the identification of technologies that should be excluded because of their threats to essential island ecosystems. Compilation of data of the special characteristics of islands, and the strengthening of international cooperation.

While the objectives of the SUSTIS partnership dovetail with those of Agenda 21 for small islands, the potential of the above activities for promoting sustainable development in such islands will be examined in the proposed research project. In addition, specific chapters of Agenda 21 have particular resonance for this research:

- Chapter 8 on integrating environment and development in decision-making;
- in terms of participation of major groups, Chapters 31 (scientific and technological community), 30 (business and industry) and 28 (local authorities);
- in terms of means of implementation, Chapters 35 (science for sustainable development) and 34 (transfer of environmentally-sound technology: cooperation and capacity building);
- Chapter 40 (information for decision-making) on the development and use of sustainability indicators, on improved data collection and assessment of that data; and,
- Chapter 37 (national mechanisms and international cooperation for capacity-building), which is reflected in the element of the partnership that strengthens the capacity of island peoples for implementing sustainable development.

Since the SUSTIS research project aims to focus on case studies in the following sectors: land use, agriculture and forestry, coastal management, water, energy, waste, climate change and tourism, the project reflects Agenda 21's concerns in these areas (Chapters 10, 14, 17, 12,18, 9, 20-22).

With regard to the Millennium Declaration, this partnership proposal fully supports the fundamental values of freedom, equality, solidarity, tolerance, respect for nature and share responsibility for managing worldwide economic and social development, as well as threats to international peace and security. The key objectives of development and poverty eradication, protecting the vulnerable, protecting our common environment and human rights, democracy and governance are of particular relevance for this partnership.

Methodology:

The **first task** of the project is to review scientific knowledge relative to the functioning and the degradation of the island ecosystems, to select best practice in terms of policy tools, to identify and to characterise the technological and other options currently in use and that are required for

prevention and adaptation policies, and to develop the set of tools adapted to island contexts. The first task should be complete by the end of the second year of the project.

The **second task** of the project, starting from the contextual information gathered in the first task, is to identify thresholds and targets to which policy is to be directed. Prevention and adaptation strategies will be built according to models of different scenarios of development, and cost-effectiveness analysis. Cost-benefit analysis will complete these analyses, taking into account the environmental and health costs of the technological options. All the potential social issues that could arise from the implementation of these options will also be taken into account in the models. A sustainability impact assessment will be applied to the instruments used in order to achieve objectives; it will also address social innovation. This task will be complete by the mid-term of the fourth year of the project.

In the **third task**, which will be iterative during the lifetime of the project, the results of the research and the methodological framework will be demonstrated to policy-makers in the form of sensitivity analysis, taking into account different assumptions with respect to socio-economic conditions and characteristics of technological options. This task will adopt a participatory approach, involving users and stakeholders in defining issues, testing methodologies and implementing them. This will ensure that stakeholders are partners in the whole development cycle, providing the necessary empirical and local knowledge and participating in decision-making on methods and solutions.

The case studies to be carried out in the islands, for a range of sectors that have particular relevance, in their own right and together, are: **land use, agriculture and forestry, coastal management, water, energy, waste, climate change and tourism**. The analysis will take into account the inter-dependencies between these sectors and also the boundary conditions relative to social and economic issues, principally social inclusion, economic development and trade. Furthermore, the consequences of the selected schemes on other important island issues such as biodiversity will be addressed.

Since this project aims at a multi-disciplinary approach, partners from the scientific, engineering and policy-making communities will participate, as well as social scientists, in particular economists and geographers.

Expected results:

The output of the research project will be the following:

- a summary of best practice with respect to tools for implementing sustainable development in islands;
- a scientific review and synthesis of the issues relating to sustainable development dimensions in the study islands (ecosystem functioning and damage, externalities, social thresholds);
- an integrated and coherent methodological and modelling framework that has been tested and piloted in island contexts and may be used to assess future development paths for island communities, and which may also be used in more general terms to provide scenarios and sustainability impact assessment in non-island contexts;
- a set of studies and proposals for strategies addressing the selected issues and options in the context of sustainable development in the study islands; and,
- a transfer of the results to the decision making process, including the provision of indicators for monitoring and evaluation.

Specific targets of the Partnership/Initiative and timeframe for their achievement:

The overall objective of this project is to develop an integrated framework of tools for implementing sustainable development in small islands. The associated overall project target is for this framework to be complete by the end of the project lifetime, which is four years after commencement (mid-2003 to mid-2007). Subsidiary targets have also been specified:

1. Summary of best practice: end of Year 1.
2. Scientific review and synthesis of issues: end of Year 2
3. Studies and proposals for strategies on issues and options in the study islands: end of Year 3
4. Transfer of results to decision-making process: ongoing, but to be completed by mid-term of Year 4
5. Dissemination of results: end of Year 4.

Coordination and Implementation mechanism

The project Consortium will be broadly structured along the following lines. A Core Group will be responsible for methodological aspects and guidance of the project. This Core Group will be made up of senior researchers that provide the scientific and methodological support to the wider consortium partners. It will include partners responsible for the overall management. A Users' Group will be responsible for highlighting issues, communication and the application of the results in the decision process. As for the Core Group, partners will be in charge of one or more tasks; they will come from the different islands involved in the project but also from those countries that have expertise in island or policy issues.

The project reflects best practice in terms of research integration, at different levels:

- horizontal integration of disciplines: natural sciences, health, economic and social sciences and technologies;
- linking of stakeholders through the participatory approach followed;
- vertical integration from the purely physical aspects to the implementation process of a strategy, including the necessary intermediary assessments and reviews.

Arrangements for funding

It is expected that funding will be sought from the following institutions:

- Research institutions;
- Small and Medium sized enterprises;
- National Governments;
- The European Commission Directorate-General for Research.

Arrangements for capacity building and technology transfer

Since the aim of the partnership project is to develop an integrated framework of tools for implementing sustainable development that is adapted for the special circumstances of small islands, capacity building and technology transfer are core elements of the proposal. European and other expertise, both in planning for sustainability and in the various technological options

available at present, will be assessed for their usefulness for island contexts, and the expertise developed throughout the project will be shared with all partners, as they learn and improve on existing knowledge, good practice and technology. The formation of a Users' Group within the Consortium will ensure that capacity building and technology transfer is directed principally, but not exclusively, towards institutions that will most immediately find a use for the knowledge and methods developed.

Brief description of expected arrangements for technology transfer:

Networking and knowledge sharing and adaptation are core activities for this project. This will take place during the first and second tasks of the project. Technological options in use in contexts similar to the study contexts will be examined and assessed for their usefulness.

In addition, the following activities will serve to support and strengthen the networking and technology transfer:

- Annual meetings for all partners, to coincide with the commencement of each new phase of the project and the closure of the previous one;
- Regular exchange and training workshops to synchronise methodologies and practices at the various stages of the project;
- Three monthly meetings of the Core Team;
- Publication of regular project newsletters in paper and electronic format.

Links of Partnership/Initiative with on-going sustainable development activities at the international and/or regional level (if any)

This project arises in response to and in parallel with the EU Sustainable Development Strategy. In the wake of the Göteborg European Summit in June 2001, sustainable development is becoming an increasingly important policy goal at a European scale. In order to meet its responsibilities in this regard, the EU has adopted a Strategy for Sustainable Development,¹ which recognizes that economic activity, social cohesion and environmental protection must go hand in hand. This strategy aims to be a catalyst for policy-makers and public opinion and to become a driving force for institutional reform, promoting comprehensive, cross-sectoral approaches that cut across policy areas having a bearing on sustainable development.

Two principal EU policies provide strong support for the implementation of the EU Strategy on Sustainable Development: the Sixth Environmental Action Programme and the European Research Area. The Environmental Action Programme promotes best practice on sustainable development, and calls for account to be taken of specific regional circumstances, with particular emphasis on action in the area of nature and biodiversity, and the sustainable use and management of natural resources and waste. The European Research Area, and more specifically the new Sixth Framework Programme for Research, will offer the possibility to launch projects aiming at providing the scientific, technological and socio-economic background necessary to identify and to implement sustainable development strategies at local, regional and national levels. Land use and the methodological aspects of sustainability are highlighted as the important areas for action in this regard.

This initiative also falls in line with United Nations Environment Programme regional activity in

¹ *A Sustainable Europe for a Better World: A European Union Strategy for Sustainable Development*, COM (2001) 264.

the Mediterranean, which is channeled through the Mediterranean Action Plan. Through this initiative, activities such as the promotion of integrated coastal management, tourism carrying capacity assessment and policy-making tools such as systemic and prospective sustainability analysis and sustainability indicators have been carried out and will be used as examples of best practice in this project.

Monitoring Arrangements

The following monitoring arrangements have been set up for the project:

- Monthly progress reports for each case study;
- Quarterly monitoring reports (paper and electronic) for the project in general, organized by theme (eg. water, energy, agriculture);
- Quarterly newsletters;
- Annual progress reports on project timetable;
- Final evaluation report.

A project website will be kept updated with the latest project information, and will be updated regularly as required, but at a minimum every quarter.

Other relevant information:

The islands that are to be used as case studies will include: Aaland (Finland), Balearic Islands (Spain), Bornholm (Denmark), Canary Islands (Spain), Corsica (France), Crete (Greece), Cyprus, Fiji, Lesbos (Greece), Lipari Islands (Italy), Madeira (Portugal), Malta, Nisyros (Greece), Reunion (France), Rhodes (Greece), Samos (Greece), Inishkea Islands (Ireland). Through this Type 2 Partnership initiative, it is expected that more non-European islands can be taken on as case studies.

Web-site (if available): N/A

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