



The EU Interreg CHANGE WE CARE project: coordinating coastal assessment, monitoring and planning at trans-boundary level

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Throughout the recent years, the development of scientific tools for the characterisation of the effects of climate change (CC) on coastal regions has been progressing alongside with the increasing awareness of the extent of such processes. Although this led to a more-than-decadal scientific advancement, the integration of the achieved multi-disciplinary knowledge into efficient and sustainable response protocols is still a current challenge, striving to overcome fragmentation both in disciplinary and geographical terms. In fact, focusing merely on local resources and critical issues can lead, if nothing else, to a suboptimal exploitation of the available knowledges and tools, whereas a cooperative, synergetic and interdisciplinary approach in the assessment, monitoring and planning activities, allows an optimization of the insight potential and a maximization of the management efficiency.

The Adriatic Sea (NE Mediterranean basin) presents a heterogeneous variety of coastal and transitional systems prone to different aspects of climate change. They range from low-lying coasts prone to flooding and erosion, to coastal lakes and free-surface aquifers that face salinization issues, all involving a broad spectrum of physical, geomorphological and ecological issues. This makes the Adriatic Sea an ideal site for developing concerted strategies for a multi-disciplinary assessment of the present conditions and expected scenarios in climate change scenarios, as well as coordinated adaptations actions, at a transboundary level. This is the goal of CHANGE WE CARE (Climate cHallenges on coAstal and traNsitional chanGing arEas: WEaving a Cross-Adriatic Response), a Project starting in 2019 and funded by the EU Interreg Italy-Croatia Programme.

The project explores climate risks faced by coastal and transition areas, contributing to a better understanding of the impact of climate variability and change on water regimes, salt intrusion, tourism, biodiversity and agroecosystems affecting the cooperation area, up to delivering integrated and shared planning options to decision makers and coastal communities. Focusing on five coastal systems encompassing the variability of possible geomorphological and ecological settings, physical drivers, and threats determining coastal vulnerability in the cooperation area, the project also aims at defining new paradigms for transferring successful methods of analysis, development and implementation of adaptation measures from the pilot sites to other systems, facing similar problems at the cross-border scale. The present contribution illustrates the pillars of CHANGE WE CARE, the planned activities and its elements of innovation, encouraging the share of approaches and experiences from (and to!) the cooperation area within the scientific community and with coastal stakeholders.