



NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

NEWS ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM LITTORAL '94 LISBON, 26-29 SEPTEMBER 1994

The International Symposium LITTORAL 94, an initiative of the EUROCOAST-PORTUGAL Association, member of the EUROCOAST Federation, took place in Lisbon, the 26-29th September 1994. Two hundred fifty researchers, teachers, engineers and managers interested on the problems of the coastal zone from France, United Kingdom, The Netherlands, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Japan, Greece, Turkey, Egypt, Ukraine, Croatia, Russia, Denmark, Tahiti, Brasil, U.S.A., Poland, North Ireland, Malta and Iceland have participated. The opening session was chaired by the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources of Portugal and co-chaired with the presence of the Minister of Sea.

Eight conferences, 100 papers and posters were presented on the following themes: Geomorphology and Geology, Sedimentology, Hydrodynamics, Biology Resources, Management, Conservation and Pollution. During the Symposium, the General Assembly of the EUROCOAST Federation took place with the presence of the national associations of France, United Kingdom, Portugal, Poland and Spain.

The General Assembly has elected the new executive Bureau composed by:

President:

Dr. Sussan Gubbay (United Kingdom)

Past-President:

Dr. Roger Emmanuel Quélenec (France)

Vice-Presidents:

Prof. G. Soares de Carvalho (Portugal)

Dr. José Luis Mansó (Spain)

Prof. Maurice Aubert (France)

Treasurer:

Dr. Robin Wingfield (United Kingdom)

The offer to host LITTORAL '96 in Portsmouth, U.K. was approved by the General Assembly.

The Proceedings of the Symposium LITTORAL '94 including the texts of conferences, papers and abstracts of posters, available to all participants on the day of the opening of the Symposium, have been published in two volumes, of 1,055 pages. They can be obtained through the EUROCOAST-PORTUGAL Association "Instituto de Hidráulica e Recursos Hídricos, Faculdade de Engenharia, 4099 Porto Codex, Portugal—fax 351-2-310870, 351-2-319280.

The price of the Proceedings (two volumes) is 12,000 PTE (Portuguese escudos). Package + handshipping: 500 PTE (Portugal), 4,000 PTE (Europe), 5,000 PTE Outside Europe. Cheques should be paid in portuguese escudos (PTE) to the EUROCOAST-PORTUGAL Association and sent to the headquarters of the Association.

CONCLUSIONS

(1) The Symposium showed that actually unprecedented coastal change occurs on the shorelines of all continents at all latitudes.

(2) The Symposium pointed out unprecedented coastal pressure on most European and American shores. High levels of urban industrial and recreation activities on the coastal fringe have been reported. Estuaries and Lagoons—acknowledged as the most sensitive elements of the coastal systems—are at constant risk. Rare examples of non artificial coastal wetlands persist in Europe, and these must be saved.

The Symposium participants showed a concern about nature conservation issues. It was reported that environmentally sensitive areas can be conserved and, more importantly, developed in cooperation with other interests such as tourism to mutual benefit.

(3) The Symposium pointed out how, in many cases, scientific knowledge helped solving or minimizing delicate problems of the coastal environment. Presented case studies showed that a con-

siderable progress, both in scientific data and knowledge, was achieved since the last Eurocoast Littoral'90 Symposium in Marseille.

(4) The Symposium's communications particularly emphasized that our ability in predicting the behaviour of the coastal systems has substantially improved in the past few years.

However it also showed that the degree of confidence in these predictions is, in many cases presented, still unsatisfactory. It was particularly emphasized that in the actual moment of accelerated coastal evolution and change, prediction of coastal behaviour is a critical issue. The Symposium showed that we can only predict coastal phenomena with reasonable reliability in regions where extensive research and monitoring data was previously available. This implies that better management of the coastal environment and better use of its natural resources can only be reached through a long term commitment on coastal research, coastal planning and public involvement.

(5) The Symposium discussions highlighted the absolute need for a coordinated and more intensive approach to the understanding of several critical scientific issues. Among others, the study of coastal morphodynamics, the effects of global climate change and sea level rise, and the risks of coastal stabilisation were constantly cited.

(6) The Symposium pointed out the validity of several extremely different approaches to coastal evolution, monitoring and prediction, coastal

planning and coastal management. Most participants agreed that there is a strong need to exchange these experiences, and there is still a lot to be done in this field.

Networks of scientists, planners, managers and decision makers, should be intensively encouraged. During the discussions this was a theme of critical importance. Most participants felt that governmental and inter-governmental agencies and international organizations should increase their support and commitment to the coastal zone networks, as the actual levels are clearly unsatisfactory and ineffective.

(7) Finally the Symposium participants highlighted the importance of public involvement in coastal issues such as planning, use of its natural resources and nature conservation. Dissemination and education will therefore be vital activities for the future.

As conclusive remarks we would emphasize that the coastal fringe is the world's most valued territory. The Littoral'94 International Symposium clearly showed that this territory is at risk. But it also showed that there is a considerable scientific knowledge, technical experience, and personal commitment from the coastal professionals. However, a lot more can and must be done, to save our coasts.

Secretariat
Lisbon, 29th September 1994