

What is ComCoast?

ComCoast - COMBINED functions in COASTal defence zones - is a European project which develops and demonstrates innovative solutions for flood protection in coastal areas.

Rijkswaterstaat, a part of the Dutch Ministry of Public Works and Water Management, leads the project. Besides the Netherlands, four other North Sea countries are involved (UK, Germany, Belgium and Denmark). In total, ten partners constitute the project consortium.

The partners share their knowledge and experience and develop the best possible practices, which will benefit all coastal defences comprising embankments in Europe.

ComCoast runs from April 1, 2004 to December 31, 2007. The European Union Community Initiative Programme Interreg IIIB North Sea Region and the project partners jointly finance the project costs of € 5,8 million.

Anticipation of future developments

Climate change will cause increasing physical loads on the flood defence along the North Sea over the next decades. This is caused by a sea level rise whilst the ground level is lowering with ensuing salt-water intrusion into the land surrounding our coasts.

It is no longer feasible to continue traditional flood management methods where the line between land and sea is keeping out tidal waters. New methods involving a gradual transition from sea to land are being explored in order to incorporate land use management with regard to the increasing pressures from population growth. These transitional areas will create new opportunities for both the environment and the people whilst offering new opportunities. In the ComCoast project, we recognise the need to develop new sustainable flood management strategies in order to influence planners to anticipate future developments.

The ComCoast concept

The ComCoast concept aims to create multi-functional flood management schemes with a more gradual transition from sea to land, which benefits the wider coastal community and environment whilst offering economically sound options.

The concept focuses on coastal areas comprising embankments,

- to provide economical and sustainable alternatives to the traditional single line flood defence strategy of step by step raising the crest level of the embankments,
- to create a win-win situation for both flood management over a wider coastal zone and multi-functional land use and
- to adjust to spatial developments and needs in the coastal zone.

The aim of ComCoast

- to explore the spatial potentials for coastal defence strategies for current and future sites in the North Sea Interreg IIIB region
- to create and apply new methodologies to



evaluate multifunctional flood defence zones from an economical and social point of view.

- to develop innovative technical flood defence solutions to incorporate the environment and the people and to guarantee the required safety level
- to improve and apply stakeholder engagement strategies with emphasis on public participation
- to apply best practice multifunctional flood management solutions to the ComCoast pilot sites
- to share knowledge across the Interreg IIIb North Sea region.

The ComCoast solutions

Depending on the regional demands,

ComCoast develops tailor-made solutions:

- to cope with the future increase of wave overtopping of the embankments
- to improve the wave breaking effect of the fore shore e.g. by using recharge schemes
- to create salty wetland conditions with tidal exchange in the primary sea defence using culvert constructions or by realigning the coastal defence system
- to cope with the increasing salt intrusion
- to influence policy, planning and people
- to gain public support of multifunctional zones.

The ComCoast structure

The project structure ensures a good coordination of the activities and a sound communication.

Partners

The ComCoast project is carried out in cooperation with 10 partners:

- Rijkswaterstaat in the Netherlands, Lead Partner,
- Province of Zeeland, the Netherlands,
- Province of Groningen, the Netherlands,
- University of Oldenburg, Germany,
- Environment Agency, United Kingdom,
- Ministry of Flanders, Belgium,
- Danish Coastal authority, Denmark,
- Community of Hulst, the Netherlands,
- Waterboard Zeeuwse Eilanden, the Netherlands,
- Waterboard Zeeuws Vlaanderen, the Netherlands.

Steering Committee

Project management at the strategic level, in which the political level and highly ranked representatives of the contributing partners are involved.

Work Packages

The Work Packages (WP's) are the 'building blocks' within the project, run by international teams and led by one of the partners. Every Work Package will focus at a specific field of interest.

Project Coordination Unit

The Project Coordination Unit, delegated from WP 6, executes the day-to-day overall management of the project.

Project Group

Coordination between the Work Packages is prepared by a project group and provided by regular transnational meetings (e.g. once per 2 months) between representatives of the participating partners.

Expert Panel

Recommendations of an independent Panel of Experts are asked for of the relevant strategies and results drafted by the Work Packages.

Results

Between 2005 and 2007, ComCoast will deliver a number of pilot projects in England, Germany and The Netherlands. All Work Packages will lead to reports and plans concerning the (consequences of) the realisation of the ComCoast principle in various coastal areas along the North Sea.

Information

Information on the ComCoast project can be obtained through the project management, situated at Rijkswaterstaat in Delft, f.c.hamer@dww.rws.minvenw.nl, phone + 31 15 251 8442.

See also www.comcoast.org or www.waterinnovatiebron.nl - pilots - ComCoast.

If you wish to receive the (free) digital newsletter, please send an e-mail to info@comcoast.org referring to 'newsletter ComCoast'.

