

National Integrated Coastal Zone Management Planning

The Bahamas

The Horsley Witten Group, Inc. (HW) supported the Government of The Bahamas in scoping issues and identifying potential management tools in preparation for a nation-wide Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) plan. Under contract to the Inter-American Development Bank, HW worked in coordination with the Government of The Bahamas, through site visits and local meetings, to identify and assess the key coastal management issues facing The Bahamas. These issues included:

- land/water use and resource allocation conflicts;
- degradation of coastal ecosystems;
- depletion of commercial fisheries stocks;
- declining water quality, erosion and shore instability;
- coastal hazards;
- sea level rise;
- impoverishment of coastal communities;
- interagency coordination;
- intergovernmental coordination (national/local);
- public involvement/participation; and,
- public education.

HW then presented a diverse list of potentially suitable and effective management tools, including national and local planning coordination, zoning ordinances, health regulations, stormwater regulations, wetland mitigation, marine protected areas, conflict management, environmental monitoring, public participation and outreach, hazard mitigation planning and transfer of development rights. The management approach recommended by HW was grounded in three initial steps: (1) characterization and mapping of critical resource areas, (2) development of standards and policies to protect those areas, and (3) identification of the most appropriate tools and techniques to implement the Plan. The Government of The Bahamas will use the results of this project to continue the important process of developing its national Integrated Coastal Zone Management plan.

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