

**TIDE & Natura 2000:
A partnership for sustainable tidal river
development?**

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Estuaries

Estuaries are among the most productive, dynamic and complex ecosystems of the world. They have both high ecological and economic values.

They are key areas in the Natura 2000 network:
306 Natura 2000 sites - 643.704,44 ha

Natura 2000

- Natura 2000 is the largest network of nature protection areas in the World. It is the core instrument in the EU for biodiversity conservation.
- Natura 2000 sites form a EU-wide coherent ecological network for the protection of the most threatened species and habitat types.
- Natura 2000 is not a network of strict nature reserves but a network of sites where sustainable economic development takes place in full respect of biodiversity values.

New guidelines for estuaries

- To promote sustainable development in line with EU environmental legislation, the European port and Marine policies and the European Maritime Strategy
- To provide clarifications, explanations and new prospective views on the application of the Community nature legislation to port development and the management of estuaries and coastal zones

New guidelines for estuaries

- To explain the protection regime under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive with regard to the specific context of estuaries and coastal zones.
- To provide recommendations and elements of good practice while facilitating sustainable port development in or near Natura 2000 sites.
- **Latest revised draft coming soon! See:**
<http://circa.europa.eu/Public/irc/env/estuary/home>

Understanding complex ecosystems

- The balance between the different components (physical, chemical, biological and hydro morphological) of estuarine ecosystems is **very complex** and can be easily affected by human activities
- When setting conservation objectives in estuaries and coastal zones, **it is important to understand** how such complex ecosystems function and how they evolve

Some examples from the estuaries guidelines

- Nature conservation objectives and socio-economic development objectives should be joint together in planning processes.
- Where uncertainty on effects remains, monitoring and adaptive measures are crucial.
- Integrated management plans are they key to sustainable development in Natura 2000 sites.

'Working with Nature' in Natura 2000

- Achieving project objectives in an ecosystem context rather than assessing the consequences of a predefined project design.
- Identifying win-win solutions rather than simply minimising ecological harm.
- To be applied early in a project when flexibility is still possible.
- To be applied not only at project level but also to the strategic planning level.

“Working with Nature” is cool

“Working with Nature” is about more than avoiding or mitigating the environmental impacts of a pre-defined design.

Rather, it sets out ways of achieving project objectives while delivering environmental protection, restoration or enhancement. It prefers prevention to compensation. It promotes biodiversity rather than just avoiding its decline.

Welcome 'TIDE' project !

- The guidance document on estuaries and coastal zones will provide recommendations to enhance sustainable economic development in or near Natura 2000 sites.
- The TIDE project is seen as an **important complement** to the continued exchange of information and good practice in the estuaries Working Group.

Some expectations from TIDE

- Contribute to the protection of estuarine ecosystems and biodiversity
- Improve knowledge about estuary functioning
- Improve exchange of experience and knowledge
- Develop practical approaches for working with nature and avoiding conflicts
- Design and promote integrated development approaches in estuaries

Some more expectations from TIDE

- Provide feed-back on implementation and examples of good practice
- Contribute to the dialogue on Natura 2000 and estuaries in the context of the estuaries working group
- Contribute to better understanding and awareness about the objectives of Natura 2000
- Further strengthen the partnership between Natura 2000 and developers in tidal rivers

Good luck TIDE!



http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/index_en.htm

Thank you for your attention !