

Abstract

From Global to Local: a comparative ocean and coastal Management approach in Western Europe, France, and East Asia, Japan

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France and Japan are two very different countries from the geographical, environmental, socio-economical and cultural points of view:

France is part of Europe and member of the European Union, at the edge of the European continent, bordered by three ocean or semi-enclosed sea bodies, the Atlantic Ocean, the Channel/North Sea, and the Mediterranean Sea.

Japan is part of the “East Asian Community” and member of regional organisations like APEC, as an ocean and archipelagic state located into the Pacific Ocean and surrounded by the open sea and semi-enclosed sea bodies, namely the Okhotsk Sea, the Japan Sea, and the South-China Sea.

In Japan, the “Bill for the Basic Ocean Law” took effect in July 2007. The contents of this new Law “define the basic principles of Japan on the ocean, clarify responsibilities of the national government, local governments, business operators, and citizens, specify the basic items concerning measures on the ocean, and stipulate the establishment of the Headquarters for Comprehensive Ocean Policy for the purpose of promoting these measures in a comprehensive and systematic manner, aiming at realizing a new ocean-oriented nation.

In France, the current national move for the management of the coast and ocean is largely influenced by the new European Maritime Policy and its Marine Strategy Framework Directive. It was initiated within the framework of the “Grenelle Environment” and then “Grenelle of the Sea” national consultations pushing forward sustainable development measures related to the key maritime activities, governance arrangements, education and training, and knowledge in continuity between the water basin, the coast and the ocean in metropolitan France and its overseas territories.

In these respective national contexts, both countries have numerous ongoing local ICM initiatives taking place in specific regional and local context. The question is therefore how to progressively build up from national to local and vice-versa an adequate, viable and well supported governance and management process that can help each nation to consolidate their national framework hence promoting their ocean-state position in their respective maritime region and in the international arena.