

CO-LAND: Inclusive coastal landscapes: activating green and blue infrastructure for sustainable development of the urban-land interface

Coastal landscapes across Europe are often characterized by overlaying and competing land uses: infrastructure, industries, tourism, residential development that lead to unsustainable development such as urban sprawl and irreversible consumption of soil and other natural resources.

However, water-based recreation has various positive effects on human health and wellbeing – in relation to physical exercise and mental wellbeing, which is why on the one hand people love to visit the seaside on vacation while on the other hand poor or restricted access to waterscapes raises issues of social equity and spatial justice. The urban-land interface is also an important and often vulnerable habitat zone for flora and fauna (biodiversity) and is extremely rich in cultural heritage forming part of our collective memory and identity. Sustainable and integrated planning, design and management is crucial for the mental, social, physical and economic well-being of many European citizens.

This strategic partnership will develop a learning environment in which students from various planning disciplines can qualify themselves for addressing the specific spatial, social and environmental challenges of coastal landscapes in Europe with integrative and inclusive methods such as:

- Applying an holistic landscape assessment framework
- Using the green/blue infrastructure approach to improve the connectivity and multi-functionality of fragmented and competing spatial layers and structures
- Using people-centred and community-based planning and design methods
- Apply scenario techniques for envisioning alternative futures
- Using innovative communication and visualisation tools to support the community in envisioning alternative futures

Theory, methods and case studies in this field will be dealt with during an open online course delivered collaboratively by the partnership to its students. The CO-LAND online course will also be open to interested professionals and students from other universities outside the core partnership.”