

PAKISTAN



A. HOW IS COASTAL ZONE DEFINED IN THE COUNTRY?

The coastal zone in the country is broadly defined by its geographical location which is part of the Sindh and Balochistan provinces. There are two primary regions in the coastal area, the Balochistan or the Makran coast and the Sindh coast.

B. HOW IS THE COASTAL ZONE REGULATED?

Pakistan does not have any particular regulation pertaining to the developments in the coastal zone. Coastal issues in the country fall primarily under the ambit of various existing environmental regulations. The National Environmental Policy of 2005 (NEP) provides an overarching framework for addressing pollution issues of coastal water in the country. As noted in the NEP, there is a need to prepare and implement integrated coastal zone management plan for protection of marine life. The NEP also mentions the requirement to establish a marine pollution control commission.

Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan

■ The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) under the Balochistan Programme for Sustainable Development (BPSD), outlined an Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan (ICZMP) for Pakistan in 2011. Some of the main objectives of the ICZMP are prevention, reduction and control of marine pollution, sustainable management of coastal resources, ensuring sustainable livelihood practices for coastal communities, improving on existing environmental regulations and institutional capacity building.

National Climate Change Policy, 2011

■ The National Climate Change Policy (NCCP), 2011 drafted by the Ministry of Environment aims to address various problems that are likely to affect the country due to change in climatic conditions. The policy touches on issues of climate change that are important consideration for the coasts and emphasizes on efficient resource management through development of research and technology, developing legislative structure and capacity building for implementation.

■ Policy guidelines specifically for protection of coastal and marine ecosystems include conservation and plantation of mangroves and other vegetation considered important for controlling erosion and minimizing the impacts of cyclones and tsunamis. The policy also emphasizes on disaster preparedness through construction of cyclone shelters in coastal areas, development of early warning systems and evacuation plan for vulnerable communities, development of climate resilient infrastructure such as embankments and strengthening of institutional capacity for timely response.

C. WHAT IS THE CLEARANCE PROCESS FOR A COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT?

There is no specific guideline for permitting projects in the coastal areas in Pakistan. Development activities that are presumed to have a significant environmental impact are required to obtain a permit from the provincial Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). For a proposed development activity, an application needs to be made to the Director General of the provincial EPA. As per provisions of the Pakistan Environment Protection Act (PEPA), 1997, the general steps involved in the permit process are (*see: Clearance process*):

- For a proposed activity, an Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) is required to be carried out by the project proponent. The IEE report is reviewed by the provincial EPA and approved.
- Following the IEE review and approval, depending on the scale and anticipated environmental impact of the proposed activity, an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required to be done. EIA is only required for large scale projects as determined by the provincial EPA. For small projects, no EIA is required and a No Objection Certificate is granted by the provincial



EPA for commencing the activity following the IEE approval.

- For large projects, besides EIA, a public consultation process also needs to be carried out.
- Upon reviewing the EIA, a final decision is made by the provincial EPA about permitting the proposed activity, which is to be communicated within a period of four months from the date of submission of records.

D. ISSUES / PROBLEMS WITH COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT IN PAKISTAN AND WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE

There is no overarching regulation to address the coastal issues in Pakistan. The various policies and plans that are proposed are also at a very nascent stage. The matter of coastal management thus needs to be addressed from a very basic level, from formulation of a definition for coastal zone to institutional capacity building and ensuring proper implementation of regulations and policies. The factors that need to be urgently addressed for sustainable coastal management include:

- Defining and demarcating the coastal zone precisely.
- Integrate various regulations that are already in place and improve institutional capacity as a starting point for addressing coastal issues.
- Formulating regulations and policies specifically for managing coastal areas in the country.
- Developing a guideline for activities that can be permitted especially in the coastal zone and emphasizing on a stringent evaluation process for permitting such activities.
- Currently developmental projects that require EIA to be conducted and that do not, are not clearly categorized. A clear categorization of projects will help to streamline the process of clearance and also evaluate their impact more clearly.
- Implementation of policies such as ICZM that are in the pipeline on a priority basis.

