

GHENT UNIVERSITY
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B-9000 Gent, Belgium

Sustainability and innovation at the Belgian North Sea Coast

The Beaufort Case



Renata Januszewska
Jacques Viaene

August 2008

Learn project – ‘Sustainable Tourism Development by Applying the Learning Concept in the North Sea Region’ – is realised with the support of
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND INTERREG IIIB
Community Initiative concerning Transnational
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1. OBJECTIVE OF PILOT REGION PROJECT ANALYSIS

The Pilot Region Analysis is prepared in the frame of the ToLearn project ‘Sustainable Tourism Development by Applying the Learning Area Concept in the North Sea Region’ supported by the INTERREG IIIB programme.

The project partners represent 5 countries (Table 1). The German partner has made the comparable analysis for the UK and Sweden.

Table 1: Partners of the ToLearn project

Country	University	Representatives	e-mail
Germany	Christian-Albrechts-University of Kiel	Sterr Horst Von Rohr Goetz Corves Christoph	sterr@geographie.uni-kiel.de rohr@geographie@uni-kiel.de corves@geographie.uni-kiel.de
Netherlands	CHN University Netherlands	Postma Albert	apostma@chn.nl
Belgium	Ghent University	Januszewska Renata Viaene Jacques	renata.januszewska@ugent.be jacques.viaene@ugent.be
Denmark	University of Southern Denmark	Liburd Janne Hergesell Anja	liburd@sitkom.sdu.dk anhe@sitkom.sdu.dk
Norway	University of Stavanger	Mykletun Reidar	reidar.j.mykletun@uis.no

Based on the first analysis on “challenge profiles” the following aspects were researched for the Belgian coast: target groups and activities, current situation of tourism, trends in tourism development, examples of sustainable actions, stakeholder communication and networking, tourism innovations and impact of tourism policy on sustainable tourism development at the Belgian coast.

The project partners have chosen one pilot region per participating country. The selected pilot projects inside these regions are considered as particularly successful in finding innovative solutions and strategies to developing sustainable tourism. Description of these projects includes “sustainability and innovation check” comprising the following questions:

- Which strategies aimed at coping with challenges in tourism implemented in the past years could be considered innovative and may serve as “best practice examples” to other regions?
- Which efforts were made specifically to strengthen the development of sustainable tourism?
- What are the main barriers to implementing innovative strategies and which steps have been taken to overcome such barriers?
- Which communication structures and learning processes formed the basis for the region’s success?
- Does the region’s tourism sector have a specific communication structure that facilitates learning processes and the implementation of innovative strategies?

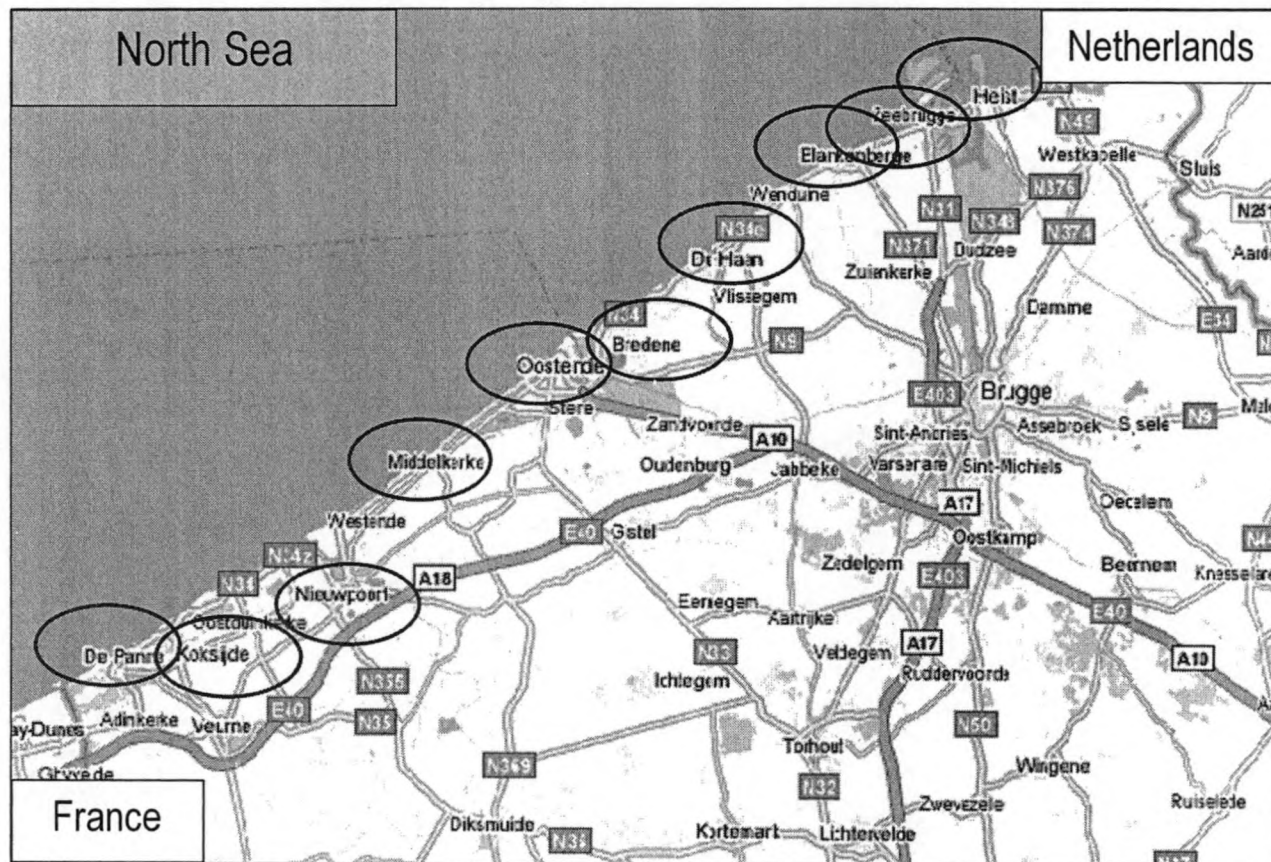
In Belgium, the overall analysis of the coast shows that a few excellent cases of sustainable tourism development exist. They include: Green Key project, Coastal Barometer, Coastal Tram and Beaufort project, which is a triennial of contemporary art event by the Belgian coast. Beaufort is therefore chosen as an excellent case of innovative and sustainable approach to tourism development by creating a unique cooperation structure between national, regional and local institutions as well as coastal municipalities.

2. DESCRIPTION OF BELGIAN COAST AND BEAUFORT PROJECT

2.1. Description of the North Sea coast in Belgium

The whole Belgian North Sea Coast, an important tourist destination, is situated in West Flanders. The Belgian coast spans on 67 km of coastal line that belongs to ten coastal municipalities (De Panne, Koksijde-Oostduinkerke, Nieuwpoort, Middelkerke-Westende, Oostende, Bredene, De Haan-Wenduine, Blankenberge, Zeebrugge and Knokke-Heist). The land lying behind the dikes or dunes belongs to the Flemish Polders. The following map shows the Belgian situation (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Ten Belgian municipalities along the coastal line



Tourism is by far the most important economic activity for the whole Belgian coast region. Both overnight tourism and day tourism are very important especially for Flemish citizens and inhabitants of Brussels. Surveys show that there are about 10mln tourist visiting the Belgian coast during the year.

The tourist season starts with the Easter holidays, has its peak during July and August and evolves after the season called “Indian Summer” that is recorded in September and October.

It is well known that coastal tourism has a significant impact on the socio-economic structure of the region and in particular on employment, income and investment.

Taking into account special Belgian situation, the whole coast is further considered as ‘Pilot Region’ and a special focus is created on the cultural project Beaufort in order to understand the dynamics of cooperation and networking between all coastal municipalities.

The population is rather concentrated in the middle of Belgian coast (NIS, 2007):

- West Coast: De Panne (10.153) + Koksijde (21.419) + Nieuwpoort (10.940) = **42.512 people**
- Middle Coast: Middelkerke (18.080) + Oostende (69.115) + Bredene (15.343) = **102.538 people**
- East Coast: De Haan (12.177) + Blankenberge (18.329) + Zeebrugge+Lissewege (7.146) +
Knokke-Heist (34.132) = **71.784 people**

2.2. Why the Beaufort project was selected for Pilot Region Analysis?

2.2.1. What is Beaufort?

Beaufort is a triennial of contemporary art festival on show at the Belgian coast (www.beaufort03.be). It is an excellent case of innovative and sustainable approach to tourism development. Since tourism at the Belgian coast faces a unique situation and the coastal line is only 67 km, the annual number of tourists reaches approximately 10mln. The major groups are active seniors, elderly, singles and the families with children. The major strength is the diversity of the tourist product offer, however limited to the top season between July and August. Projects as Beaufort try to extend the tourist season and to attract different socio-economic and age groups.

2.2.2. Creation and management

The idea of cultural event Beaufort was created by Willy Van den Bussche, the former head curator of the Provincial Museum of Modern Art (PMMK) in Oostende, employee of the Province West-Flanders. Thus, the Beaufort administration office is based in Oostende, a popular historic town located in the middle of Belgian coast.

The Beaufort project is organised by the vzw Ku(n)st in collaboration with the PMMK and the ten coastal municipalities. The vzw (non profit organisation) consists of two partners: the Province of West-Flanders and the coastal city Oostende.

Placing the 'n' between brackets, a word play – only applicable in the Dutch language – originates between 'kust (coast)' and 'kunst (art)'. The name of the vzw refers to the principal mission and identity of the organisation, pointed out in the articles of association that consists of 'the organisation of art projects along the Flemish coast and/or the hinter-land of West-Flanders'. A project office under supervision of the Board organises the Beaufort project. The promotion, communication, fundraising, human resources, business policy, management are the responsibilities of the project office of the vzw Ku(n)st.

The vzw originated from the old cultural foundation "From Ensor to Delvaux", a very successful exhibition organised by the PMMK, Provincial Museum of Modern Art in 1996-1997 (more than 350.000 visitors). Consequently, the foundation turned into a vzw disposing an important starting capital to organise the first Beaufort edition. There was no starting capital left after the first edition in 2003, therefore the support of partners and sponsors became even more important for the second edition in 2006 and the third in 2009.

2.2.3. Three editions

From the beginning onwards it was the aim of the Beaufort contemporary art festival to be a triennial. For the first time in the Belgian coast history a bound-breaking project took place in 2003. Ten coastal municipalities and the Museum of Modern Art in Oostende (PMMK), worked together on a large scale art project '2003 Beaufort: Art by the Sea' (Beaufort01). It was an invitation to all people to become acquainted with contemporary art, with a focus on innovation and quality.

The next edition of this sustainability-oriented approach was in 2006. Meanwhile the name of 2003 Beaufort and 2006 Beaufort has been labelled as Beaufort01 and Beaufort02. Those changes fit into a completely new communication and promotion program, underlining the contemporary, young and dynamic character of the art festival.

Beaufort02 has run from 13th April till 1st October 2006 with the aim to extend the short tourist season at the Belgian coast. For 'Beaufort Outside', 30 installations and art works were presented on open air in the coastal towns and the exhibition 'Beaufort Inside' was held at the PMMK.

The third Beaufort edition (Beaufort03) will be on show from 28th March till 4th October, 2009.

2.2.4. Unique character

It is well established that the Beaufort projects are characterised by one U(nique) S(elling) P(roposition): presentation of contemporary art on an unique Belgian coastal strip where people whether or not in swimming suit have an agreeable encounter with art. Beaufort is an invitation to all to become acquainted with contemporary art, with a focus on quality, national and international art. The different base lines in the communication "Art by the Sea" and "Coast shores art" underline the hospitality of the Belgian coast.

The name Beaufort is also very special. Given the unique location, the sea, where the triennial takes place, the organisers looked for a title that is connected with all these aspects. Because of the international character, it was also needed that a title is internationally applicable. The name 'Beaufort' was chosen because wind speed affects life at sea and life by the sea. "Beaufort" contains a number of shorter words: beau, eau, be, ufo, fort; a...rt, and it is directly applicable to this triennial because it wants to create a strong (fort) and beautiful (beau) image for itself with an art (a...rt) project that takes place by the water (eau) in Belgium (Be) and requires an active imagination (ufo).

'Beaufort Inside' takes place in the exhibition space of the museum of Modern Art (PMMK) in Oostende. The infrastructure is very adequate.

'Beaufort Outside' spreads along the coast. In each of ten coastal municipalities, there are 3 to 4 artworks located. The location is diversified: some sculptures are in the city, others on the beach, dunes or some remote places out of the city. The accessibility is well guaranteed by the coastal tram. The indications are made at the tram stops for such sculptures. The curator sometimes decides to locate objects in places less familiar for the sake of the education aspect. In this way, social education is realised. However, the protection of monuments is more difficult in the remote places.

2.2.5. Financial structure

The fundraising is one of the fundamental tasks of the project office. The Beaufort projects cannot be organised without the financial support of several regional, provincial, Flemish, federal and European institutions and subsidizers. The Province of West-Flanders and the 10 coastal municipalities are the leading actors, followed by the Flemish government with the Flemish minister for Culture, the Flemish minister for tourism in the framework of the coastal action plan (Kustactie Plan), spread over several years and the Flemish minister of Public Works through MDK, department Kust. All those government authorities work together with the vzw Ku(n)st and the 10 coastal municipalities to promote the Belgian coast as a place where cultural experiences are possible as well as relaxation and recreation.

For both editions Beaufort01 and 02, the vzw could also rely on the support of Europe (Objective 2). The National Lottery was an important partner during Beaufort 02.

Also Tourism Flanders & Brussels and a lot of sponsors including the main private sponsor KBC Bank & Insurance supported the 01 and 02 editions. Important contributions were made in both editions by the media sponsors with the newspapers De Standaard and Le Soir, the magazines from the Roularta group Plus Magazine and Knack, the Flemish Radio Broadcasting, KLARA, the Walloon radio Broadcasting RTBF and the regional television broadcasting Focus/WTV. Also the Flemish public tram and bus transport company, De Lijn and the Belgian railways company, NMBS are important partners.

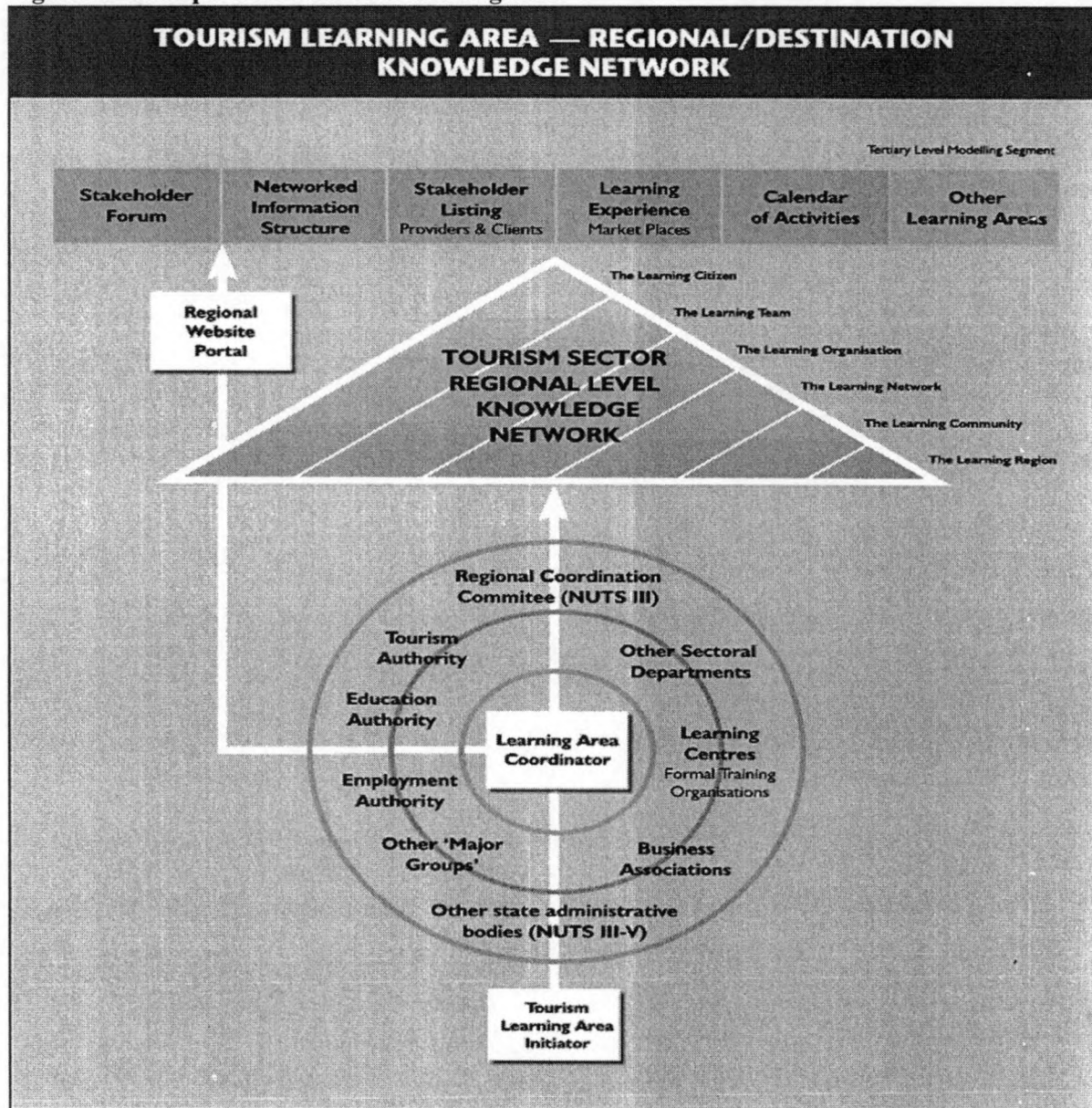
3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. ToLearn Concept

The handbook “How to Set up Tourism Learning Areas” was published by the European Commission with the aim to explain what learning areas are, why they can be useful and how they concern the tourism sector (EC, 2004). The handbook gives practical advice and information on how to set up a provisional Learning Area for the Tourism Sector. The book includes many technical appendixes containing a set of generic tools to help with the daily implementation tasks.

A Tourism Learning Area (TLA) is a concept of a multi-stakeholder, inter-sectional, partnership approach aimed at improving human potential for running the tourism sector at the local/regional level (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Concept of the Tourism Learning Area



Source: EC (2004). A handbook “How to Set up Tourism Learning Areas”. Developing Thematic, Destination-Level and Regional Tourism Knowledge Networks. DG Enterprise Tourism Unit

A TLA brings stakeholders together in coherent information and cooperation networks, in order to pay specific attention to the sector's performance and governance issues related to regional eco-system security, human capital and SME/Micro-enterprise development. A TLA network addresses tourism sector challenges by improvements in entrepreneurial quality, innovation, competitiveness and sustainability.

3.2. Check-list development

Check-list for the Pilot Region Analysis was built in relation to the handbook "How to Set up Tourism Learning Areas (TLA)" and it was discussed in two workshops with all ToLearn partners:

- Research methodology preparation, Kiel, Germany, 26-27 October 2006
- Partners' meeting during the Joint Annual Conference of INTERREG IVB program, Brunstad, Norway, 19-21 June 2007

TLA concept suggest that in order to establish the effective tourism learning area the destinations need to focus on and research the following five points that were included into the research questionnaire called 'Pilot Region Analysis':

1. Stakeholder communication, cooperation and networking

How important are regional communication structures, networks, learning processes and key actors/ key institutions for the development of the region's tourism sector?

- a. *What are characteristics of the region's communication networks (openness / closeness / transparency)?*
- b. *Which (tourism) area do regional networks represent?*
 - *government bodies: counties, communities, ministries, regional development agencies*
 - *industries: Enterprises/ companies (e.g. gasoline stations - Norway), owners' associations, project developers*
 - *destination marketing: tourist info, tourist- boards, NTO*
 - *researchers, journalists*
 - *NGOs: nature conservation/protection groups etc.*
 - *inhabitants/ local people*
- c. *How effective are communication structures in including all relevant stakeholders in planning and decision making?*
- d. *What is the nature of the contacts between members of the networks?*
 - *Private contacts*
 - *Professional/ job-related contacts*
- e. *What do tourism actors use the network for?*
 - *Exchange of information, support/help/advice, exchange of resources*

2. Learning processes and knowledge management

To what extent do communication structures and learning processes form the basis for the region's success?

- a. *Does the regions tourism sector have a specific communication structure that facilitates learning processes?*
- b. *How is knowledge disseminated in the region?*
- c. *What opportunities for qualification/ education/ professional training for the tourism sector exist in the region?*
- d. *What role does explicit knowledge play in the region's knowledge management?*
- e. *What role does tacit knowledge play in the region's knowledge management?*
- f. *Is staff turnover an issue for competence development? Which measures are taken?*

3. Innovation

Which innovative products / processes/ people that strengthen the sustainability of the tourism sector can be identified?

- a. *What efforts, activities are undergone and how is the performance?*
- b. *What characterizes tourism stakeholders concerning innovation: are most of them Non-innovators, innovators / early adopters, followers or leaders?*
- c. *What external and internal factors stimulate innovation in the region?*
- d. *What are barriers to the implementation of innovations?*
- e. *Which innovations strengthen sustainability?*
- f. *Which innovative forms of communication exist in the region?*
- g. *What are critical success factors?*
- h. *What are criteria for "success"?*

4. Tourism policy

In which ways do (tourism) policies at different government levels affect tourism development in the region? [Questions should be answered related to sustainable development]

- a. *Is there coordination between political entities at the national and regional level?*
- b. *To what extent has the region its own tourism development strategy?*
- c. *Does a tourism policy exist?*
- d. *What are positive effects of tourism policy?*
- e. *What are negative effects of tourism policy?*
- f. *Where does need for action exist?*
- g. *What problems for stakeholders are derived from (tourism) policies?*
 - *Taxation and subsidies*
 - *(over-) regulation and restrictions*
 - *Communication*
- h. *What does risk and safety management/ policy in the region characterise?*
- i. *Which efforts concerning environment conservation are taken by (tourism) policies/ governmental bodies?*
- j. *What can be improved about tourism policy making?*

5. Visitor management

- a. *Are some places overused? Is crowding or group size an issue?*
- b. *Any guide on carrying capacity or other limits existent?*
- c. *Is current visitor behaviour considered appropriate?*
- d. *Is seasonal visitation addressed in management?*
- e. *Impacts addressed? Monitoring system in place?*
- f. *Conservation activities undertaken or planned?*
- g. *Existing infrastructure adequate?*
- h. *Issues of shared resources (water, electricity, waste, infrastructure)*
- i. *Areas of conflict and activities for improvement*

3.3. Testing of the check-list

The check-list was tested with the experts in tourism and culture projects at the beginning of 2008.

The aim was to find out if the questions proposed reflect all necessary issues in order to decide whether the project is the best example of sustainable and innovative action.

The testing was also done in order to avoid repetition of the questions, and to set up the logical order of the analysed issues.

The following experts were consulted during testing of the check-list (Table 2):

Table 2: Experts participating in testing of the check-list

Experts	Function	Organization	Contact
Colette Castermans	Head of Communication, Press & Education	vzw Ku(n)st Oostende	colette.castermans@west-vlaanderen.be
Griet Geudens	Sustainable Tourism Manager	Tourism Flanders Brussels	griet.geudens@toerismevlaanderen.be
Hannelore Maelfait	Representative Coordinator	Coördinatiepunt Geïntegreerd Beheer van Kustgebieden (CGBK), Oostende	hannelore.maelfait@vliz.be

3.4. Arrangements of meetings/interviews

The meetings in each of the ten municipalities were planned with representatives of culture and tourism departments. The meetings were pre-arranged by phone. A short explanation was given about the ToLearn project and the aim of the interview. The ToLearn concept was explained and a brief presentation of the check-list was done during arrangements of interviews.

The final version of the check-list was sent in advance to the selected people participating in the focus groups. In this way, they had time to prepare the answers to the questions. Promotional material was requested reflecting tourist and cultural activities of each specific municipality.

3.5. Executing interviews with municipalities

The implementation of interviews took place in March and April 2008. The five points of the check-list were discussed in-depth with the representatives of tourism and culture in each municipality.

The selected experts were engaged in a roundtable discussion in an informal setting. The focus group discussion was directed by a moderator who guided the discussion in order to obtain the group's opinions about or reactions to specific issues. The researchers conducted interviews personally at the appointed locations of the coastal municipalities. Each interview took about 2 hours.

Additionally, the moderator and his team looked around the municipality in order to see the existing infrastructure, and tourist and cultural attractions.

The experts participating in the interviews included representatives of tourism and culture departments in ten coastal municipalities. Their names and coordinates are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Experts participating in the interviews at the Belgian coast

#	Person	Address	Contact
1.	Patrick Van Gheluwe Tourism Deputy West-Flanders	Koning Leopold III-laan 41 8200 Sint-Andries	patrick.van.gheluwe@west-vlaanderen.be tel: 056.50.00.93
2.	Geert VanThuyne Director of Culture	Zeelaan 21 8660 De Panne	geert.vanthuyne@depanne.be tel: 058.42.97.53
3.	Mieke Ghesquière Director of Tourism	Zeelaan 303 8670 Koksijde	mieke.ghesquiere@koksijde.be tel: 058.53.21.22
4.	Eric Verdonck Director of Tourism	Marktplein 7 8620 Nieuwpoort	eric.verdonck@nieuwpoort.be tel: 058.22.44.20 (22)
5.	Belinda Ghillebert Tourism manager Joris Vaneesen Culture coordinator	Meeuwenlaan 39 8434 Middelkerke (Westende)	belinda.ghillebert@middelkerke.be tel: 059.30.03.68

6.	Martine Meire Director of Culture	Town Hall 8400 Oostende	info@toerisme-oostende.be tel: 059.70.11.99
7.	Lukas Vandendriessche Culture coordinator	Kapelstraat 76 8450 Bredene	cultuur@bredene.be tel: 059.56.19.65
8.	Dennis Bauwens Culture coordinator Ann Dehaemers Tourism Manager	Leopoldlaan 44 8420 De Haan LeopoldLaan 24 8420 De Haan	cultuur@dehaan.be tel: 059.24.21.33 anndehaemers@dehaan.be tel: 059.24.21.34
9.	Linda DeMey Director of Tourism	Leopold III-Plein 8370, Blankenberge	linda.demey@blankenberge.be tel: 050.41.22.27
10	Carine Decroos Tourism Manager	Toerismehuis, Oud Sint- Jan, Postbus 744 8000 Brugge	carine.decroos@brugge.be tel: 050.44.46.39
11	André Desmidt Director of Tourism	Zeedijk 660 Knokke Heist	andre.desmidt@knokke-heist.be tel: 050.63.03.80

3.6. Preparation of scripts from interviews

The scripts from each interview were prepared and then combined in one document. The points of view on each of five issues are presented in this document.

The document was sent back to the people who participated in the interview with request for check up. The missing information was also requested.

3.7. Preparation of additional secondary data

In the meantime, the research assistant prepared the secondary data about the Beaufort project and the publicity measures regarding the project. This material was integrated into the overall report about the Beaufort project.

4. SUSTAINABILITY AND INNOVATION ANALYSES

Sustainability and innovation analyses are made for the five points of 'Pilot Region Analysis' questionnaire.

4.1. STAKEHOLDER COMMUNICATION, COOPERATION AND NETWORKING

4.1.1. Characteristics of the region's communication networks

All ten coastal municipalities (departments of tourism) are involved in monthly communication meetings with Westtoer in order to promote the Belgian coast. Westtoer is an important institution that developed the communication and promotion platform for the whole Belgian coast. However, these meetings do not refer to specific actions, as the Beaufort project. Westtoer has also a specific budget for the communication and promotion platform.

Regarding the Beaufort project, a communication structure was not operational at the beginning. While establishing the initial contacts, it became clear that some representatives of tourism and culture departments from ten Belgian municipalities did not have the habit to collaborate for mutual activities. No external links existed between these municipalities in 2002, when the preparations for the first edition of Beaufort started. Nowadays, after two Beaufort editions, the Beaufort communication platform is well established and it works quite efficiently. The third edition in 2009 will focus on different kind of art and the existing communication platform will be extended.

All ten coastal municipalities are stakeholders in the Beaufort project and each municipality has a specific communication, cooperation and networking approach. The Beaufort project is seen by all municipalities as an excellent tool to bridge the communication since some competition still exists between municipalities. In the following text the characteristics of the ten municipalities are presented.

West Coast

De Panne is a municipality with 10.153 citizens (NIS, 2007). It is known for its famous route called 'Erfgoed wandeling' (Heritage walking), Museum of Oceanic Coast and many sport activities designed for seniors. De Panne recognises Beaufort project as a contributor to better collaboration between tourism and culture departments. This collaboration is a very unique new approach and important element for future development of tourism in De Panne. New communication for Beaufort03 has started between the organisers and De Panne municipality. With a new mayor of the city, new communication style and structure is also expected.

Koksijde-Oostduinkerke is a municipality with about 21.419 citizens. The tourism department is located in a new Town Hall. The department is divided into the communication office and leisure department that is linked to the cultural department. The main attractions in Koksijde are the Casino Koksijde, the Abbey-Farm "Ten Bogaerde" and Royal West Aviation Club.

Nieuwpoort has about 10.940 inhabitants over the year. It is a city with a rich history since it was founded in 1163 and for centuries suffered and successfully combated 13 foreign invasions. The river Ijzer, flowing out to the sea, creates a characteristic situation favourable for a large yacht harbour (2.100 boats) located inside the land. The tourist attractions include the Monument of King Albert I, the places of silent recreation such as the natural reservoir (only two of them are along the whole coast) or children's farm; and the places of active recreation such as the sailing schools.

The three municipalities in the West Coast are well cooperating. Beaufort is considered as an additional point in the already existing cooperation style of the three municipalities. It is also seen as the first important initiative related to the organisation of long-lasting events.

Middle Coast

Middelkerke-Westende is a community of about 18.080 people. The municipality is known for its excellent beach, a fine biking route, the Casino Middelkerke and a historic landmark of the Belgian coast – Bellevue Hotel. The construction sector in this part of the coast faces some technical problems linked to the soil condition. Because of this, limited accommodation is available for tourists in Middelkerke-Westende.

The Oostende population consists of 69.115 people. Oostende is the most cosmopolitan city along the Belgian coast, offering wonderful beaches, yachting marina, Casino Oostende and nightlife. Oostende organises the greatest number of activities (#16) during the whole year (Annex 1). The attractions for all tourist groups are offered in all-weather conditions and they include: North Sea Aquarium, SeaSens, Earth Explorer, Raversijde Domain (3 historical museums by the sea), Nord Sea Flying Club Oostende, Wellington Golf Oostende, Franlis private fishing lessons on sea and many others.

Bredene has 15.343 citizens. The place is special because there is no dike, i.e. the promenade along the coast which has the buildings on one side and sea on the other. Bredene attracts youngsters and people from lower social classes on big camping places. Cultural tourism has not a strong acceptance by this group of tourists. Events focusing on folk festivals and popular music are well accepted. There are only 3 hotels in Bredene and not many restaurants. Bredene thinks that Beaufort contributed to the development of cultural activities, which are well perceived in cultural policy plan.

East Coast

De Haan-Wenduine has 12.177 citizens and it is one of the best preserved seaside resorts with the atmosphere of Belle Époque. De Haan consists of four entities: Wenduine, Vlissegem, Klemsterke and De Haan. The major attractions include the Tramshelter from 1902 and splendid hotels in the Anglo-Norman style. De Haan-Wenduine has the longest coast line after Knokke-Heist. The whole area between the old tram station and the coast is protected and no high buildings are allowed.

Blankenberge is a popular resort with tradition where 18.329 people live. The major attractions are SeaLife Centre (opened in 1995) and Serpentarium, the Reptile Zoo. A very well developed tourism policy document (BSB, 2007) shows that the sustainability issue is well integrated in a strategic development of this municipality.

Zeebrugge is a small community of less than 7.000 people with many inhabitants working in Brugge. This municipality has a strategic harbour (start in 1907) and is in huge contrast with family-friendly beach. Zeebrugge tries to be active in small events focussing on families such as the film festival on the beach (third edition has three options: family, concert and evening movies), fishing feasts during which one can see how shrimps are harvested ('visserijfeesten') or open days to visit the marine boats.

Knokke-Heist has 34.135 residents and it is one of the most attractive seaside resorts along the Belgian coast. It is known for its beautiful beaches, an inviting promenade, the casino, and most of all for the Natural Park 'Het Zwin'. The park was the first private nature reserve in Belgium in 1952. Cultural activities are very important for Knokke. There are about 70 art galleries and the casino hosts some famous paintings of René Magritte and Paul Delvaux. A ten years' project 'Art in the City' ('Kunstroute') shows splendid sculptures made by world-known artists. There are about 4mln one-day-visitors in Knokke. Hotels capacity is estimated to 500.000 nights per year. Knokke is very unique since they have very new accommodation possibilities.

The municipalities in both the Middle and East Coast are quite independent in their approach to executing tourism projects.

Annex 1 presents the activities prepared by each coastal municipality for the whole year 2008. One may see that the most dynamic municipalities are: Oostende (16 - tourist attractions in year 2008), Koksijde-Oostduinkerke (15), De Haan-Wenduine (15), De Panne (10), Nieuwpoort (10) and Knokke-Heist (10).

4.1.2. Regional networks representation

The main stakeholders in the Beaufort project are: the Province West Flanders, Tourism Flanders & Brussels, Tourism of West Flanders (Westtoer), the ten coastal municipalities, the Flemish government (Culture, Tourism and Public Works), De Lijn (tram & bus company) and the media partners. Province of West Flanders is a driving force behind the Beaufort project.

The Beaufort project would not exist without an extended networking structure, good cooperation and understanding between all coastal municipalities, many institutions, various actors and local population. The Beaufort project cannot be organised without the financial support of several regional, Flemish, federal and European institutions and subsidizers: Province of West-Flanders, the coastal municipalities, the Flemish departments of Culture, Tourism and Public Works, the National Lottery, Europe - Objective 2 and various private partners.

There is however a problem with representatives from industry and business: they are interested and eager to know about on-going projects, not only Beaufort, but rarely offer (financial) help or support. Some do not consider the importance of the event such as Beaufort and its impact on regional development.

The local population was informed about the actions and benefits of the Beaufort project just before its second edition. The series of meetings called "road-shows" were organised by the communication head, Colette Castermans. In this way, the population became acquainted with the on-going activities and could participate more actively in the whole event.

Researchers are not an integral part of the Beaufort network. However, the High School of West-Flanders, Department of Tourism conducted informal information sessions at the coast during the second edition of Beaufort. This study was quite limited and focused on the age group of 18-25. An extended economic study about Beaufort01 was made by West-Flanders Economic Study Bureau (WES, 2004). WES carries out research and consultancy assignments for public bodies and private organizations in the field of regional and local economic development.

Journalists are very important for the promotion of the project. Tourism Flanders designed a careful strategy for the international promotion of the Beaufort project (The Netherlands, Germany and France). About a half year before the event, meetings with distinguished national and international journalists take place. National and international press coverage for Beaufort project is well documented.

An important factor in the Beaufort project is the financial partner. Various companies, including De Nul, Delvaux, TMVW, the Mondriaan Foundation, Africalia, and KBC Bank & Insurance have financially supported Beaufort. However, KBC Bank&Insurance was the title sponsor during Beaufort01 and Beaufort02. In the third edition, another sponsor will be chosen.

4.1.3. Effectiveness of communication structure

The communication structure in the Beaufort project is very effective. The effectiveness of this communication depends on the following elements: setting up the specific challenges, defining target groups and building specific media strategy.

In 2006, Colette Castermans, Head of Communication, Press and Education for the Beaufort projects, has won 'The Silver International Museum Communication Award' (IMCA) for the excellence of communication with all Beaufort stakeholders (the golden Award went to the National Portrait Gallery in London).

Details of this communication structure are presented below since they may help in implementation of the project in other regions.

4.1.3.1. Beaufort challenges on marketing-communication level

Beaufort has a few specific challenges regarding marketing and communication:

- Generate *attention towards and communication on* Beaufort02 over 6 months
- *Combine and conciliate cultural and tourist aims*
- *Create a discussion - communication platform*, by bringing together the departments of culture and tourism of the ten coastal municipalities
- *Promote the Belgian coast as one region* knowing that there is no tradition in a common approach in a cross-border collaboration
- *Present coherency* between Beaufort Inside (PMMK) and Outside (coastal municipalities)
- *Improve the regional tourist and cultural experience and economic opportunities* linked to these

4.1.3.2. Beaufort target groups, markets and phases of communication

In the Beaufort project three phases of communication were developed in which different target groups and markets were considered:

1) Target groups:

- | | |
|--|----------------------|
| - the connoisseur of art | ~ 1st - 3rd period |
| - the local inhabitant | ~ 1st - 3rd period |
| - the "second resident" | ~ 2nd period |
| - schools - youngsters | ~ 1st - 3rd period |
| - the tourist: one-day tourist | ~ 2nd period |
| residential tourist (short – long stay) | ~ 2nd period |
| - the member of social-cultural organisation | ~ 1st - 3rd period |
| - the senior (55+) | ~ 1st and 3rd period |

2) Target markets: Belgium, Holland, Germany, France (North)

3) The three phases in the Beaufort communication linked to the target groups are:

- April – June (1st period)
- July – August (2nd period)
- September – October (3rd period)

4.1.3.3. Beaufort media strategy

Beaufort02 media strategy consisted of three parts: press canvassing, joint promotions with the official media partners and a series of activities for the public in collaboration with non official media partners. The total of the received media value was estimated on € 8.774.437.

1) Press canvassing

- **A half year before** the opening of Beaufort
 - national press conference - Cultural press
 - international press conference in Grand-Duché of Luxembourg - Tourist press
- **With the opening** of Beaufort02
 - national press conference: tourist and cultural press
 - international press conference: principally tourist press and trade sector (travel). Press from the Netherlands, France and Germany. The journalists were invited to stay a few days at the Belgian coast, combining the visit to Beaufort02 with other tourist activities such as the coastal cycling route
- **During Beaufort02** - international press trips – Italian, Spanish, Russian an Scandinavian journalists came over to discover Beaufort02 and the Belgian coast

2) Official media partners and non official media partners and their actions (Table 4).

Table 4: Official media partners and non official media partners and their actions

Media	Joint promotion and public activities	Target groups	Period
De Standaard (daily newspaper in Dutch)	1) <u>Edition of De Standaard Magazine</u> <i>AIM: -to give a reading on artistic content and practical information</i>	*all groups with exception of the schools & youngsters	1st
	2) <u>“Walking guide action” for the readers</u> (collaboration between De Standaard, KBC(bank) and 2006 Beaufort). <i>AIM: -to stimulate people to visit Beaufort Outside AND Inside. A free ticket was enclosed in the prize of the walking guide</i>	* all groups with exception of the schools and youngsters	All
	3) <u>Series of advertisements</u> <i>AIM: -to promote and communicate public activities</i>	* all groups with exception of schools and youngsters	2nd
	4) <u>Publication of 4 family searches (2006 Beaufort made 10 searches in total)</u> <i>AIM: -to stimulate young families & children to get involved with contemporary art in a playful way</i>	* youngsters and families	2nd
Le Soir (daily newspaper in French)	1) <u>Edition of Le Soir Magazine</u> <i>AIM: -to give a reading especially on the tourist content and practical information of Beaufort02</i>	*all groups with exception of the schools and	2nd

	<p><u>2) Photo competition</u> <i>AIM: -to stimulate the artistic ability</i> <i>-to stimulate discovery other places at the coast than those they are already familiar with</i></p>	<p>youngsters</p> <p>*residential tourist & one day tourist</p>	<p>2nd</p>
<p>Knack (general weekly magazine in Dutch)</p>	<p>1) <u>Series of advertisements published in alternation with the advertisements of De Standaard and Plus magazine</u> <i>AIM: -to promote and to communicate the public activities</i></p> <p>2) <u>Action towards the Knack members via their membership card</u> <i>AIM: -to stimulate the visit of Beaufort Inside</i></p>	<p>*all groups with exception of the schools and youngsters</p> <p>*all groups with exception of the schools and youngsters</p>	<p>2nd & 3rd</p> <p>All</p>
<p>PLUS Magazine (monthly magazine for seniors in Dutch & French)</p>	<p>1) <u>Search along the coast made by Plus Magazine</u> <i>AIM: -to stimulate the seniors to (re)discover the coast and to underline the attractiveness and accessibility of contemporary art</i></p> <p>2) <u>Series of advertisements</u> <i>Aim: -to prompt</i></p>	<p>* the senior</p> <p>* the senior</p>	<p>2nd</p> <p>All</p>
<p>Focus/WTV (regional TV in Dutch)</p>	<p>1) <u>Series of broadcast</u> - mounting of Beaufort02 - covering of the artistic content - covering the public activities - portrayal of the curator of Beaufort02</p> <p>2) <u>Competition</u> <i>AIM:- to stimulate the local inhabitants to visit Beaufort02</i> <i>-to give a deep reading on the artistic content of Beaufort02</i> <i>- to emphasize the good quality and sustainability of the coastal environment</i> <i>- to point the economic importance of such events for the local population</i> <i>-to stimulate their involvement</i></p>	<p>* the local inhabitant</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>De Lijn (coastal tramway - is regarded as a media partner)</p>	<p>1) <u>Every tram stop nearby an art work of Beaufort02 was equipped with</u> - the visual of Beaufort02 - a map where to find the Beaufort art work <i>AIM: -to support public transport at the coast</i> <i>-to support the development of sustainable tourism at the coast</i></p> <p>2) <u>Transport passes (3-day pass or 1 day pass)</u> <i>Aim: -to stimulate hotel accommodation and residential tourism at the coast, with a special focus on the mid-week offers</i></p>	<p>* all groups with exception of the schools and youngsters</p> <p>* all groups with exception of the schools and youngsters</p>	<p>All</p> <p>All</p>
<p>NMBS (Belgian railways – regarded as a media partner)</p>	<p>1) <u>Special railway ticket with entrance to the Beaufort Inside exhibition in Oostende</u></p>	<p>* all groups</p>	<p>All</p>

3) Public and educational activities with non official media partners (Table 5)

Table 5: Public and educational activities with non official media partners

Krant van West-Vlaanderen (local weekly newspaper)	1) <u>Edition of Beaufort02 magazine (4 pages)</u> <i>AIM: -to give a reading on artistic content and practical information</i> <i>-to underline the attractiveness and the social cultural and economic capacities of a region well known by the locals</i>	the local inhabitant	1st
Thomas Cook, Neckermann, Vlaanderen vakantieland (national & internat. trade)	1) <u>Different offers of hotel accommodations in combination with Beaufort02</u> <i>AIM: - to stimulate residential tourism</i>	* all groups with exception of the schools and youngsters	All
Klasse (magazine for teachers and parents)	1) <u>Organisation of a teacher's day at Beaufort Inside - PMMK</u> <i>AIM: -Introduction to the project Beaufort02</i> <i>-Introduction to and promotion of the education project 'the tingling cocoon'</i> 2) <u>Reduction in the Beaufort Inside exhibition for teachers</u> <i>AIM: -to stimulate teachers to visit Beaufort02 with their pupils.</i>	* all Belgian Schools	1st & 3rd
De Bond (monthly newspaper for families)	1) <u>Special ticket for families</u> 2) <u>Organisation of a family day in the PMMK via the educational project 'the tingling cocoon'</u> <i>AIM: -to stimulate coastal activities with the whole family</i> <i>-to stimulate the involvement of young people</i>	* youngsters and young families	2nd
Daidsfonds (social-cultural organisation)	1) <u>Organisation of a two-day course on contemporary art by using the content of Beaufort02</u> 2) <u>Organising two bus trips along the coast</u> <i>AIM: -to make contemporary art comprehensible for a large public</i>	* the art connoisseur	1st&2nd

As the result, Beaufort02 Inside at the PMMK, Museum of Modern Art received **40.000 visitors**, while Beaufort02 Outside has been visited by over more than **740.000 visitors** in 2006.

This figure is an extrapolation of the amount of catalogues and walking guiding sold during Beaufort02. Visitors came mainly from Belgium, followed by Dutch, German and French visitors. Nine million hits have been registered on the website www.2006beaufort.be (still on line via www.beaufort03.be). All target groups, specified in the communication strategy, have been reached.

4.1.3.4. Coastal municipalities' view on communication effectiveness

The effectiveness of the communication in Beaufort project is transparent. The question arises how this communication is seen by the coastal municipalities. A short description of various voices gathered during the interviews at the Belgian coast is hereby presented.

West Coast

A lot has been learnt during the last two Beaufort editions in De Panne. In Beaufort01 and 02 the communication was done by vzw Ku(n)st and this is considered as the best approach. The vzw Ku(n)st organisation knows how to conduct and develop communication and promotion towards the visitors. However, the communication at the political platform could be improved; the impression is that sometimes the Beaufort Board takes univocal decisions and discussion about the content of the promotional materials such as posters with the partners (e.g. in De Panne) is an option. Another concern relates to the ability of local government to influence the decision about the best location of the artworks. Locations chosen by the organisers are sometimes not practical, and resulted in criticism from visitors that the objects were difficult to find.

In Nieuwpoort the opinion is that the efficiency of communication and networking improves in each edition of Beaufort. A major restructuring took place in Nieuwpoort since Beaufort01 in 2003. About this period, tourism and culture worked as one unit. In 2006, they split out into separate departments. For the third Beaufort edition, they will be working on separate issues; i.e. the culture department develops the content of the event while tourist department coordinates all arrangements. The walking-guide is seen as a very important tool of communication to the visitors.

Middle Coast

The internal communication in the Beaufort project is seen as very positive in Middelkerke-Westende. Internal communication in Middelkerke means the contact with the city mayor and the deputies representing the culture and tourism departments. It is appreciated that Beaufort won the international price for the communication plan. The communication with the artistic curator of Beaufort could be improved. In the previous editions contact with him was limited and now with a new person in charge in PMMK, there is hope for relationship improvement.

The tourism office did the effective and efficient external communication with the public of Beaufort. The project was well explained to tourists in the walking-guide but the plan of Middelkerke-Westende municipality was too small and some tourists had difficulties in finding the sculptures. Looking to the profile of the visitors, it was also a very good idea to prepare the walking-guide in the three official languages: Dutch, French and German. Middelkerke-Westende offered a few special treats for art-lovers. For instance, one of the most famous Belgian artist called Kamagurka performed live-art in the local Saint Teresa Chapel and nobody from the public made the remark about impropriety of this idea.

The project is very important for the City of Oostende and communication about Beaufort is done by the tourism department. The concept of Beaufort has to be well communicated to all municipalities and the aim is to discuss the artworks and their location with cultural departments of each municipality. The third edition of Beaufort will have another artistic concept. The cultural department of Oostende looks forward to this new concept as a test how far 'democratisation of art' can progress in the events such as Beaufort.

Bredene did not participate in the first edition of Beaufort in 2003. The municipality paid €25.000 for participation in Beaufort02 and the return on this project was very positive. The major success is seen in effective communication and a good publicity Beaufort project did for Bredene to the outside world.

East Coast

De Haan-Wenduine is convinced about a good local cooperation between the coastal municipalities and Beaufort organisers. The Beaufort project builds on win-win situation and stimulates the departments of tourism and culture. It brings people together and attracts many visitors. In 2006, more hotel arrangements were noticed and the effect of Beaufort was in this way visible. Even though De Haan was satisfied with the choice of the artworks in both editions, they did not buy them.

Blankenberge indicates that the communication and networking in the Beaufort02 improved and both departments of culture and tourism are satisfied with the project. The municipality is well informed and organised and they will be present during the first meeting with all stakeholders of Beaufort03 in April 2008 in the PMMK in Oostende. The stakeholders in Blankenberge include people who live from tourism, including HoReCa sector. This sector is quite positive towards Beaufort project and actively participated with package arrangements for day-trips in the second edition.

Zeebrugge and Knokke-Heist considers the value of Beaufort in its ability to promote the Belgian coast as one entity. Beaufort attracts a lot of international journalists and this is the best publicity, which cannot be overestimated. Thus, the international dimension of Beaufort is highly appreciated. Tourists coming to see Beaufort can admire other offers such as the existing art-route ('Kunstroute'). A good communication scheme between tourism and culture departments, which started only three years ago, is growing all the time.

4.1.4. Nature of the contacts between members of the networks

The contacts in the Beaufort project focus on the professional and job related issues. The communication continuously develops between various actors in the Beaufort project.

The Beaufort project uses various actors in order to exchange information and resources and to receive support and advice.

There are three networks in the Beaufort project:

1. A decision-making platform: network between deputies of the municipalities and the vzw
2. A communication platform: network between tourism and culture departments and the vzw
3. A technical platform: network between technical staff and the vzw

A high staff turnover is recognised as having a negative impact on good communication and networking. The relationships once developed have to be re-invented with new staff members, the process which requires time, skills and great effort. When the staff turnover is high the overall competence of the institution is not growing. In the Beaufort project, only three people have permanent jobs, while the rest of staff members are employed on the contractual basis.

4.2. LEARNING PROCESSES & KNOWLEDGE MANANGEMENT

4.2.1. Specific communication structure that facilitates learning processes

At the Belgian coast, a specific communication structure was developed and it was successfully used in the Beaufort project. This structure includes province West Flanders, national organisation Tourism Flanders and the professional organisation Westtoer that deals with the analysis of the Belgian coast.

Their help and support was highly appreciated during all editions of the Beaufort project. Westtoer makes promotion for all coastal municipalities as every municipality contributes to the budget based on specific local socio-demographic indicators.

In the Beaufort project, the walking-guide and the website were important communication tools. The walking-guide price was kept low (€5) and about 40.000 copies were sold in Beaufort02. In preparation to the guide, each municipality had to prepare the best walking route indicating three or four Beaufort artworks and some local attractions.

The learning process is very important at the level of municipalities. The following is a short summary of the statements about this aspect.

West Coast

The learning process is important for De Panne that is building up the image not only as the tourist destination of 'sea and sun' but also as the one where sport and cultural activities are possible. Cultural activities are the phenomenon of the last years and the Beaufort project was the break-out-event. Since then art expositions are often organised and it is noticed that overall knowledge about the art and culture is growing. Two types of public are noticed in De Panne for Beaufort. First, there are 'culture freaks' trying to see every artwork and information about it. In the second group are all other tourists and local citizens who do not search actively for the art. De Panne borders with France and it was noticed that only some French tourists were interested in cultural activities.

Koksijde-Oostduinkerke shares the opinion of De Panne; but they would like also to offer more family friendly activities. The Beaufort walking-guide is a good example of a learning tool for people who are not art specialists. It was made in a simple way to explore and see what the art is. For the tourists-experts, the walking tours were organised, which gave the opportunity to learn more about the artworks. However, attention should be paid because there are various groups of people who come to see Beaufort. The biggest groups are older people and families with children for whom a special searching tour was organised in Beaufort02. Younger people are not much interested in Beaufort but Koksijde has a few other projects for this group.

Nieuwpoort agrees that due to the Beaufort project more people came to learn about the coast. However, the Beaufort project is one of many by which the learning process continues. Culture minded people demand more information but a majority of tourists are not interested in art and culture. The question arises in what way the same tourists participated in both editions of Beaufort. It was only observed that many visitors of Beaufort02 did not know about the first edition. If Beaufort proves to be a project with a long tradition, it is hoped that people will actively search for art at the beach.

Middle Coast

For many years Middelkerke-Westende develops ideas how to transfer information and knowledge to people about art. Beaufort is not the first art project in this field in Middelkerke. In the previous years, the analysis was made how people understand the iconography presented in the local exhibitions. The learning process is evolving but some attention has to be paid to the fact that art at the seaside is not perceived too seriously because people are on holiday. It was suggested that even though people's interest in art and culture is a growing phenomenon, the approach of the artists and curators should be carefully chosen at the coastal region.

Oostende sees Beaufort as one of the many projects by which the learning process develops at the Belgian coast. Many guided tours are organised in parallel to the Beaufort project. Beaufort Inside is located in the Provincial Museum of Modern Art (PMMK) and this part of the event is strongly anchored in the city of Oostende. Tourists and locals who appreciate modern art know the place very well and they definitely learn from many temporary and also permanent exhibitions.

The learning process about art with the citizens of Bredene develops since there are about 60 local artists. Unfortunately, majority of them did not agree with the idea of Beaufort project. Only a small group of 15 artists supported the organizers and agreed about the quality of art objects in Beaufort 02. The learning process directed to the tourists was done mostly through the walking-guide and the posters that gave a lot of information about artists, artworks and their location. The culture-minded tourists actively searched for information while others found the objects rather by coincident than by careful planning.

East Coast

De Haan-Wenduine is very interested in the learning process because of its past linked to so called 'The Concession'. It means that in 1889 the state granted a concession of about 50 ha as the hereditary tenure to E. Collinet and H. Passenbronder for a period of 90 years. Both gentlemen found the "Soci te Anonyme de Coq-sur-Mer" in 1896, which established and preserved the original architectural style of all buildings in this period. The historical aspect in De Haan is very important and the tourists are stimulated to discover the city and its surroundings. The walking guide in the Beaufort project is seen as an excellent tool to inform the tourists about the event and about the city.

Blankenberge sees the Beaufort project as a good example of the learning process. The interests of relatively younger population coming to Blankenberge are constantly changing. People like active holidays and the Beaufort project is now a part of the tourists' expectations coming to Blankenberge.

Zeebrugge and Knokke-Heist confirm that there is a positive impact of the Beaufort project on the Belgian coast. Many people know that there is a lot to see about art in Knokke and that the first circle of artists including Pissarro and Maeterlinck started there in 1880. Since Knokke has a long relationship with artists, the Beaufort project was immediately accepted and supported. The learning process started 140 years ago in a local school of artists and it was recently strengthened due to Beaufort.

Finally, it is noticed that a majority of tourists identify themselves with specific images of the municipalities at the Belgian coast. This movement is especially visible for British in Oostende, Germans in De Haan, rich artists in Knokke, families in Zeebrugge, Middelkerke, etc. Moreover, tourists rarely commute along the coast and their search trips are usually limited to the adjoining villages. This is recently changing and Beaufort project contributed to the new trend of 'discovery of the coast'.

4.2.2. Knowledge dissemination and education in the region

Regional media play a crucial role in dissemination of information about the Beaufort project. Local TV, newspapers, brochures in the local travel offices are well prepared.

The most important communication tools for the Beaufort project are:

- Leaflet, catalogue and the walking-guide
- Website
- Digital news letter
- Road tours directed to local people

Each municipality issues professional brochures, leaflets and other materials including tourist information. Almost all municipalities indicate that the walking-guide and the posters were the best tools to disseminate the knowledge and information about the Beaufort project. All municipalities actively distributed promotional materials of Beaufort prepared by vzw Ku(n)st and sometimes they integrated information about the project to the local tourist brochures. Unfortunately in some cases, information about Beaufort was not integrated to local brochures because it came too late.

The walking guide was an excellent knowledge dissemination tool at a low price (€5). It was also multifunctional as it contained not only artworks of the Beaufort project but also it described a short history of each municipality and gave some links with the existing tourist attractions.

During Beaufort02, many tourists combined interests in culture with joining other activities. For instance, while the older part of the family searched for the artworks, the children went to Plopsaland in De Panne, which is a well-known amusement park.

According to Middelkerke-Westende, knowledge about art and beauty is the essence of human existence. Many people start to realise that culture has simple rules and is everywhere around us – it is linked to what we eat, what we admire in nature, what art we are interested in, etc. Thus, knowledge is disseminated in a very natural way through people who open themselves to new experiences and flavours of life.

Education and professional training for the tourism and HoReCa sector is provided in the two schools located in Brugge and Kortrijk. The Royal Institute Spermali in Brugge (<http://www.ki-spermalie.be/index.htm>) offers a Bachelor degree in Tourism. The candidates from these schools took part in the seasonal jobs at the Belgian coast during Beaufort events. The experience is the best way of learning and students are satisfied with such opportunity.

4.2.3. Role of explicit knowledge in the region's knowledge management

The explicit knowledge is knowledge that has been articulated and captured in the form of text, tables, diagrams, product specifications, scientific formulas, computer programs, written work objectives and documented best practices. Explicit knowledge is declarative knowledge, because it consists of descriptions of facts and things or of methods and procedures.

All materials printed out in the coastal municipalities are examples of explicit knowledge. The reports published by the professional organisations such as Westtoer, WES and other organisations are a good source of information about the coast. The Coastal Tourism Policy Plan builds on extended information, which is quite frequently updated. The reports circulate between various stakeholders giving clear instructions and suggestions how to strengthen local character of tourist activities.

4.2.4. Role of tacit knowledge in the region's knowledge management

Tacit knowledge is knowledge that cannot be articulated. The example is the pattern recognition, i.e. vague recognition of the person, object or the process without ability to describe it in exact words. Each of us knows more than we can tell. Tacit knowledge is procedural, which means that knowledge manifest itself in doing of something. As such it is reflected in motor or manual skills and in cognitive or mental skills. It is also knowledge about how to do something. The key here is to remember that tacit knowledge cannot be articulated but it can be communicated or transferred.

The relationship and relying on experience of somebody else is a part of the tacit knowledge. In the case of the Beaufort project, the trust and new relationship between various stakeholders was gradually developed. At the beginning, there was no trust and understanding but later on all necessary structures and actors become open and supportive.

4.3. INNOVATION

4.3.1. Efforts and activities for innovation

The efforts and innovative activities of the Beaufort project are presented as first, and then the activities of each municipality are shortly outlined.

4.3.1.1. Beaufort sustainable innovation characteristics

The innovation of Beaufort is linked to the artistic content and the (re)discovery and (re)evaluation of the coastal region and locations. The past Beaufort-projects consisted of two sections: Beaufort Outside located in the various coastal communities and Beaufort Inside at the Museum of Modern Art, PMMK in Oostende. The former was accessible for free; the latter had to be paid for.

In Beaufort01 as well as in Beaufort02, 30 artists from the national and international art scene were invited to work on the theme of the sea related to the local history and the oral tradition.

Each artist occupied a unique coastal location. This resulted in 30 locations blended with artwork creating a temporary intriguing coastal art resort. By this way, many visitors have (re)discovered beautiful and attractive spots in the different coastal villages. The artistic content of Beaufort03 will be worked out in a similar way.

The most important innovative characteristic of Beaufort events are the development of sustainable tourism and focus on the cultural identity at the Belgian Coast.

After the closing down of Beaufort01 and Beaufort02 sculptures have been bought by several coastal cities and official institutions. Seven sculptures and/or installations and one stained-glass picture are still on show. The sale of the art works is an important financial source for the vzw Ku(n)st.

It is the aim of the organizers to extend in the coming years a Beaufort Coastal Sculpture Park in the coastal area. After each edition the possibility is given to the coastal municipalities to buy an artwork. Through this Beaufort Sculpture Park the vzw Ku(n)st will look for various partnerships, supporting

the development of sustainable tourism at the coast: the vzw wants to link up via new cycle and walking tours between the Beaufort art works with the already existing Coastal Biking Route (Kustfietsroute); and wants to work with the Coastal Heritage foundation (Kusterfgoed) and other cultural organizations along the coast.

The organization of the Beaufort projects and the building out of the Beaufort Coastal Sculpture Park do not only have an influence on the development of a coastal cultural identity and the development of the cultural sustainability, but also it contributes to the development of sustainable tourism in the whole coastal region. This contribution towards sustainability is realised on several levels:

- Administration level
 - o Stimulation of cooperation between different institutions such as: the Flemish Administration of Monuments and Landscape; the Flemish Agency for Nature and Forestry, the Flemish and Regional Administration of Environmental Planning, and many other.
 - o Stimulation of a sustainable cooperation between ten tourist and ten cultural coastal administrations.
- Tourist level
 - o Stimulation of residential tourism and hotel accommodation.
 - o Broadening the tourist coastal season.
 - o Promotion of the coast as one region, with respect for the identity of each coastal town
- Cultural level
 - o Selection of coastal locations as temporary hosts of the artwork. The selection is well thought and made in relationship with the local history and in function of re-evaluation and (re)discovery of the coastal area.
 - o Pointing the Belgian coast not only as a tourists and recreational resort, but also as a place where cultural activities are possible.
- Marketing-communication level
 - o Well thought press canvassing towards tourist and cultural national and international press with special attentions for specific target groups such as the senior visitor, the day and residential tourist.
 - o Promotion on national and international level.
 - o Press canvassing and promotion are emphasising the good quality of life, the rich variety of recreation at the coast, in cooperation with the administration of the coastal towns.
- Social-economic level
 - o Giving a boost to the local economy through temporary cooperation between Beaufort, the hotel and catering sector and the coastal tourist departments.
 - o Improving the link between the regional tourist and cultural experience and the economic opportunities.
 - o Stimulation of involvement of the local population by underlining the regional capacities and the attractiveness of the region.
- Liveability
 - o Improving mobility along the coast, which has important accessibility and parking problems during tourist season by stimulating public transport.
 - o Cooperation with the coastal tram company De Lijn with special tickets and route mapping. The tram ticket was also valid on the busses.
 - o Cooperation with the Belgian Railway Company NMBS through special train ticket called 'B-Day Trip'. This cooperation had a severe limitation given the fact that there are only 5 railway stations at the coast (versus 10 coastal towns). The Beaufort-ticket was only valid as a return ticket to Oostende (Beaufort Inside at the PMMK).

4.3.1.2. Coastal municipalities approach to sustainable innovation

West Coast

The Beaufort project is perceived as unique and innovative because of its effect on cooperation between all coastal municipalities. After Beaufort other trials with projects were not that successful. For instance, 'Uitblazen' project (www.uitblazen.be), which focused on the music linked to history of each municipality, was assessed as not a big success. The project was not well planned and it had no impact. About two years are necessary to plan and organise a good project. Careful planning of the innovative project into the calendar of existing events is a crucial part of the success.

Dranouter, a folk festival (www.folkdranouter.be) is an example of a successful project developed by De Panne. The project has a third edition in 2008 and attracts youngsters and families between months of April and May. It is scheduled in cooperation with sport department, which is especially active in de Panne.

Koksijde-Oostduinkerke is well known for cultural activities and people used to explore art in three local museums. The Beaufort project is for Koksijde the extra point on the long list of possibilities. It is however recognised as an excellent idea promoting the whole Belgian coast. The newest innovation in Koksijde is the introduction of IPod for the walking-trail 'Erfgoed wandeling'. The software can be downloaded from Internet while hardware may be borrowed in the tourist office.

The recent innovations in Nieuwpoort include the extension of the yacht harbour up to 2.900 boats by year 2011; renovation of the existing buildings and a strong investment in construction of new ones. Second homes are considered as very important because they generate high taxes. Future plans include the start of a Visitors Centre close to the famous monument of King Albert I by 2014; and a new Fishery Centre that will show Nieuwpoort as 'a city on the water' and it will offer an educational program for children how to recognise and prepare fish for consumption. Also the fishing industry in Nieuwpoort has recently new specialisations: at the moment they focus on shrimps and mussels (first cultivation three years ago, first harvest of 60.000 kg distributed to the public in November 2007).

Middle Coast

In Middelkerke-Westende, the Beaufort project is seen as a positive project in which high quality of work is always present. The quality of cooperation between municipalities improved because of this excellent concept of working together. 'The Babies' by David Cerny (Czech Republic) were admired by all visitors during Beaufort02 in Middelkerke-Westende. The same was observed in Oostende, where a giant spider 'Maman' by Louise Bourgeois was placed in the local cemetery.

Beaufort is an innovative project because it is an all-weather event. It is also a project where some artists worked in function of the community, which means that they worked in same place where art was exposed. It was noticed that tourists and inhabitants of Middelkerke-Westende enjoyed the contacts with internationally known artists such as Tom Claassen (who created 'Liggende Man' on the beach) or Kamagurka (Luc Zeebroek), who was painting in the local chapel. One of the newest plans in Middelkerke includes the installation of the project 'Memorabilia of Prince Charles of Belgium' in the provincial museum Atlantic Wall. A new cooperation is also emerging between Middelkerke-Westende and Oostende in which more attention will be given to younger people.

Bredene sees Beaufort as the innovative project stimulating both decision-makers and visitors. The municipality was satisfied with the artworks given to Bredene, especially the sculpture of a woman torso dressed in bikini called 'Body Bar' by Joep Van Lieshout (Netherlands) and two cross-like sculptures 'Aral's' by Josep Riera I Arago (Spain). A new project will be realised during Beaufort03 with young artists. The competition of artists younger than 30 years old takes place in Bredene every November. After 2008 year competition, three best artists will be selected and will have an opportunity to organize art exposition in the new building of tourism and culture departments. This exposition will be made in parallel to Beaufort03 in 2009. Details of this join project are now discussed between Bredene and the new curator of the Beaufort event.

East Coast

De Haan-Wenduine says that it is not easy to link Beaufort with existing activities. However, the Beaufort walking-guides show the local attractions. Beaufort is also integrated in the monthly agenda of top events in De Haan. The recent innovative projects include 'Tasty Old Land Route' (Lekker Oudland Route) on which one can taste regional products while enjoying biking; Giant Festival or Museum of Perfume in Wenduine. On the first Saturday of August, the 'TrameLand' festival shows the folklore from 1900's.

Blankenberge sees Beaufort as a very successful project because it promotes the whole Belgian coast. The municipality tries to introduce other innovative projects and one of the recent ideas is related to the exposition of the artist Franz Maezereel. This exposition will be integrated during Beaufort03 between 30 June and 4 October 2009. New ideas come also from Westtoer and one of them is to prepare the concept of 'TeleTourism'. If the final decision will be positive, the budget will increase for the promotion of the Belgian coasts in France. The similar action was organised last year in Luxembourg and it was very successful. The promotional fund is seen as an excellent tool for working together and for increasing the chances of bringing new visitors to the Belgian coast.

Zeebrugge considers the Beaufort project as very interesting especially as it gave possibility to combine the visit of artworks along the beach with visiting museums in the nearby city of Brugge. Special combination tickets were issued with various options: a ticket to the museum, renting bike, a ticket on train back to the coast, etc. Thus, a new way of selling destinations emerged due to the Beaufort project.

In Beaufort02, Zeebrugge had the sculpture called 'The man who saw the boat in the air' by Jean Bilquin: it was very successful and it is now a permanent installation on the beach. Another art piece 'Three Graces' by Michael Ray Charles, was located in the far distance of the village Zeebrugge but unfortunately no one knows how many people could finally reach it. This sculpture has been bought by the city of Oostende. New initiatives emerge between Zeebrugge and Brugge working on the project 'Light festival' in Lissewege, a village selected for the competition between the nicest villages in Flanders. During this festival the candles are lighted outside the houses and the whole place is promoted as a 'Shining white village'. The additional event initiated by a local artist is called 'Sculptures in the white village'.

It is also important to mention a new approach in which the 'three-corner-cooperation' between Zeebrugge, Lissewege and Brugge is planned. The distance between Zeebrugge and Brugge is only 13km therefore many common tourist projects are developed. Brugge has recently about 3mln of day-tourists who enjoy the 'theme-lines' projects, such as gastronomy-theme, biking-theme, biking-museum-theme, music-theme or art-theme ones. The image of Brugge is linked to 'Early Netherlands painters' the so called 'Flemish Primitives'. More attention goes to winter activities and re-discovery of many local specialties like embroidery. There are plans to use laces in furniture and fashion and a new exposition about 'Kantlijnen' is planned in 2009. Other initiatives focus on usage of chocolate for massage or 'walking with chocolate-tasting' during winter season.

Knokke-Heist indicates Beaufort as a truly wonderful project bringing more cooperation between culture and tourism departments. The vzw Ku(n)st had to convince the municipality that the artworks will be of high quality and that people will be able to discover something new and admire it. The existing visitors of Knokke have high expectations and purchasing power and therefore the quality of art is important. This fact created good relationships of Knokke with other municipalities where visitors profile is somehow different.

4.3.2. Characteristics of tourism stakeholders concerning innovation

The most common characteristic of the different stakeholders relates to a quite traditional approach to the project development and performance.

In 2003, the approach was to invite the tourists to various locations to see the artworks. It was an easy confrontation with the art on the beach (Beaufort Outside) and in the museum (Beaufort Inside).

Different profiles of the tourists were observed, with the majority of those who came for sun and outdoor recreation. However, a group of tourists already knew the PMMK museum and started searching for the new exposition 'Beaufort Inside'. Belgians, Germans and especially Dutch visitors expressed high interest in the innovative character of the Beaufort projects.

In 2006, special residential offers were made for Dutch visitors and these arrangements were very successful: more than 400 families from Holland came to see Beaufort02. Similar arrangements were organised neither among Germans who are considered as the traditional tourists nor British who are recognised as tourists interested in sea recreation. Colette Castermans is convinced that there are British target groups, interested in the Beaufort project. Small media promotions during the past Beaufort projects in the UK have proven this. The experience of the Beaufort projects shows that future cooperation between Belgian and British stakeholders must include involvement and coordination of the visitors with the hotel sector.

West Coast

De Panne makes efforts to bring innovative projects to the specific tourist groups. The structure of visitors in De Panne is quite similar to the whole coast: mostly older people (+55 years) and groups with specific arrangements, and less younger people. A majority of tourists are Belgians however there are more Flemish than Walloons. In Beaufort02, De Panne tried to attract young people (12 years) via the workshops focusing on 'the tinteling room' ('prikkelkamer') during which they developed a good knowledge about art in overall and the Beaufort project in specific. The assessment of this activity is positive, it was well implemented and children were satisfied.

Koksijde-Oostduinkerke and Nieuwpoort focus on families in the first place and older people in the second. More research is necessary to proof the feelings about the importance of these both groups for the local economy. On the one hand, the surveys should publish the economic figures and they should be very practical and easy to implement. On the other hand, there is often not enough money to adapt local strategies to the propositions made by the external researchers. The observation is that the number of foreign visitors is growing every year. The research should find out the behaviour and attitude towards existing tourist and cultural propositions among these people. Some tourists may have high expectations and there would be a need for improvement and quality attention in specific fields.

Middle Coast

In Middelkerke-Westende, the target groups are older people and families. Family tourism in Middelkerke is different than in other municipalities that have museums. Local strengths are well exploited and some of many possibilities include: the biking route or ability to do sports on the beach. Culture projects are interesting not only for the visitors but also for the local habitants.

Oostende has all kinds of visitors. The tourist attractions are very diverse and can satisfy those with the high or low budget. The events, festivals and permanent installations give opportunity to find something interesting all-year-round and in all-weather conditions.

Bredene has specific visitors due to the fact that it has big camping places. Young people and low income groups are often coming to Bredene. The local strategy is to build evens among popular music and folk festivals.

East Coast

De Haan-Wenduine focuses on two main tourist groups: +55 and families. Many winter season activities are oriented to the 7.000 second home residences. Culture is very important in De Haan since there is a lot of interest of and contribution from local artists. 'The Art Route' is organised every two years with the aim to see the local works and ateliers. Additionally, the exposition of local art is organised in summer and the artists may use the exposition panels in the Meeting Centre. The price is relatively low and may be shared between the artists (€200 per 14 days).

Blankenberge is known as the destination for families and many attractions are organised for this group. Zeebrugge is linked to Brugge and all types of tourists can be expected. Knokke-Heist likes to develop activities for a richer and culturally-minded audience. With such a different focus, the municipalities in the East Coast have to develop their own approach to tourism development.

4.3.3. External and internal factors stimulating innovation in the region

4.3.3.1. View of Beaufort – External stimulating factors:

- The coastal municipalities
- Province of West-Flanders
- Flemish Government
- Beaufort Board, including representatives of Tourism Flanders, Westtoer, City Oostende
- First budget from the revenues made in 1997 during the exposition “From Ensor to Delvaux”
- Sustainability concept/movement around the world

4.3.3.2. View of Beaufort – Internal stimulating factors:

- Innovative artistic idea of the Beaufort Project came from the former head curator of the of PMMK – Willy Van Den Bossche, employee of the Province West-Flanders
- Private organisations such as the vzw Ku(n)st
- Qualified people
- Well chosen place for development/location of the innovative project

4.3.3.3. View of the coastal municipalities:

All factors stimulating innovation are:

- o External communication between municipalities
- o External communication via media and journals
- o Budget
- o Organisation
- o Promotion
- o Walking-guides
- o Walking tours are a very good concept for the ‘culture freaks’ but older tourists prefer to have total arrangements

4.3.4. **Barriers to the implementation of innovations**

4.3.4.1. View of Beaufort – barriers to the implementation of innovations:

- Internal tension or even competition between various stakeholders located in the coastal municipalities. On a small scale there is cooperation noticeable between De Panne, Koksijde and Nieuwpoort. This cooperation can be on tourist, cultural and administration level.
- Distress about the quality of the artworks designated between municipalities since some objects are made by world-known artists and others are made by less known ones.
- High costs of project installation and implementation: the general budget decreases in each Beaufort edition. For example the budget for the “creative and communication office” became with each edition smaller:
 - o Beaufort01 (2003): €75.000
 - o Beaufort02 (2006): €42.000
 - o Beaufort03 (2009): €25.000

It means that the same activities have to be implemented with a smaller budget but with the same or higher artistic value.

The costs for promotion are minimised because of the open channels of some media partners. For instance, one of the major Flemish newspapers in Belgium – De Standaard – gave a good coverage about both Beaufort editions. Idem for the French newspaper, Le Soir, the Roularta group with Knack Magazine and Plus Magazine, the cultural radio channel KLARA, the local TV broadcasting and News paper de Krant van West-Vlaanderen.

- Lack of structures: at the beginning no platform was available to act for various stakeholders. Nowadays, three platforms are operational:
 - o A Communication platform
 - o A Technical platform
 - o A Political platform
- HoReCa: it is difficult to work with the association representing hotels, restaurants and cafeterias - in opinion of the Beaufort project organisers and many representatives of tourism and culture in coastal municipalities. It was necessary to develop and promote new structures for this specific cooperation. One of those wishes resulted in the Flemish project 'Tafelen in Vlaanderen' (Dining in Flanders) (www.vlaanderenlekkerland.be), worked out by Tourism Flanders & Brussels via Westtoer. The Beaufort organisers asked if it was possible to work out cooperation with this new platform and if it is possible the use the already existing channels established by Westtoer. In this way, restaurants and hotels can use the Beaufort project to make special Beaufort arrangements and menus.

4.3.4.2. View of the coastal municipalities – barriers to the implementation of innovations:

West Coast

- o Restaurants: Cooperation with restaurants is barrier to the implementation of innovations.
 - However, in De Panne, a few successful contacts between tourism department and restaurants were developed. Gastronomy in De Panne is seen as a part of cultural heritage and the tourists coming for Beaufort are culturally minded people. They are also relatively well off and eating aspect is very important part of their relaxation at the coast. During Beaufort01 and 02, some restaurants prepared special menus accompanied with a good wine.
 - Another good example of cooperation with restaurants is found in Koksijde where a new brochure 'Q-Linair' was recently developed. The new concept and the corresponding website were made by the tourism office. Interesting events such as the shrimp festival are promoted or special menus are offered in the restaurants inspired by the poems of a famous author Willem Anshoft.
 - In Nieuwpoort the efforts were made and all existing restaurants were proposed to join the idea of special Beaufort menu. Only one restaurant answered positively and this fact illustrates the general difficulties in establishing contacts with restaurants.
- o Hotels: The lack of accommodation for the visitors is seen as a huge barrier in implementation of even the best prepared projects. The exceptions include Nieuwpoort where all hotels had very high booking rates.
- o Location of artworks: In Beaufort01, there were thousands of volumes of the walking guide sold in Nieuwpoort where the major attraction was the artwork called 'Searching for Utopia' (also known as 'The Turtle') of Jan Fabre. The giant turtle was located on the beach and easily found. It can be still admired there since the municipality bought it out. Many publications in Belgium and abroad presented the picture of the famous sculpture (also showed at the cultural Olympiad in Athens in 2003) and this lead to unusual promotion of the beach resort Nieuwpoort. In Beaufort02, Nieuwpoort did not make a comparable success because of a few reasons. For instance, the art sculpture 'Portable Table' by Ai Wei Wei (China), was almost hidden in the yacht harbour and difficult to find.

Middle Coast

- o Lack of participation from private firms: Middelkerke-Westende tried to set a teambuilding exercise in order to attract the enterprises but it was not successful. One of the possible reasons is that the Beaufort project is indeed spread along the coast and local firms do not believe in its impact.

- HoReCa: the gastronomy and hotel sector is rather difficult to work with; however local initiatives were worked out with different restaurants in De Haan during the past Beaufort editions.

East Coast

- Cooperation with the head organizers: changing of the originally presented plans should be avoided; the changes create confusion and mistrust. Moreover, when another art object is proposed, it may not well match the location already chosen. For instance, the replaced object for Beaufort 02 in Blankenberge was 'A half boat on the pier'. The problem was that the object was quite heavy and there are technical limits of weight on the pier. Such difficulties may be finally solved but time is necessary to make inspections and good installations.
- Timing: the event should be well prepared and the promotional text materials should be sent in advance to all coastal tourist offices in order to be on time with introducing them into the local travel magazines.
- Authorization for installation of artworks in nature: in Knokke-Heist there is a problem linked to the fact that sculptures should not be located in the natural park 'Het Zwin'. In Beaufort02, no agreement was issued to locate the art in the natural park.
- Common financial support: some frustration existed among the Knokke authorities about the financial support of the Beaufort project. This was linked to the fact that people thought that they help the PMMK museum in Oostende (exposition 'Beaufort Inside').
- HoReCa: A few representatives of tourism and culture departments concluded that people representing HoReCa sector are rarely satisfied or optimistic. For instance, De Haan was chosen as semi-finalist in the competition of 'The Most Beautiful Flemish Villages' and HoReCa sector was asked to join the promotional actions but there is still no positive response.

4.3.5. Innovations strengthening sustainability

4.3.5.1. View of Beaufort how to strengthen sustainability of the project:

- The Beaufort03 communication and promotion will take up the challenge to use the popular digital platforms such as Web2.0, Flickr, developing chat rooms, etc. These structures are important to attract young people who very rarely come with parents. This segment requires another approach that may contribute to diversification of the Beaufort project.

4.3.5.2. View of the coastal municipalities how to strengthen sustainability of the project:

- Profit: the Beaufort budget became smaller during every edition and it is still difficult to find sponsors/partners for the third edition. The innovative approach should be established in order to satisfy all stakeholders in regard to the economic aspect of the project. The hard ciphers are necessary to show that the event has a potential of the profit-bringing activity. The profit may be also better made on acquisitions of the artworks that are on-sale after Beaufort ends. These purchases may be seen as long-term investments; however the prices should be reasonable.
 - Famous Beaufort02 sculptures called 'Elephants', were bought by the third parties since De Panne could not effort to pay 6mln BEF (€1,5mln). Koksijde purchased the object called 'Cross Section' after Beaufort01. Blankenberge also invested and bought a very popular group of sculptures called 'Babies' by David Cerny (Czech Republic).
 - The profit is also made from the second home residents who are potential visitors of Beaufort. The profit they bring indicates the importance of tourism in general and projects as Beaufort in specific: 8.000 second homes residences in e.g. Nieuwpoort x 2.5 people (on average) x €30 spent daily = €600.000 per day. The average number of

days spend yearly by second home resident at the coast is 1000, thus the money returning to the community per year is about €6mln.

- In Knokke, Beaufort is seen as the project that automatically brings new clients to the existing art galleries and a better profit is generated (multiplier effect). The positive thing is also a possibility to deduct all municipal costs paid for Beaufort from the price of artworks. Knokke did not purchase however any of art sculptures because of too high price. There are 17.000 second home residences in Knokke, which bring a substantial profit. The profit generated is invested in new projects related to improving existing hotels (La Reserve Hotel) or building new ones. New hotels include 150 rooms 5-star hotel for international visitors near the casino and 200 rooms 3-star hotel close to the station. These actions show high economic importance of the second home residences at the Belgian coast.
- People: On the one hand, the innovations and sustainable cooperation between municipalities bring many advantages. On the other hand, it is not clear if the public participating in both Beaufort editions was the same. Much more could be learnt if the research was done during all Beaufort editions. The marketing approach could help to design additional activities for specific target groups in each municipality. A common feeling is that the public and its requirements are changing. According to Middelkerke, in order to sustain the Beaufort project, both groups, the tourists and the coastal citizens, should be culture-minded and like to learn about modern art.
- Planet: The artworks located in the public space contribute to bringing people together. Since everybody finds public space important, a lot of effort is done to keep it tidy and interesting.
 - Many innovations were recently done in coastal municipalities regarding infrastructure, construction and conservation of green places. In the confrontation of the cities with the modern art should there is no place for destroyed environment. People should learn not only about art but also - or especially - what is the cultural behaviour and how to protect the nature.
 - In Knokke-Heist efforts are made in two directions: to protect the environment (natural park 'Het Zwin') and also to bring nature to the city. An interesting project was recently realised in which dunes were installed in the centre of Knokke. The quality of beach and water in Knokke-Heist is given every year the Blue Flag award but the local policy is not to display it since not all municipalities are able to do the same.
 - Another innovation strengthening sustainability is the installation of solar energy in the project focusing on purification of water in Knokke-Heist. In order to have sustainable energy sources, building of windmills park in the sea close to Oostende has started.
- Public-private cooperation: De Lijn represents the public transport sector and in the Beaufort project, their cooperation was excellent. The same company owns the Coastal Tram, which is itself a best example of the sustainable transport medium.

The Beaufort project is a sustainable event in the general opinion of the tourism and culture departments. However, a few voices say that the future of Beaufort is not sure because of the financial aspect. Decrease of profit is linked to possible difficulties of conservation of the artworks outside and expensive protection activities against vandalism. Additionally, the insurances of famous objects are costly and require many legal arrangements.

It is also interesting to notice that not all municipalities understand the concept of sustainability and therefore it is difficult to discuss this aspect. Profit, people, planet are three basic elements of the sustainability concept. Clear examples of sustainable projects should be developed. Other good examples of the existing sustainable projects at the Belgian coast, such as the Green Key award or Coastal Barometer, should be better communicated to the public.

4.3.6. Innovative forms of communication in the region

Other innovative forms of communication are being developed by the coastal tourist offices, Westtoer, Tourism Flanders. For instance, in March 2008 Koksijde-Oostduinkerke has introduced 'the audio- and video tours' on the internet (www.koksijde.be). A new concept relates to various types of walking tours during which one may discover unique fauna and flora of Koksijde dunes, or may get inspiration from Paul Delvaux, Georges Grard, Walter Vilain and other famous artists whose paintings and sculptures may be found in Koksijde. Additionally, it is possible to make a nice walk in Koksijde-Oostduinkerke with mp3, iPods or other mini music- and video-equipment, while the software can be downloaded from the internet.

The international projects supported by INTERREG program of the European Union give another dimension of communication and cooperation in the Belgian coast region. New projects emerge in which Koksijde-Oostduinkerke participates or likes to join at the moment. The projects proposals are being prepared where the focus is on promotion of the whole coast. A new cooperation with France is possible and it is very interesting because of many visitors from behind the border.

4.3.7. Critical success factors

In the case of the Beaufort project, the success is clearly linked to the natural way people are confronted with contemporary art. The visitors are in no way pushed or forced to go to the museum or other places, but are gently invited to discover the artwork on beach, dunes, and streets or in specific locations of the municipalities. The walking-guide described each location and gave information about the possible transport means. The coastal tram played a crucial role in travelling along the coast and finding the art objects.

Some municipalities mentioned that the greatest success factor of the Beaufort project is the magical combination between art and coast, while others said that the project creates and promotes the image of the whole Belgian coast and that was never before achieved at this scale.

The Beaufort project organisers made the observation that Beaufort is successful because the event is perceived as a 'trendy social event' and many people came on the organised tour.

Additionally, the organisation of the 'Road Shows' during Beaufort02 helped to explain the project to the small medium enterprises (SMEs) along the coast. In this way, the SMEs learned about challenges, opportunities and the possible economic impact of Beaufort on their own businesses.

Finally, it seems that most important success factors include benchmarking with other regions, finding the best practices and analysing, which project have the chance to become a success. Later on, the task is to choose a clear focus: 'Choose what is in the best synergy with your product that should represent the most authentic part of your region'.

The following outputs may serve as the indicators of the project's success:

- Economic indicators and tourism results: numbers of sold publications, walking-guides and entrance tickets to the museums. During the Beaufort02 project, 40 thousand walking-guides were sold and 9 million hits on the project's site were recorded. It is known that figures are very important but surveys are expensive. WES (West-Flemish Economic Study Bureau) did the economic evaluation of Beaufort01.
- Public transport: the Coastal Tram allows transportation along the whole Belgian coast. In the Beaufort project there was always a perfect collaboration with the company 'De Lijn' owning the bus-tam network in Belgium.
- Internal communication: a broad communication style between vzw Ku(n)st and the coastal municipalities has been developed in an excellent way and it contributes to the success of the project. It is very important to work with all cultural ambassadors in the future edition of Beaufort.

- The cultural curator of Beaufort: the person holding such function should have not only professional contacts with world-known artists but also a specific personality including innovativeness, adaptability, flexibility and perfect networking skills.
- Diversity of experiences: people like to have diversity of experiences; they are looking for something new and fresh, linked to history and local aspects but also amusing, enjoying, relaxing and giving a bit of challenge, which may be linked to trying new sports or exploring things. Active recreation is a core of tourist activities for different target groups in Belgium.
- Appreciation of the public: the positive articles in the international journals, letters and emails confirm the positive impressions about the events.
- Repeating experience: spreading word-of-mouth, number of hits on the Internet site of the project is also an indicator of the interest people have about the project and the efficiency of promotional activities.

4.4. TOURISM POLICY

4.4.1. Tourism policy at Belgian coast

In Belgium, the tourism policy plan at the coast was prepared by Westtoer with collaboration of the West Flanders Province and Tourism Flanders. The strategic policy plan formulated 8 objectives (Westtoer, 2002):

1. Developing and repositioning the Flemish coast as a contemporary quality destination for commercial stay tourism, second home tourism and day tourism
2. Sustainable reinforcement of the attractiveness of the coast product
3. Creating stable economic turnovers and stable employment
4. Developing and positioning the Flemish coast as a tourist destination throughout the year
5. Spreading the risk for coast tourism by raising the share of the foreign overnights in a total of overnights in commercial accommodation
6. Preserving the most important existing markets for commercial accommodation and creatively anticipating on new, potential market segments by developing new products and approaches that are adapted to these segments
7. Stimulating the use of public transport and gentle transport forms to and along the coast
8. Reconciling tourism activities with quality of living for the local population

Most recently, a third Coast Action Plan was created for the period 2005-2009. This plan comes after a first (period 1997-2002) and a second (period 2000-2004) planning period of the Flemish government.

It will be updated with a new publication in 2008. New issues include collaboration and networking, accommodation, prices of construction land and promotion:

- **Collaboration and networking**: New priorities focused on collaboration and networking are recognised. New tourist products should link the interests of many coastal communities. It was difficult to involve small communities in the projects and in the first Beaufort01 (2003), about 10% of the total budget of € 5mln, was donated by the local communities.
- **Accommodation**: New research, which is a base for a new strategic plan of the coast development shows that there should be more attention to various forms of accommodations along the coast; the aim is to keep a democratic coast. There are too many second stay accommodations while there is a need for more quality hotels.

- **Prices of building land:** Another problem is the price of the building land at the Belgian coast. The power of the building sector is very strong. In order to keep “the polders” untouched, the value of the remaining land along the coast is continuously growing. The village developers have a strong position.
- **Promotion:** More promotion is needed, in order to create new projects supported by different level organizations. Another important aspect is building the image of the Belgian coast by well organized events such as the events Beaufort01 and Beaufort02.

A tourism policy is well developed at the national level. However, it is very difficult to execute a tourism policy at the Belgian coast since there is no ‘one coast’, in opinion of many stakeholders. Each municipality has its own approach to the tourism development. Some municipalities have extended policy documents; others just started to develop them.

The ten strategic plans from each coastal municipality have to be accepted by the province West Flanders. The plans include various programs, such as the latest KIDS program. This program focuses on the coast indicators that are collected from the HoReCa sector, the confederation of campsites, the confederation of building sector and tourism sector. This program will be executed until 2013.

Many differences are noticed in relation to execution of the concept of sustainable tourism. For some municipalities the environment comes on the first place, while other municipalities focus on the socio-economic dimension.

4.4.2. Beaufort as part of the strategic tourism plan

The Beaufort project organisers propose to include the event in the overall tourism policy plan at the Belgian coast. In this way, this project may be better structured and financed in order to contribute to the sustainable tourism development at the Belgian coast.

At this moment, the money for Beaufort comes from the culture departments of coastal municipalities that have different development plans for culture activities; and Beaufort is not always included.

The coastal municipalities have either a 3 or 5-years strategic tourism plan. Short descriptions related to this aspect are presented below.

West Coast

De Panne does not have its own tourism policy plan, but they have a budget for tourism activities. The same situation is in Nieuwpoort where the Beaufort project is considered as only a part of the local activities.

Koksijde-Oostduinkerke is a very well organised municipality; they have their own 5-year strategic tourism plan until 2012 in which the Beaufort project is well integrated. The necessary funding goes from the community level to NGO and is distributed for different tasks. A better impact is expected with Beaufort03 because of the budget and a bigger team is planned. One year before Beaufort03, the groups arrangements and the walking tours are pre-established and will be soon consulted with vzw Ku(n)st. Three persons are involved in the preparation of Beaufort03 in Koksijde; they are responsible for the communication to the inhabitants, the briefings with various stakeholders and they prepare the information for the local magazine. In Beaufort02, Koksijde made visit-tours to all tourist offices along the coast. In the new edition, they will prepare such a tour for their stakeholders because it is considered as an important element of the collaboration.

Middle Coast

Middelkerke-Westende has no tourism plan, however it has a budget of about €70.000 for all tourism and culture related projects. This budget is discussed every year.

Oostende has tourism and culture-related development plans. The City provided a budget of €92.000 for Beaufort02 and will support Beaufort03 with another €104.000. All coastal cities agreed to raise

their financial support for Beaufort03 (+20% for every city). In every Beaufort edition, the tourism office closely works with the vzw Ku(n)st and develop explicit strategy to promote the project in Oostende (idem for all the other offices of Tourism).

The Beaufort project is mentioned in the Bredene culture policy for 2008-2013. Hereby, the indicators are described that help the yearly evaluation of various cultural actions. One of the ten points relates to the visibility of art in the streets of Bredene. It means that policy-makers in Bredene support Beaufort.

East Coast

De Haan-Wenduine follows the general tourism policy developed by Westtoer and for the first time the municipality develops its own tourism policy document. In De Haan-Wenduine, the financial contribution for Beaufort03 increased 20% in comparison to the second edition (€49.000). It means that the project is well incorporated in the city expenses.

Blankenberge has developed a new tourism plan for 2007-2012 that is based for the first time on the Flemish Decree. In this document, new roles for the city management team are written. There is more responsibility on the one hand and more freedom to work at the departments' level on the other hand. Blankenberge confirms that the tourism policy is seen as a top priority in the city planning. All tourist activities are carefully developed in cooperation with the Board of City Directors representing different departments. Since tourism has a special place, one of the elements that will soon change an image of Blankenberge is a new style for the houses. The budget for this issue is planned since year 2010. A new houses style will serve as the logo of the municipality.

Zeebrugge and Brugge have an extended tourism strategy. Both cities are connected though various projects and Beaufort is only one of them. The tourism and culture department work together and they look for new partners while developing projects.

In Knokke-Heist tourism is seen as an important industry. Half of the Knokke-Heist citizens work in tourism or related services. There is a strategic plan about tourism development in Knokke; however it does not include the Beaufort project.

In the context of the Beaufort project, coordination between the mayors of the coastal cities called political platform is operational. The departments of tourism and culture are well cooperating in communication and technical platforms. There are frequent informative meetings about the progress of the activities in each Beaufort edition. This regional cooperation is well supported by Tourism Flanders and Westtoer.

4.4.3. Positive and negative effects of tourism policy

The positive effects of a tourism policy are seen in the creation of possibilities and availability of finances. The budget is well planned and projects such as Beaufort are supported.

According to the representatives of the West Coast, one of the positive effects of tourism policy is the ability to perform surveys about tourists by Westtoer.

Good cooperation with De Lijn providing the Coastal Tram is seen as a positive outcome of tourism policy at the Belgian coast. This tram stops in 70 places along the 67km of the coast. All municipalities confirm that this tram is a crucial element in bringing visitors to different places. They also appreciate that a special brochure was developed showing many arrangements (coastal tram tickets, entrance tickets, etc) for those who liked to see the Beaufort project.

The negative effects of tourism policy are linked to the strict regulations behind the Coast Action Plan. About four reports are requested per year, which is seen as too much of the paperwork. Another disadvantage is related to the confine structures, which means that there is not enough space for creativity in order to overcome some administrative problems.

4.4.4. Risk and safety management/ policy in the region

Risk and safety management at the Belgian coast is well organised. Local policy department take care about the safety of citizens and visitors in the cities. When specific events are organised, such as the flower festival ('Bloemen Corso') in Blankenberge, about 100.000 visitors are expected in the city of 18.329 citizens. During such days, everybody is practically concerned with safety issues.

Life guards are working on the majority of the beaches from May until the end of the tourist season. The Belgian coast is generally seen as the safe place where few incidents are recorded.

In the case of the Beaufort project, the technical difficulties sometimes arise in regard to installation of the sculptures on the beaches, dunes, promenades or piers. Therefore, careful management is implemented by the technical Beaufort platform that was created between vzw Ku(n)st and technical services of each municipality. The artworks have to be safe and this is not easy task because of the changing conditions of nature. Tides and strong winds are especially dangerous for art object displayed at the sea.

Artworks are endangered by the natural forces and also by human vandalism. Unfortunately, there were a few cases of vandalism on the Beaufort objects. The issue of protection is not fully resolved since there is no possibility to monitor all art sculptures along the whole coast. The insurance of the artworks is the responsibility of the vzw Ku(n)st.

In some cases, when the lack of information related to the artwork is noticed, unnecessary attention is created. For instance, the Gaya organisation (fighting for the rights of the animals) made a protest when the sculpture "Aaneen" of Berlinde De Bruyckere, showing two hanging horses in polyester on a cross was displayed in the dunes. If there was sufficient information that this is a part of the artistic exposition, such situation would not probably occur. In spite of the protest, the situation generated a huge promotion for the Beaufort and many visitors came to De Haan-Wenduine to see the artwork.

4.5. VISITOR MANAGEMENT

4.5.1. Over usage/overcrowding

On the one hand, the approaching roads to the coast, some beaches and places like the Koninklijke Baan in Oostende are overused. On the other hand, plenty of beaches and dunes are never fully used and they are easily reachable by the coastal tram. Thus, the crowding is not a problematic issue in all of coastal municipalities.

West Coast

Two groups of tourists in De Panne were basically observed in Beaufort02: those who came to see 'Elephants' and those who liked to walk on the whole beach and to discover all artworks. Therefore, the issue of overcrowding did not exist in De Panne. In Koksijde-Oostduinkerke, the overcrowding issue was only seen during Beaufort exposition in the Abdij Museum (Abbey Ten Duinen). The visitors even kept coming after the event was finished and this is considered as a positive outcome of the project. In Nieuwpoort the places are quite full for the whole year since there are many second home residences.

Middle Coast

The issue of crowding in Middelkerke-Westende and Oostende is not problematic. Oostende is used having many tourists and – since there are many attractions – people are well spread along a quite long coast. The cultural department of Oostende made however a proposal to extend 'Beaufort Inside' until winter season in order to divide streams of public over the year, but the proposal was rejected. The reason was that it is too difficult to stretch the attention of the media for period of ten months. As far as Bredene is considered, the tourists are well spread along the beach, dunes and the city streets since there is no dike in this municipality. In Beaufort02, Bredene made an effort to bring tourists on the education route, thus there was no overcrowding issue.

East Coast

De Haan-Wenduine says that the overcrowding is not a problem for the city. This feeling is linked to the fact that there is no train station in the city, thus the arrival of visitors is done either by the car or the coastal tram. Blankenberge, Zeebrugge and Knokke-Heist also do not particularly complain about overcrowding. Especially regarding the Beaufort project, the artworks in these municipalities did not attract too many people.

4.5.2. Current visitor behaviour and protection of artworks

The common feeling is that people should be instructed how to behave with art in public spaces and how to respect it. The communication approach needs to be reconsidered; a short text should accompany each artwork indicating not only the author but also inform that art must not be touched. In some cases, like 'Searching for Utopia' ('The Turtle') by Jan Fabre in Nieuwpoort, children constantly mounted on the giant sculpture. As the consequence, it was restored a few times. Recently, the city of Nieuwpoort decided to introduce severe fines when they catch people sitting or climbing on the statue.

In the case of the Beaufort project, the conservation activities are seen as a very complex and difficult task. A majority of artworks are exposed outdoor and therefore a careful protection must be done against unfavourable weather conditions on the one hand and against vandalism on the other hand. The technical platform is well prepared in executing these tasks in each municipality. The vzw Ku(n)st in cooperation with the local government is responsible for surveillance of the objects. During Beaufort01 there was a lot of damage, especially the photographs of Dirk Braeckman have been destroyed; however there was no serious vandalism case during Beaufort02.

Typical conservation activities related to preservation of the artworks are done in close collaboration between the creator/artist, the business director and the technical staff.

4.5.3. Addressing seasonal visitation in management

Tourism Flanders makes all possible efforts to extend a typical tourist season (May – August) at the Belgian coast. They are interested in organising activities in the so-called "shoulder months"; i.e. the months just before and after the high tourist season.

For instance the Beaufort projects started before Easter vacations (March – beginning of April) and continued until the middle of October. In the case of 'Beaufort Inside' during Beaufort01 (2003), the exposition at the PMMK museum in Oostende was on show until October. This approach proved to be successful because many different socio-cultural groups had still the opportunity to enjoy a part of the Beaufort event. In the opinion of Colette Castermans, Head of Communication, the extension of the season for the 'Beaufort Outside' during wintertime, will not be successful.

Additionally, it may be concluded that due to thousands of second home residents in many coastal municipalities, the tourist season is already extended along the whole year.

4.5.4. Monitoring system

Several studies about the visitors were realised at the Belgian coast. Based on the study prepared by Flemish Economic Study Bureau (WES) in Brugge in 1998 the conclusion was made that most people come to the coast for the contact with nature and the simple activities such as walking, cycling and eating. It seems that ten years ago people did not expect that there are other forms of attractions, including cultural activities: if they encountered the shrimp fisherman or some local attractions, they were quite satisfied.

In 2008 the profile of respondents is certainly different and there is a need to conduct more research about changing lifestyle of tourists and residents of coastal villages. The coastal tourism departments

conduct all year survey about the origin of the tourist, but up to now they do not know which places are mostly visited, which are less popular and the reasons behind these choices. With the new iPod digital system in Koksijde some of the current issues will be solved.

A new publication by Westtoer will be soon published that is based on research conducted along the Belgian coast during six months of 2007. In this way, it will be possible to analyse general visitor trends since year 2002 when the last survey was done by the same organisation.

In relation to the Beaufort project, a comprehensive study was prepared by the WES (West-Flemish Economic Study Bureau) about various economic indicators related to the performance and outputs of Beaufort01. The study indicated that between 400.000 and 600.000 people had seen Beaufort01. Those visitors were good for an economic return between €11.000.000 and €25.000.000, versus the Beaufort investment of €5.000.000. This means that for every €1; € 5 came back via:

- Restaurants	€ 7.000.000
- Shopping	€ 7.000.000
- Hotels, residential stays	€ 5.000.000
- Café, tearooms	€ 3.000.000

In the next Beaufort02 edition, no study was conducted. However, the second edition has been seen by approximately 740.000 visitors. By the extrapolation of selling figures for catalogues and walking-guides, some conclusions were made. Additionally, students between 18 and 25 years old visited Beaufort and did some monitoring of the artworks and visitors behaviour on the beaches and inside the churches (in each municipality there was a church selected by the curator where one big or several small Beaufort paintings were on show).

4.5.5. Areas of conflict and activities for improvement

4.5.5.1. Beaufort View

In the Beaufort project, the most important problem is related to accessibility to the artworks. Some people do not expect that an effort is necessary in order to find the objects either on the streets or in nature. On the one hand, Beaufort is considered as an education tool by which people may learn how to read maps and locate the object. On the other hand, it was observed that many people do not need any maps to enjoy walking and finding the extraordinary art objects along the coast or in the cities.

4.5.5.2. View of West Coast

The areas of improvement suggested by De Panne include: development of personal contacts with artists who like to exhibit their objects in the municipality. A suggestion is made to invite artists before Beaufort and make a press conference with media in order to spread information about the artists and their plans. Such approach is seen as essential part of a good planning and organisation process in the Beaufort project.

Koksijde-Oostduinkerke suggests having more impact on decision related to location of artworks along the coast. For the moment the artists and the curator of the project make this decision explicitly. The tourist department says that they are satisfied with the quality of the objects but not with the place where it is exhibited. Another suggestion is to develop better arrangements for groups of tourists.

The suggestion of Nieuwpoort is related to a more open communication between Beaufort organisers and the municipalities. There is a feeling that Beaufort is too much generalised in Oostende. Since Nieuwpoort is one of the richest municipalities due to the second home residences, there is also a discussion if they should contribute more money into the projects like Beaufort. The shared opinion is that it is possible but under the condition that there is a good dialogue with the Beaufort organisers about the choice of the artworks and their location. This aspect is important also for the purchasing process of artworks after the project ends. Nieuwpoort considers art as a good investment that brings additional value to the city and its environment. Thus, the projects like Beaufort make sense for the liveability of the cities and sustainability of the environment. Art is seen as the element improving the quality of life in the cities and the factor minimising pressure made by the cities on the environment.

4.5.5.3. View of Middle Coast

Middelkerke-Westende and Bredene would like to have more impact on the choice of the artworks and their location. The approach developed by the vzw Ku(n)st is perceived as an efficient method of learning, cooperating and networking between all stakeholders. The artistic concept of the project and the choice of the artists and works are decided by the curator of Beaufort, who is at the same time the curator-director of PMMK, Museum of Modern Art. The locations of art works are decided with the artists and the municipalities. Sometimes locations perfectly match the object, like in the case of a giant spider 'Maman' by Louise Bourgeois that was located on the local cemetery in Mariakerke (Oostende). Unfortunately, some objects are placed too far to be visible like the statue of Jan Fabre on the roof of the Oostende Casino during Beaufort02. Thus, there is a common agreement that more careful decisions should be made in regard to the location of the art objects.

4.5.5.4. View of East Coast

De Haan-Wenduine would not like to have more impact on the choice of artworks and their location. In the opinion of tourism and culture representatives, it is better to have this decision made by the curator of the Beaufort project. The only problem reported here was linked to mistakes published in the walking guide of Beaufort02. It means that more attention should be given to reviewing of the guide. The walking-guide is also seen as a kind of a luxury souvenir; presenting the highest quality possible. Additionally, De Haan-Wenduine suggests keeping the project Beaufort only at the Belgian coast; not expanding it to other countries.

Blankenberge would like to have more impact on the choice of the artworks. Artists have to be more involved in a good choice of location because sometimes they do not realise the technical difficulties in placing the sculptures. They also do not realise that fixing sculptures in a close proximity to places like the emergency airport, can cause a problem and requires special permissions.

Zeebrugge and Brugge suggest that the sculptures in the Beaufort project have to be better located, so people may find it easier. The media should be more involved and the new ways of communication with public introduced. The GPS system of tourist navigation should be considered in the future, since technology exists and everybody has a mobile telephone.

Knokke-Heist thinks that it is very important to have the agreement about the artworks and their location. The art has to be adjusted to the place where it will be exposed and it can be only done by close cooperation between different stakeholders. In Beaufort02, there was a sculpture 'Floating Mountain of Immortals' by Zhan Wang (China) that was placed in the North Sea in front of the nature park 'Het Zwin'. The feeling was that it was too far to reach for many visitors and one must remember that most of the tourists at the Belgian coast are older people.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Focusing on recommendations for other North Sea regions the following conclusions are made:

- Sustainability issue: representatives of culture and tourism departments contacted in this research supported the idea of sustainable tourism development of the coast. They express the hope that the Beaufort project will continue in the future; the only weak point here is related to the financial aspect.
- Innovation issue: innovation is well pursued in various projects at the Belgian coast: local authorities pay attention to the fact that projects like Beaufort, are not only done to promote art but that they bring real benefits to various stakeholders, especially local population.
- Regional communication structure: the regional communication is very important especially in the Belgian case, where local rivalry linked to the access to the coast was present for centuries. All representatives confirm that nowadays the only way of future development is good networking and cooperation; the Beaufort project is a perfect example of the common activity, which required cooperation of many parties for benefit of all of them. It is also hoped that based on this growing positive experience other new actions will be developed.
- Extending tourism season: winter season at the Belgian coast, like in all North Sea regions is quite difficult, and it is very difficult to bring tourists to the coast. Nevertheless, many efforts are made in order to follow the coastal policy guidelines. It is clear that all municipalities work on this issue; they have recently developed a few projects focusing on out-of-season tourist attractions and all-weather activities.
- Identification of opportunities: projects such as Beaufort show that they are affordable and directed to all socio-economic groups, therefore the issue of social inclusion is well taken into account. Some municipalities ask the question how far the process of art democratisation can go on and this aspect will be soon tested during a third Beaufort edition introducing new artistic approach. 'Beaufort Inside' is also well accessible to handicapped people.
- Trends: the Beaufort project and many other ones at the Belgian coast are well integrated into the recent world trends in tourism sector, these projects are also linked to other activities such as holiday packages, special day-trips, etc.

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Annex 1: Activities prepared by each coastal municipality for year 2008

#	De Panne	Koksijde-Oostduinkerke	Nieuwpoort	Middelkerke	Oostende	Bredene	De Haan - Wenduine	Blankenberge	Zeebrugge	Knokke-Heist
januari-februari										
1				Valentijnweeke d, 14-17 februari	Nieuwjaard ik, 5 januari					
2					Romantiek in Oostende, 8-10 febr.					
maart-april										
1	KBC 3- daagse De Panne- Koksijde, 1-3 april	Bloemenjaarmarkt, 22 maart	Frans-Vlaamse dagen, 31 maart-15 april	Wijnweekend, 18-20 april	Bal Rat Mort, 1 maart		Sneukeltoer, 16 maart	New Balance wandeltweedaag se van Vlaanderen, 26- 27 april	Saint- Georges Day- Herdenking, 19-20 april	Internat. Fotofestival 2008, 1 april-1 juli
2	Zeilwagenwe dstrijden Krabrally, 12-13 april	KinderKoksijde, 29-30 maart			Belgisch Kampioensc hap Veldlopen, 9 maart					Nacht van Exclusief Vlaanderen, 10-12 april
3	Dranouter aan Zee, 26- 27 april				Met Kunst aan Tafel, vanaf 21 maart					World Press Photo, 30 april-4 mei
mei-juni										
1		Middeleeuws theaterfestival, 1 mei	Visserijweeke nd, 26-27 mei	Visweekend Westende, 13-15 juni	Kites International 10-11 mei		Molenfeesten Wenduine, 29 juni	Folkloristische Havenfeesten, 1- 4 mei	Dag van de toerist, 1 juni	Spirit of Passion, Life style beurs, 1 mei-1 juli
2		Garnaalenfeesten, 28-29 juni	Vlaanderen- Europa Nieu- wpoortweek, 30 juni-4juli	Bierweekend, 20-21 juni	Oostende voor Anker, 22-25 mei					Scapa Sport's Beach Polo, 26-27 mei
3										Belgisch Kampioen wielrennen, 29 juni

juli-augustus										
1	Leapoldfeesten, 16-18 juli	Air Show Luchtmachtbasis Koksijde, 5-6 juli	'Vlaanderen Zingt' samenzangspektakel, 7 juli		Kids@Oostende, 2-5 juli	The Village goes crazy Bluesfestival, juli	Middweek Music, 2 juli-28 aug.	Zeezegening, 6 juli	Internationale Opendeurdagen Marinebasis Zeebrugge, 5-6 juli	International Cartoonfestival & Press Cartoon Belgium, 15 juli-30 sept.
2	Artiestendag, 3 augustus	Folklorefestival 'Een venster op de wereld', 12-21 juli	Landbouwfeest, 8 juli		Woosha! (jongerenevenement), 9-13 juli	Folkavond, juli	Kids De Haan op maandag, 7 juli-25 aug.	Parkconcerten, elke woensdag in juli en augustus	Filmophetstrand, juli-augustus	Kneifestival, Festival de rock&pop, juli
3	Koetsendéfilé 10 augustus	Beach Run, 18 juli	Vredesconcert met Barbara Dex, 4 augustus		Vurige Maandagen, 14,21,28 juli, 4, 11, 18 augustus	Duynewake, 5 juli	Kids Wenduine op dinsdag, 8 juli-26 aug.	Klankenberge, elke vrijdag in juli en augustus	Strandbibliotheek, juli-augustus	
4	Folklorefestival, 12-14 augustus	Koksijde zingt, 26 juli	Nationaal Huldebetoon aan Z.M. koning Albert I en de helden van de IJzer, 5 augustus		Theater aan Zee, 31 juli-9 augustus	Theater Boulevard, 12 juli	Rezenfeesten Wenduine, 19-20 juli	Paravangfeesten, 3 augustus		
5	Verkiezing Miss Elegantie 2008, 17 augustus	Tennistornooi Flanders Ladies Trophy, 9-17 augustus	'Vlaanderen Zingt' samenzangspektakel, 11 augustus		Toog-en Tafelhappen, 3 augustus	Dahliade/Afro-Caribbean Festival, 16 augustus	Boulevard 2008 – Feest van De Haan, 21 juli	Bloemencorso, 31 augustus		
6		Tennistornooi Flanders Mens Trophy, 18-24 aug.	'Nieuwpoort Swingt' openluchtbal, 18 augustus		Paulusfeesten, 10-16 augustus		Vosseslagfeesten, 25-27 juli			
7		4-daagse van de IJzer, 20-23 augustus	Sint-Bernardusfeesten, 25-26 augustus				Trammelant De Haan, 2 augustus			
8		Dansfestival, 28-30 augustus					Garnalenfeesten Vosseslag, 9			

							aug.			
9							Boulevaard 2008- Feest van De Haan, 16 aug.			
10							Oude Klepperparade De Haan, 24 aug.			
september-oktober										
1	Zeilwagenwe dstrijd Potjesregetta, 6-7 september	Elsschot en de zee, 11-12 oktober		Landbouwweeke nd, 20-21 september			Klemskerke Zomerende, 7 september			Zwintriatlon 5 september
2		Halooweenstoet, 31 oktober								
november-december										
1	De Panne Beach Endurance, 7 december	Winterwandeldag, 27 december		Champagneweek end, 7-9 november	Halloween in Oostende, 24 oktober-2 november		Paardenzegeni ng Vlissegem, 2 november			Canadees Wandelweek end Knokke, 3-4 november
2					Winterijs, 28 november-4 januari		Sprotjesfeest Westuine, 26 december			
3					EK veldlopen, 14 december					
Σ	10	15	10	6	16	5	15	7	5	10

Source: Kustschatten, 2008

Gent, 13 augustus 2008

Mevrouw/ Mijnheer

Hierbij bezorgen we u het eindrapport – Sustainability and innovation at the Belgian North Sea Coast – the Beaufort case – dat werd samengesteld binnen het project 'Sustainable Tourism Development by Applying the Learning Concept in the North Sea Region'.

In het rapport wordt 'Beaufort' als voorbeeld genomen van een innovatieve en duurzame toeristische activiteit aan de Noordzeekust. Vooral de samenwerking tussen de afdelingen toerisme en cultuur van de tien Belgische kustgemeenten wordt in Europees perspectief bijzonder gewaardeerd.

Het rapport kan u tevens onder elektronische vorm verkrijgen bij:
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We hebben tevens andere 'best practice examples' van activiteiten aan de Noordzeekust ontwikkeld. Het gaat over de 'Kustbarometer', 'Groene Sleutel' en 'Kusttram'. Dat kan u terug vinden op de ToLearn website: www.tolearn.uni-kiel.de/tolearn

Met vriendelijke groeten,



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