

Preface

*The dismal truth is that shores . . . are fast disappearing, and may well do so completely within the life of some of us.*¹

– Rachel Carson, 1957

Like many people of my generation and many of those born before me, such as Rachel Carson, I entered adulthood acutely aware of the changes taking place in the natural world before my eyes – unwanted changes, in my opinion – changes that worried me. I spent my early childhood in the 1960s in Silicon Valley, California. Before being called “Silicon Valley”, it was the Santa Clara Valley and it still had agricultural fields and fruit orchards, remnants of the “fruit basket” of the U.S. West Coast. But these field and orchards were rapidly becoming housing developments, shopping malls and gas stations. It seemed that orchards turned into parking lots overnight, just like in the Joni Mitchel song: “You never know what you’ve got till it’s gone. . .” I knew what we had then, and I knew it was going. . .

These changes signified to me far-reaching transitions from the natural world to the developed, which engendered feelings of loss, which in turn brought me to want to dedicate my career to addressing the situation. I hoped that as an environmental planner I could improve conditions under which development takes place, and if not stop it, at least try to mitigate some of its more disastrous effects on the environment. Unfortunately, intermittingly from job to job as a planner, I found myself contributing more to development than to conservation and environmental protection. With this realization, I decided to get a doctoral degree in public policy and use my experience as a planner to help others to better care for the environment. I felt that this was a way to reach out, bring my knowledge and feelings about sustainability and conservation together, and make a difference. I view this book as a stepping stone towards these goals.

¹ Souder W (2012) On a farther shore, the life and legacy of Rachel Carson. Random House, New York, p 267.

Without specifically planning it, I've never lived far from the sea. Although my family was not particularly beach-going, I spent my summers at sleep-away camps in Oregon and Washington, and in various places in California – always right on the water. I understood the tremendous draw of the ocean and lakes for tourism, recreation and development. As a high school exchange student for a year in Recife, Brazil, I lived in a seafront home (*na beira mar*) on one of the most beautiful beaches in the world: Pierdade-Boa Viagem. My college years took me to the magical beaches of the Sinai Desert and of the Mediterranean Sea. By the time I got to the legendary Cape Cod, where I spent two years as a post-doctoral fellow at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, I had seen such incredible beaches that the cold, windswept shores of Massachusetts were not particularly inviting! But it was there that I learned to appreciate the importance of fishing grounds, industrial ports and ocean sanctuaries, among other uses of oceans and coasts.

While living and working in New England, I realized that the conservation of coastal and marine environments is part and parcel of other paradigms, such as the public trust doctrine, that guarantees the rights of all people to the sea's shores and oceans, just as our rights are guaranteed to the air we breathe and the water we drink. Just as significant as these rights is the obligation of the "powers that be" – in this case, the government – to plan, manage and protect ocean and coastal resources for the public and for posterity. About a decade ago, as a doctoral student of public policy – and at the same time a planner working for the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection – I decided that this was a topic to which I would dedicate the next chapter of my career.

While not targeted solely towards planners working in the public sector, this book assumes a praxis-oriented view. For the most part it is organized around the following theme: we have a responsibility to act as stewards of the natural resources entrusted to us as planners, as policy makers and as citizens. Good stewardship requires a responsible attitude and a good understanding of the world around us and of the institutions through which public policies are made and carried out. And more than this, it requires an appreciation of natural processes, a humbling before the forces of nature. Nowhere on Earth – or on the "water planet" as we should perhaps rightly say – are these forces more immediately apparent than in the near-shore coastal environment, at the meeting of land *and* sea.

This book consists of 12 chapters organized in three parts. The first section (Part I) highlights the basics tenets of environmental planning for oceans and coasts. It covers important concepts from the general field of planning and relates these to oceans and coasts. Problems inherent within these environments are addressed, such as sea level rise, marine pollution, overdevelopment, etc.

A number of methods are regularly used by planners working to improve environmental quality and conditions of oceans and coasts. Part II covers those methodological approaches tailored to oceans and coasts – among others: integrated planning, pollution prevention, marine spatial planning and the ecosystem services approach.

The last section, Part III, focuses more specifically on state-of-the-art tools and technologies employed by planners for marine and coastal protection. These include marine protected areas, marine spatial planning, decision support tools and various forms of communication, including visualization, narration and strategies for stakeholder participation. The last chapter in this section (Chap. 11) deals with coastal adaptation, thus revisiting how the book began with an emphasis on change.

The concluding chapter (Chap. 12) stands alone. It reviews the main points brought up throughout the book and includes some examples. It provides some new information, such as about coastal and marine online databases and classification schemes, but for the most part it summarizes the fundamental concepts and ideas most important to the book.

Before embarking on the use of this book, or its chapters, the reader should be aware of a few organizational points and emphases. Generally, in the spirit of integration (across landscape units, in this case), there is no hard and fast separation between coastal and marine (ocean) topics. Further, the book does not attempt to present an “objective” view of oceans and coastal planning; its message is one of environmental protection and sustainable use. Although examples and case studies I use are from throughout the globe, most are taken from developed, industrial countries. This by no means implies that environmental planning for oceans and coasts is not taking place, or should not take place, in developing countries – more likely it has to do with use of the English language and availability of materials on the Web. Finally, the book’s outline mirrors that of a class I teach entitled: Planning and Management of the Coastal and Marine Environment. While not designed throughout as a textbook, I hope this book can be used as one.

To wrap up this (somewhat personal) introduction, I acknowledge the following assistants, who accompanied me on this journey – Jen Holzer and Miri Koolyk. Their expert editing and general assistance in administration and correspondence were invaluable. I also thank Professor Jay Gatrell of Bellarmine University in Louisville, Kentucky. A chance meeting with Jay led to the contract for this book, a huge boost which led to my idea becoming a reality. Others who helped me along the way include Maria Adelaide Ferreira, Michael Orbach, Gesa Geißler, Johann Köppel, Judi Granit, Yael Teff-Seker, Erez Roter, Emri Brickner, Yarden Elhanan, David Terkla, Ran Levy and Gaul Porat.

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