Atlantic Stakeholder Platform Conference - 20 January 2015, Porto

HOW TO IMPLEMENT THE MARINE LEISURE DIMENSION OF THE ATLANTIC MARITIME STRATEGY

With 85 000 jobs, marine leisure represents an important potential for the economic, social and environmental development of the Atlantic Area. How to develop this field of the Atlantic Marine Strategy?
The speakers discussed about the strategy to develop the marine leisure aspect of the Atlantic Marine Strategy. There are many development opportunities in different fields, such as: marine leisure industry, services, local or touristic nautical activities, professional training, events, etc. Activities can be developed in ports, marinas, economic zones, bays, beaches, in seawaters as well as on lakes and rivers, for local communities, touristic populations or export customers.
The objective will be to encourage the emergence of local, regional, national, transnational, crossborder projects, engaging the economic sector, the communities, the political authorities and the EU. It will also be to develop links with the other maritime sectors and to provide a transnational coordination.

Organiser: CPMR – Atlantic Arc Commission

1. Inma Valencia (Spain)
2. François Arbellot (France)
3. Steve Conlon (Ireland)
4. Rui Azevedo (Portugal)
5. Paul Wickes (United Kingdom)

1. Key messages

- NEA2 and the other marine leisure projects for the period 2008-2014 showed the strong potential of marine leisure (already 85,000 full time equivalent jobs) for the economic, social and environmental development of the Atlantic Area.

- As marine leisure is part of the Atlantic Strategy action plan, stakeholders and public authorities should implement the marine leisure dimension of the Atlantic Strategy. The marine leisure action plan should involve all the sectors across the Atlantic: industry, services, activities, marinas, etc.

- It is necessary to encourage and accompany the emergence of local, regional and transnational cooperation projects with the support of the different EU funds and programmes, as well as to promote, coordinate and assess them. This could be done through an EU Atlantic macro-project.

2. Summary

Inma Valencia,

Representing the Presidency of the CPMR Atlantic Arc Commission, Mrs. Valencia insisted on the fact that Marine leisure is an asset and also a challenge for the whole Atlantic Area. This sector has a large potential for the economic (tourism and production of goods and services), social (education, social cohesion) and environmental (protection and valuation) development of the Atlantic Area but, as it includes thousands of entities, we need to support strategic projects that will federate the stakeholders and territories in order to make them stronger to face the crisis, the competition of other areas and the changes in expectation of the public and clients. Within the CPMR Atlantic Arc Commission, a specific working group on "Atlantic culture and tourism" tackles this specific issue.

François Arbellot

He reminded that marine leisure can contribute to the development of the Atlantic Area by implementing the Atlantic Strategy Action Plan. Marine leisure can be developed by using a full range of EU funds: ERDF, EARDF, EFF, LEADER, COSME, HORIZON 2020, ERASMUS PLUS, LIFE, 10 interreg Programmes along the Atlantic coastline and its hinterland.

He suggested to create an Atlantic "one stop shop" used as a leverage for the marine leisure sector in order to:

- develop the marine leisure priority of the Atlantic Strategy
- support and promote the marine leisure development projects
- clarify and simplify the messages sent to marine leisure stakeholders
- support stakeholders to access EU funds
- facilitate project inventory and monitoring
- qualify and quantify the benefits of EU funds in the sector

The envisaged means are the following:

- creation of a network of identified national helpdesks acting in each country of the AA
- identification of all the local, regional, national, crossborder, transnational marine leisure projects within the Atlantic area
- Development of common actions: several thematic conferences, a biannual conference of the Atlantic marine leisure sector, emblematic sport events (Atlantic Games, Atlantic offshore race, etc.)
- Development of common tools: "Atlantic Marine Leisure" web portal, common indicators
- Organisation of strategic and regulatory monitoring of EU funds and providing advices to potential applicants

In terms of timeline, M. Arbellot suggested to prepare and develop the application in 2015 in alignment with the Atlantic Maritime Strategy and the Atlantic Area Transnational Cooperation programme 2014-2020. He also mentioned the need to work in close cooperation with DG Mare and the support team for the Atlantic Action plan as well as with the CPMR to get a wide support.

Steve Conlon

Ireland almost represents 30% of the entire EU waters and most of our coastline is exposed to the Atlantic. With 23 coastal marinas, Ireland lacks the number of safe havens that marinas provide in relation to the neighbouring countries. There is also over 1,000 kilometres of navigable waterways in Ireland. Marine Leisure Tourism accounts for approximately 22% of global tourism figures.

In 2007 the tourism development authority in Ireland, Failte Ireland, valued the contribution of Marine Leisure Tourism in Ireland at €450 million or 7% of tourism income.

The objectives for Ireland are the following:

- Collection of economic data in a cohesive manner on which to base any future development plans.
- Provide marina management training and the building of meaningful marina networks.
- Maritime on the water training for school children to introduce an appreciation of maritime affairs at an early age

- Marketing assistance to improve the competitive position of the inland waterways product.

Rui Azevedo
Portugal has a cluster of the sea economy, with 61 partners. One of the sectors is marine leisure.
The cluster has supported 6 flagship projects for 68 million euros, stimulated new ideas, promoted networking, disseminated information about sea affairs and enhanced international cooperation.
In Portugal, the potential of marine leisure is vast:

- large and varied coastline,
- good forecast conditions,
- maritime heritage and beautiful landscapes
- geographic centrality
- accessible and cheap destination
- Growth of marine leisure

The constraints are:

- heavy regulation, bureaucracy
- weakness of the networks
- lack of good conditions for the access to the sea
- Lack of tourism products in marine leisure
- many very small entities, without coordination
- social capital not sufficient
- lack of maritime culture in the country

Paul Wickes
Cornwall Marine Network (CMN) is owned by 351 marine employers, not for profit, and has directly created 1,300 new jobs, engaged 3,000 Young People in vocational training and delivered an added value to Cornwall's economy worth €160 Million. CMN strength at engaging SMEs has built a strong reputation for delivering partnership support for EU cross-border and cooperation projects, including engaging several hundreds of socially disadvantaged people in Leisure Marine activity in NEA2. The CMN model of SME employer engagement will transfer to marine clusters and representative associations, and this strength will directly support the ambition of a proposed Interreg project to create new Leisure Marine jobs.
Working in close partnership with Nautisme En Finistere, and CIM Alto, CMN advises to build an ambitious Interreg project that will target creation of jobs in Marine Leisure. A "Lead Project Team" could oversee a number of sub-projects, which will include Marine leisure and Environment; Marina's and Clusters; Tourism; Training and Skills; Social Inclusion; Maritime Heritage; Upgrading Business Infrastructures; and creating a Marine Leisure Network of key stakeholders to drive best practice. Outside of the core Interreg project, the Lead Project Team will seek to engage with other funds to increase the impact of the project.

3. Questions and answers

- What links can be developed between marine leisure and gastronomy in order to create a more attractive touristic offer?

There already are some experiences in this domain. In the Atlantic Area, the links between marine leisure, fishing and fish gastronomy are a very important asset and must be promoted.

4. Follow up

We have decided to meet with the Interreg VB Management Authority Technical Secretariat, as well as with DG Mare in order to ask for a support to the marine leisure Atlantic umbrella macro-project.

5. Next Atlantic Stakeholder Platform Conference

Yes