Contribution from the CPMR Atlantic Arc Commission to the European Commission’s call for suggestions concerning the priorities of the Atlantic Strategy Action Plan

Approved by the Atlantic Arc Commission Political Bureau held in Nantes (Pays de la Loire-France) on 13 February 2013

What is the Atlantic Arc Commission?

The Atlantic Arc Commission is one of the six Geographical Commissions of the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR). Established in 1989 in Faro (Portugal), the Atlantic Arc Commission is a network that currently brings together 21 Regions situated along the Atlantic seaboard of the European Union (EU).

The Atlantic Arc Commission has a twofold objective. Firstly, it acts as an advocate for its members with the EU and Member States to promote an ambitious vision of the European project based on solidarity. The Atlantic Arc Commission thus calls for a sustainable and balanced development of the Atlantic territories. Secondly, its working groups offer an ideal context in which to exchange best practice, define joint positions and develop cooperation projects in association with cities, socio-professional actors, universities and other private stakeholders from within the Atlantic area, on issues such as transport, maritime policy, fisheries, innovation, etc. Since June 2012, the Presidency of the Atlantic Arc Commission has been held by Cantabria (ES).

www.arcatlantique.org - www.crpm.org

What is the aim of this document?

In its Communication “Developing a Maritime Strategy for the Atlantic Ocean Area” of 21 November 2011, the European Commission calls for the drawing up of an “Action Plan for the Atlantic Strategy by the end of 2013, indicating specific projects and actions recommended for support” (cf. page 11 of the Communication). In its policy_position_document_of_22_March_2012, the Atlantic Arc Commission reiterated the importance of the Atlantic Regions’ involvement in this process of preparing an Action Plan. On several occasions, during the Atlantic Arc Commission Political Bureau (Caen, 22 March 2012), the Atlantic Arc Commission General Assembly (Santander, 31 May and 1 June 2012), and also during the Open Days Conference on 10 October 2012 focusing on the Atlantic Strategy, the elected representatives from the Atlantic Regions underlined the need to establish good governance for the Atlantic Strategy, which is the cornerstone for a successful implementation of this Strategy. This document therefore aims to effectively contribute to the preparation of an Action Plan. Our proposals for structural actions will be sent to the European Commission and to all interested stakeholders, in order to foster sustainable growth and employment in the Atlantic territories while strengthening the territorial cohesion of this area.

This document will be sent to the European Commission (DG MARE) in the framework of its “Call for suggestions for key investment and research priorities”, launched on 21 November 2012, with a deadline of 15 February 2013.

The proposals listed below are classified according to the five policy areas indentified in the framework of the “Atlantic Strategy” Working Group of the Atlantic Arc Commission and validated by its Political Bureau on 22 March 2012. In order to produce this document, a questionnaire was sent to all Member Regions of the Atlantic Arc Commission in order for them to send the proposed actions to be undertaken in the framework of the Atlantic Strategy to us.

In the previous document from the Atlantic Arc Commission, that responded and put forward proposals, the Atlantic Regions wanted to clarify the five challenges identified by the European Commission in its Communication by making the guidelines more operational. According to the Commission, these five challenges were to have been discussed during the Atlantic Forum workshops in order to prepare for the Action Plan in the best possible way. A year after the launch of the Forum process, it is clear that the European Commission has remained focused on the five initial proposals\(^1\), despite clear requests from the European Parliament and various stakeholders for an opening up of these themes, particularly to take greater consideration of the territorial dimension of the Strategy.

The Atlantic Arc Commission hopes that the guidelines proposed by the Atlantic Regions in this document can be taken on board by the European Commission in the future Action Plan.

As such, it requests that the priority areas for investment identified by the Commission for the implementation of the Strategy take into consideration the territorial issues defended jointly by the Atlantic Arc Commission\(^2\), the European Parliament\(^3\), the Committee of the Regions\(^4\) and the European Economic and Social Committee\(^5\). Restricting the Strategy’s scope for action to “the coasts, territorial and jurisdictional waters of the five EU Member States with an Atlantic coastline (...) as well as international waters reaching westward to the Americas…”, as indicated in the first point of the EC Communication of 21 November 2012, we feel is unnecessarily restrictive if the goal is the economic and social development of the entire European Atlantic Arc. The Atlantic Arc Commission considers that no action undertaken at sea can be envisaged without a natural and obvious link with the territories that surround it, beyond the coast alone.

As a reminder, the five priorities policy areas identified by the Member Regions of the Atlantic Arc Commission are as follows:

1. **Accessibility and transport in the Atlantic area (cf. EC Theme 2 “Reducing Europe’s carbon footprint”)**
   - Improving accessibility for the entire Atlantic seaboard, including the Outermost Regions and Islands;
   - Establish a genuine Atlantic corridor in the framework of the TEN-T Core Network (North-South), connected to the rest of Europe (West-East);
   - Develop Motorways of the Sea and cabotage;
   - Develop port infrastructure and multi-modal platforms along the Atlantic;
   - Develop digital high speed links.

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1/ Implementation of the ecosystem approach, 2/Reduction of Europe’s carbon footprint, 3/Sustainable use of natural resources from the Atlantic seabed, 4/Respond to threats to and emergency situations, 5/Inclusive growth


2. **Economy and maritime industries** (Theme omitted from the EC Communication)
   - Development and structuring of an industrial sector on Marine Renewable Energy;
   - Diversification of Atlantic shipyards;
   - Construction of less-polluting ships, especially for fisheries;
   - Sustainable development of fisheries and aquaculture;
   - Structuring of a nautical sector.

3. **Climate and environment** (cf. EC Theme 1 “Implementing the ecosystem approach” and Theme 3 “Sustainable exploitation of the Atlantic seafloor’s natural resources”)
   - Prevention and management of natural disasters related to climate change;
   - Anti-pollution measures and tackling “illegal dumping”;  
   - Integrated Coastal Zone Management and integrated management of the maritime area;
   - Sustainable management and conservation of fisheries resources;
   - Monitoring ecosystems, reducing the carbon footprint and conserving biodiversity.

4. **Research and Innovation** (Not identified as one of the five EC themes)
   - Traditional and emerging sectors;
   - Marine resources;
   - Basic and applied research;
   - Research infrastructure.

5. **Attractiveness of the territories** (Not identified in the EC Communication, may be linked to Theme 5 “Socially inclusive growth”)
   - Tourism and Atlantic culture;
   - Developing nautical activities;
   - Social issues: training of the labour force, etc.;
   - Strengthening the competitiveness of SMEs in the hinterland of the Atlantic area and networking (clustering).
## 1. Accessibility and transport

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<tr>
<th>Proposed actions</th>
<th>Planned funding/capitalisation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ENCOURAGING A MODAL SHIFT:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Atlantic rail corridor connected to logistical platforms and regional ports</td>
<td>Interreg Capitalise on the CFA-EFFIPLAT and START Projects Connecting Europe Facility</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Support for the rapid conclusion to the TEN-T priority project 16 (rail freight link Sines/Algeciras-Madrid-Paris), upgrading rail sections and links with Atlantic ports</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Improvement of transport intermodality across the Atlantic seaboard</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Strengthening of the rail links between ports and the hinterland</td>
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<td>- Multi-modal transport infrastructures that improve the transfer of goods to the sea (combating modal imbalance)</td>
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<td>- Development of a smart specialisation strategy in the field of transport safety technology</td>
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<td><strong>REINFORCING PORT CAPACITY:</strong></td>
<td>FEDER Connecting Europe Facility Horizon 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Development and renovation of port areas</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Smart diversification of Atlantic shipyards</td>
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<td>- Port infrastructure linked to the transport of CO$_2$</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ATLANTIC RAIL CORRIDOR</strong></td>
<td>Connecting Europe Facility EIB Ex: Mersey Multimodal Gateway 3MG Capitalise on the Ulysses Project Capitalise on the CFA-EFFIPLAT Project</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Identification of a genuine priority Atlantic corridor in the framework of the Central Network of the Tran-European Transport Network (TEN-T)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Strengthening of the motorways of the sea between the Atlantic ports</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Promotion of the consultation on the Atlantic level for the development of short sea shipping</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>DEVELOPING VERY HIGH-SPEED DIGITAL AREAS</strong></td>
<td>Cohesion Fund COSME Connecting Europe Facility Capitalise on the ERNACT Project</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Network of industrial and logistical business parks in the Atlantic Arc and correlated communication networks</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Enhancing accessibility to broadband networks and information technology and communication (ICT) for the peripheral areas of the Atlantic</td>
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</table>
### 2. Economy and maritime industry

#### Proposed actions

<table>
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<tr>
<th>MRE</th>
<th>MRE resource mapping in the Atlantic area</th>
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**Experimentation**

- Promotion of the development of pilot project on new technologies in marine renewable energy (tidal energy, wave energy, salinity gradients, etc)
  - Development of sites for the experimentation of systems for offshore installations

**Network of actors**

- Network of clusters on Marine Renewable Energy in the Atlantic
- Creation of a transnational cooperation network on MRE (Networking between Regions, economic agencies and development agencies for marine energies)

**Develop the energy network**

- Speeding up of the transition of floating offshore wind turbines to the marketing phase by creating a specially dedicated sea area for the deepwater installation of offshore wind farms with an installed capacity of 1000 MW
  - Integration of MRE in a smart specialisation strategy for the Atlantic
- Large-scale renewable energy storage tank and hydroelectric generation (North West Atlantic) + supplying to UK grid

#### Planned funding/capitalisation

- FEDER
- Marco Polo
- Interreg
- COSME
- Horizon 2020

Capitalise on the Atlantic Power Cluster (APC) Project

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### MARITIME INDUSTRIES

- Diversification and differentiation of shipyards in the Atlantic area to new markets
- Adoption of an internationalisation plan for the nautical sector across the Atlantic area (cf. “Nautical Sector” heading detailed below)
- Reduction of the Atlantic’s carbon footprint: Promote energy efficiency through innovating actions in the shipbuilding sector that are adapted to the various types of vessels (commercial, fishing etc)
- Development of the Economy of the Sea (infrastructure and skills, including the creation of a centre of excellence for the economy of the sea)

- FEDER, EMFF, LeaderShip 2020
- Cf. The CPMR’s initiative “Maritime industries for Blue Growth”
### NAUTICAL SECTOR

- Structuring of the nautical sector (leisure industry) factor of economic development and social cohesion in the Atlantic

- Development of an Atlantic nautical sector that is strong, creates jobs and is anchored in sustainable development:
  
  * Support for business development (innovation, export, corporate structuring)
  * Creation of a genuine destination for nautical tourism (expanding nautical product lines)
  * Introduction of tools (promotional measures at trans-national level)

- Development of nautical practices as a tool for tourism development, attractiveness and inclusion:
  
  * Contribution to the development of the culture and the maritime identity of the populations (accessibility, career promotion, organisation of the sector, training)
  * Strengthening of the maritime image and attractiveness (broadcasting of major nautical events, business know-how, sports)

- Support for the development, structuring and internationalisation of Atlantic nautical sector (networking, clustering, cooperation, etc.)

### FISHERIES - AQUACULTURE

- Identification of adequate maritime areas for the development of aquaculture

- Feasibility studies on the co-existence of different offshore activities (fisheries, MRE, etc.) in collaboration with the actors concerned
  
  - Training on new marine cultures and new production methods
  - Sustainable development of oyster farming and seaweed farming for food purposes

- Help with the implementation of the eco-system approach on fisheries in order to improve resource management (including the calculation of fishing quotas) and to take greater consideration of their socio-economic impact

- Promote the development of criteria for sustainable fisheries and aquaculture in order to enhance the sustainability of supported projects (standard for sustainable fisheries and aquaculture)
  
  - Encourage quality labels and eco-labelling of fisheries and aquaculture products
  - Monitoring of fisheries resources and a systematic collection of technical and socioeconomic information on small-scale fishing

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**EMFF**

**ESF**

**Interreg**

**Capitalise on the NEA2 Project**

**Current EMFF (axis 4 EFF)**

**ESF**

**Interreg**

**FEDER**

**Horizon 2020**
**FISHERIES – AQUACULTURE (Cont.)**

- Experiences in participatory management to include all actors involved in the management of fisheries and aquaculture, in particular by promoting collaborative projects
  - Development of marketing plans and enhancing the value of products
  - Improvement of the selectivity of fisheries, through technical innovation
- Strengthening partnerships between scientists, fishermen and fish farmers, particularly through the development of knowledge tools
- Strengthening of the economic and social link between fisheries, aquaculture and the territories, particularly through the promotion of sustainable development of aquaculture and fisheries-dependent areas (axis 4 EFF)
- Development of fisheries and the fishing & aquaculture industry, promotion of species with low commercial value
- Development of the Economy of the Sea (infrastructure and skills, including the creation of a Centre of Excellence for the Sea economy)

Maintenance and improvement of port services offered to fisheries professionals

**Current EMFF (axis 4 EFF)**
- ESF
- Interreg
- FEDER
- Horizon 2020
<table>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ANTI-POLLUTION MEASURES</strong></td>
<td>FEDER, Interreg, Horizon 2020, FEAMP</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Combating toxin-producing anthropogenic phytoplankton contaminants</td>
<td>Capitalise on the PORTONOVO Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Development of monitoring systems for the maritime area (ships and pollution)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Research work on floating waste (origin, collection, treatment, recovery)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Taking into account eco-system analysis in marine spatial planning and environmental monitoring (possibility of testing the eco-system approach on pilot sites: Bay of Biscay and Gulf of Cadiz)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Limiting the spread of invasive alien species linked to ballast water management and implement a transnational coordination programme to develop common guidelines for ballast water management</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Improvement of water treatment and waste management in the fishing ports</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Organisation of the Regions: Information, support and preparation of Local Authorities, identification of risk areas</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Preventive measures and information on the issue of the loss of containers</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>PREVENTING AND MANAGING DISASTERS</strong></td>
<td>FEDER, Interreg, IMP, EMFF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Implementation of management and medical response systems to emergency situations and disasters</td>
<td>Capitalise on the PORTONOVO and ANCORIM Projects</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Research work to reduce coastal pollution following shipping accidents (modelling, urban discharges, unintentional transport of bacteria, etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Prevention of collisions at sea particularly on aspects of training/knowledge sharing on the respective operation and constraints of the bridges of fishing and merchant marine vessels</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Management/prevention of coastal risk linked to climate change (ANCORIM approach)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>INTEGRATED COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT AND INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT OF THE MARITIME AREA</strong></td>
<td>Horizon 2020 (ESFRI), ESF, Interreg, EMFF, LIFE +</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Ocean observation platforms: European Atlantic Coast Observatory (in line with the list of ESFRI infrastructures)</td>
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<td>- Network of centres of maritime excellence</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Spatial database on the coastal and Atlantic marine environment, support for ICZM (INSPIRE Directive)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Programmes to coordinate information gathering</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Programme to support the adaptation of regional fishing harbours to the effects of climate change</td>
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### OF THE MARITIME AREA (Cont.)

- Implementation of an integrated Atlantic approach for wetland management, including enhancing the traditional economic activities of these areas
  - Exchange of practice and references on the ICZM approach
- Consideration of joint activities, in particular the impact of activities linked to marine energies on other activities (exploitation of algae notably)

### MONITORING ECOSYSTEMS

- Network of Marine Protected Area (MPA): focus on this network as a tool to ensure the sustainability of fisheries
  - Sharing experiences on MPA management and identification of areas requiring special protection (continuing the momentum of the MAIA project)
    - Bio-prospecting of living marine resources (bio-technologies)
  - Environmental impact assessment of the mining of underwater minerals
- Monitoring the concentration of parameters that indicate the ecological status of bodies of transitional and coastal waters
  - Mapping /monitoring of benthic habitats (MESHATLANTIC and REBENT approaches)
- Conservation of marine biodiversity: development of knowledge, education/awareness of the public and of users, specific protection measures
- Monitoring the impact of climate change on Atlantic ecosystems and biodiversity, including forests (adaptation of the forests in the Atlantic area to climate change: REINFORCE approach)

### MANAGEMENT AND CONSERVATION OF FISHERIES RESOURCES

- Adjusting the load capacity of a support for the development of aquaculture, or vice versa, the best estimate of aquaculture production in a given environment, without altering the environmental conditions
  - Integrated and detailed use (across the Atlantic basin) of statistical and administrative information available on fishing (including small-scale fishing) and aquaculture
- Creation of early warning systems for threats to aquaculture facilities in order to identify these threats before they cause any major economic loss
- Investigation into the source of the increase in the concentration of pollutants in sediments and in the flesh of marine species used for human consumption and its potential impact on aquaculture marine systems

FEDER, EMFF, Horizon 2020, Interreg Capitalise on MAIA, MESHATLANTIC, REBENT and REINFORCE Projects
### 4. Research and innovation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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| **BASIC AND APPLIED RESEARCH** | Interreg, Horizon 2020  
Capitalise on the Seas-Era Project (WP6: Atlantic Region)  
Capitalise on the MARNET Project  
Vasco Da Gama Initiative (CPMR) |
| - Support for the establishment of Maritime Universities (variety of different courses) |  |
| - Synergies between researchers, training establishments and industry in line with a multi-sector approach |  |
| - Bringing together industries and research and educational institutions located in different regions through cooperation platforms/virtual groups  
  - Strengthening of technical training across the Atlantic Arc  
  - Research into the exploration of the seabed  
- Assessment of the potential for carbon storage in the geological formations under the seabed  
- Creation of an observatory to study the socio-economic impact of the maritime sector (MARNET approach) |  |
| **MARINE RESOURCES** | EMFF, IMP, Horizon 2020 |
| - Support for maritime research on issues relating to the biodiversity of marine resources (fishing, mining, etc) |  |
| - Installation of prototype multi-purpose floating platforms in pilot areas, useful for the scientific monitoring of marine resources |  |
| **TRADITIONAL AND EMERGING SECTORS** | Horizon 2020, Life  
Capitalise on the Ecomare project  
And BIOTECMAR, MAREMED, NETALGAE projects |
| - Use of biomass found in microalgae-rich waste water  
  - Systems for monitoring fishing activities, common/compatible technologies for a better understanding of resources and contribution to the sustainability of this activity - fishing vessels suitable for fishing that is more energy-efficient, more environmentally-friendly and more respectful of the working conditions and safety of men on board  
- Cooperation on oyster and shellfish mortality through the establishment of reinforced partnerships between scientists and professionals  
  - Marine research projects aiming to improve and promote sea-food products  
- Biotechnology enhancement of marine products and co-products, including algae resources  
- CO$_2$ capture projects in intensive industrial clusters emitting carbon: Ex.: CO$_2$ capture by seaweed farming  
- Development of a sustainable economic seaweed farming/macro-algae sector (notably edible algae sector) |  |
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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ATLANTIC TOURISM AND CULTURE</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Development of maritime tourism and promotion of the Atlantic as a multi-national touri</td>
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<td>destination (Ex: creation of tourist guides on the Atlantic)</td>
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<td>- Development of the Atlantic maritime culture as a vector of endogenous development</td>
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<td>- Creation of a new model for quality tourism development</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Development of the area, quality of agricultural products from the Atlantic Regions</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Economic and tourism conservation and promotion of the material and immaterial Atlantic maritime heritage (traditional boats, lighthouses, former shipyards, small heritage ports, traditional maritime skills, marine gastronomy, maritime literature and music, etc)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Conservation of the natural and cultural heritage, creation of areas reserved for surfing in the framework of maritime spatial planning</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Ecotourism (Ecosal Atlantis): sustainable tourism based on the heritage of Atlantic salt-producing areas</td>
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<td>- Protection, preservation and showcasing of megalithic heritage sites and defence of the landscapes of the Atlantic Region</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Protection and recognition of the undersea archaeological heritage (fragile and high risk): Establishing adequate protection of underwater heritage, location, identification and promotion Mapping of underwater archaeological heritage</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>INDICATORS</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Development of analysis systems and common indicators that aim to measure the impact of tourism activities on the growth of Atlantic territories (can be developed within the framework of the Observatory of Atlantic Territories)</td>
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<td><strong>DEVELOPING NAUTICAL ACTIVITIES</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Supporting innovation in the nautical sector: development of the nautical sector of the future in the Atlantic area: new practices, boats and support for activities, services, ports, nautical bases and sites, etc (cf. Point 2, “Nautical Sector”)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Promotion of Atlantic cruises and cruise tourism</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Evaluation and development of sport fishing as a sustainable business opportunity for new socially inclusive growth in coastal areas</td>
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### SOCIAL AND TRAINING ISSUES

- Development of maritime and nautical education of young people from the Atlantic areas: establish programmes aimed at schools to raise awareness, for sailing in open waters and an environmental watch for young people.

- Support for programmes aiming to strengthen the safety of men on board and vessels, especially in regard to collision issues in areas of heavy maritime traffic.

- Improving training and recognition for maritime professions in order to develop the attractiveness of maritime careers.

- Development of the Atlantic European mobility of those who are learning in the maritime sector.
  - Support for the establishment of Maritime Universities, a variety of different courses in the maritime sector (not only for higher education).

- Creation of training that helps the adaptation of skills and qualifications to the Marine Renewable Energies sector and networking of this training across the Atlantic Area. Workshops and training courses (initial and further training) linked to fishing professions (including small-scale).

- Protection, preservation and showcasing of the heritage linked to traditional forms of fishing.
  - Heightening public awareness on the conservation of marine and coastal areas.

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**FEDER, EMFF, Interreg, COSME, ESF**

Capitalise on the NEA2 project

Vasco Da Gama Initiative (CPMR)
Conclusions:

1. Operationalise the Atlantic Strategy by taking into consideration the Atlantic Arc Commission Proposals

The Atlantic Regions, which have made a significant contribution to the adoption of a European integrated Strategy for the Atlantic Arc, request that the process that they have launched can develop operationally whilst taking into account their specific proposals in the future Action Plan of the Atlantic Strategy. Through these suggestions for actions and investment priorities, the Atlantic Regions intend to align the bottom-up approach (from the territories to the institutions) and the top-down approach (from the institutions to the territories) and thus to maximise the impact of the actions carried out in the framework of the Atlantic Strategy.

In addition, the Atlantic Arc Commission underlines that these proposals are the result of very significant consolidation work, stemming from an internal consultation launched in June 2012, with its 21 Member Regions in conjunction with the other networks of the Atlantic Arc. Thanks to these extensive internal and external consultations, the Atlantic Arc Commission was able to gather together proposals from various regional Atlantic actors in order to extract the transnational dimension from them and thus work for the development of the Atlantic Arc in its entirety.

Since the adoption of the EC Communication, the Atlantic Arc Commission has resolutely focused on the operationalisation of the Atlantic Strategy to make this Strategy a reality on the ground. This document is tangible proof of the willingness of the Atlantic Regions to move towards operational achievements and thus fulfil the ambitions expressed within the Atlantic Arc Commission for over 23 years.

2. Implement sound multi-sector and multi-level Atlantic governance

Beyond its ability to put across a summary of the proposals from its Member Regions, the Atlantic Arc Commission, in its capacity as a Forum of Atlantic Regions, helps promote ownership, networking between stakeholders, generate ideas for projects, engage the private sector and establish a functional link between European decision-makers and the territories in which these policies are implemented.

In light of this, the Atlantic Arc Commission expresses its willingness to be included in any new governance structure that will be established following the adoption of the Action Plan in 2013 in order to represent the Atlantic Regions in it. By its very nature, the Atlantic Arc Commission promotes an ambitious vision of the Atlantic Macro-Region, based on over 23 years of experience on which the European institutions can and should capitalise in order to ensure real ownership of European policies by the stakeholders in the territories.

The Atlantic Arc Commission’s objective is to work for better integration of the Atlantic Regions, to foster their economic, social and territorial cohesion. Thus, the Atlantic Arc Commission responds to the European ambition promoted by macro-regions and sea basin strategies: to do better and more together, in a coordinated and integrated manner, around a shared natural and cultural area.
3. Take action now!

The Atlantic Arc Commission stresses that the **time frame for the preparation and adoption of the Action Plan before the start of the new programming period (2014-2020) is particularly limited**. The added value of this Strategy is based on its integrated dimension. In order for the investment priorities identified in the Action Plan to be delivered in the form of specific projects across the Atlantic Arc from 2014, it will be crucial to be able to coordinate the different possible sources of financing whilst capitalising on the existing experiences in the Atlantic Arc.

The Atlantic Arc Commission’s contribution acknowledges this reality. For this reason, we invite the European Commission to rely on the various existing Atlantic networks (Atlantic Arc Commission, CAAC, ATN, AC3A, RUOA, etc) in order to mobilise all the actors, whether they be the managers of regional operational programmes, potential project leaders, the university and research sector, socio-professionals, the private sector etc. Our objective, just as that of the European Institutions, is to mobilise all stakeholders in the Atlantic Arc, as quickly as possible, with the aim of being able to start implementing structuring projects from 2014. **The experience of the Atlantic Arc Commission and other Atlantic networks is a prerequisite for the success of the Atlantic Strategy on the ground, for everyone’s benefit.**

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6 CAAC: Conference of Atlantic Arc Cities
ATN: Atlantic Trans-national Network
AC3A: Association of Agriculture Chambers of the Atlantic Arc
RUOA: Network of Universities of the Western Atlantic