ACTION PLAN
FOR THE OUTERMOST REGION OF
SAINT MARTIN
2014-2020
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Summary

Introductory words by the President

Territorial component: SAINT MARTIN

INTRODUCTION........................................................................................................................................... 1
GENERAL CONTEXT......................................................................................................................................... 2
Boosting human investment......................................................................................................................... 3
Institutional development and governance.................................................................................................. 6
The definition of tools to achieve better results......................................................................................... 11
Determining the new economic opportunities............................................................................................. 16
Cooperation.................................................................................................................................................... 22
Conclusion..................................................................................................................................................... 23
Territorial component: Saint Martin

Introduction

The island of Saint Martin has been divided into two sectors since 1648, both being placed under different national sovereignties. This distinctive feature is responsible for a major part of the uniqueness and the problems of this territory as regards the political, administrative, economic, social and cultural issues.

This secular division has not prevented the two national communities, the French and the Dutch, from living in peace and harmony for centuries, owing to the general principles established by the Franco-Dutch "sharing Treaty". People have been desperately seeking to provide this perfect cooperation-based model with a formal setting in keeping with the contemporary world. The world has changed immensely over the last 364 years and is now changing at a hallucinating speed. As a result of the various transformations that have been upsetting the traditional balances of Saint Martin and Sint Maarten for many years now people can no longer rely on the virtues of the principles, customs, practices and traditions of yesterday to solve the problems of today.

Since that far-distant time, the French party has become a territory of the French Republic, established as an overseas collectivity (OC) with autonomy in February 2007. It was formerly an overseas municipality, attached to the department of Guadeloupe after 1946 and an overseas region of Guadeloupe since 1983. Under this heading it is subject to precise yet complex rules. Formerly a constituent part of the local and regional authorities of the Netherlands Antilles, enjoying a great deal of domestic autonomy since 1955 and covered by the sovereignty of the Netherlands, the Dutch part has been an autonomous country within the Kingdom of the Netherlands since 10 October 2010. The regulations applied are not the same as those covering the French part. These new statutes have created complex legal constraints which must now be observed by both parties and significant differences remain.

When the actual situations change the ways of dealing with them should also change.
THE GENERAL BACKGROUND

August 2012 was the date the first economic and social conference was held in Saint Martin since the territory became an outermost region (OR) in 2007.

In September 2012, the elected representatives defined and published their political project whose scope covered the years up to 2030.

In December of the same year, the overseas collectivity of St Martin made a review of the strengths and weaknesses of the territory, identifying the development priorities and the strategic guidelines of the Community in the economic, social and cultural fields. This is scheduled to give rise to an action plan. Saint Martin's unique situation is characterised by land and sea borders and its action plan will seek to overcome the border-related disadvantages by experimenting with new forms of public measures and governance.

First conclusion: Saint Martin is one of the least-developed regions of France. We need to find ways to make up for this lack of facilities.

In the international context of a recession which has not spared Saint Martin, and in a territorial context where expectations are still high, time is of the essence for individuals, for the social and professional categories, for the community and for the territory as a whole.

The development of an action plan for the OC of Saint Martin highlights areas where this territory should concentrate its efforts, mindful of its serious lack of basic facilities, accentuated by strong population growth.

The collectivity can be developed only by structural improvements and hence the need to focus development efforts on the construction and adaptation of public facilities. This does not mean calling into question the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy, but gearing the investment priorities to the real needs of our outermost region.

Hence the activities of the OC of Saint Martin will focus on the high expectations of all levels of society, reflecting the projections taking into account the question of our future as an overseas collectivity while legitimately aspiring for real economic development. The opportunities for meeting all these challenges are all set out in this Action Plan. More specifically, we need to build a confident and determined society, driven by its indigenous energy, underpinned by the opportunities offered by an open-minded attitude to the world.
Freedom, dynamism, a constant search for excellence, sharing, solidarity and consensus are the key components for moving closer to achieving this aim.

In recent years, private sector investment in Saint Martin has remained relatively low compared to other areas in the sub-region. However, the territory's geostrategic position and social stability are in themselves major assets and should, therefore be, essential to sustainable development. However, the situation in the territory of Saint Martin, forming part of the French Republic, is such to make its competitiveness position difficult. The problems include wage costs up to four times higher than in the Dutch part of the island or five times higher than for the other neighbouring territories. Saint Martin thus needs to find ways to compete in terms of attractiveness.

Our goal today must be to develop an action plan capable of identifying the face and the shape of Saint Martin over the next 20 years to be inherited by future generations.

To achieve this, four guiding themes are relevant: strengthening human investment, institutional development and governance, defining tools to achieve better results, determining new economic opportunities. Each of these themes will be worked out on the basis of several variations.

1. Strengthening human investment

Saint Martin has chosen to invest first and above all in people.

Description of the current situation:

The world is now faced with an increasingly-competitive environment. In this connection, while the collectivity of Saint Martin seeks to increase its competitiveness, it should take steps to ensure the emergence of high-quality human resources. Another focus of our activities is on investing more in people. Education and training provide tools for improving the quality of human resources, which is a prerequisite for building an evolving or developing Saint Martin economy.

The Saint Martin education system boasts many achievements in terms of policy options and new educational developments. If these achievements were to be implemented in full a holistic education system could be developed that has a vision consistent with the geographical region and the requirements of the world of tomorrow. But the Collectivity does not have these enablers.
Our cherished aspiration is for education's ultimate aim to be to make young people in Saint Martin citizens who are responsible, productive and creative and to ensure their full and harmonious development, in the four dimensions of knowledge: knowledge, know-how, people skills and knowing how to live together. Our challenge will be to respond to the requirements of coordination, access, improving quality and the mobilisation of resources from the basic education system.

It should be fairly easy for Saint Martin's education system to become a leading-edge educational policy. Above all, it could boast many breakthrough innovations arising as real alternatives to the existing education system. Our governance will focus on ensuring these innovations are on the scale required to regenerate our education system.

**Descriptions of the objectives to be achieved:**

**1/ Developing structures for reducing early school leaving and offering new opportunities for qualifications and inclusion.**

The idea is to facilitate the creation in the territory of structures offering young people new opportunities for qualifications and inclusion.

Traditional teaching is inconsistent with the profiles of many young people leaving school without qualifications. It is important to allow them access to alternative learning methods that are better adapted to their profiles.

- **ERDF priority measures**
  * Creation of structures such as the second-chance school, family and rural centres (FRM), the specially adapted military service scheme.

**2/ Developing university courses to raise the level of education**

Saint Martin, despite its high school population, does not benefit from post-baccalaureate structures capable of meeting the immediate needs of students. The idea is to overcome this shortage by creating structures to accommodate students from preparatory classes, students eager to go to university via a diploma allowing access to university studies (DAEU) and/or a basic legal qualification. In addition, these structures will also offer training — Bachelor’s or even master’s degrees.

Develop post-baccalaureate training geared to the needs of the territory to allow people to acquire suitable knowledge and know-how prior to employment or continuing university studies.

Steps should also be taken to ensure the long-term viability of support measures for students obliged to leave the territory owing to the weak or non-existent university training facilities.

- **ERDF priority actions**
  * Promoting post-baccalaureate structures (e.g. partnerships with universities)

- **ESF priority actions**
  * Support measures for students
  * Post-baccalaureate training (university) in priority areas
3/Developing out-of-classroom or extra-curricular activities in association with the education stakeholders (national education, associations, parents)

We must develop out-of-classroom or extra-curricular activities in association with the education stakeholders (national education, associations, parents, etc.)

The reform of teaching calls for a better coordination of school and out-of-classroom times so that no child is left without support. Children need to be able to use out-of-classroom time for sports, cultural and artistic activities that will develop their intellectual curiosity and enable them to discover knowledge and interests that are new and enhance their pleasure in learning and taking part in the school environment.

ESF priority actions

* Homework support measures (educational support in a group or customised)
* Socio-cultural and sporting activities for children in the framework of the territorial educational project

4/Developing measures to encourage access to training and skills training for young people and jobseekers

Careers guidance and training professionals report major differences between the projected level and the actual level of jobseekers. These differences need to be properly assessed to develop more effective training paths and prevent them being interrupted. Effective tools are needed to assess capabilities enabling skills training and employment in due course.

Subsequently, under the heading of the Vocational Territory Training Development Plan Contract (CPTDFP), skills and vocational training courses should be developed to meet the social demand and business needs. The ultimate objective is to develop vocational training for the benefit of employment.

- ESF priority actions

* Skills assessment
* DIALE, MJED-style systems,
* Group training for young people and jobseekers (territorial programme...)

5/Developing work-linked training for occupational integration

Work-linked training involves vocational training with its special features combining training periods in a training centre and the business environment. An excellent passport for employment with a tremendous job placement rate, work-linked training should be promoted in the territory.

It is essential for the territory to offer a choice of training ranging from level V to level III or further. The development of training in a work and study system requires a strong partnership with the professional bodies in order to adapt the courses to the needs of trainees and businesses.

In addition, it is necessary to support the mobility of young people undergoing work-linked training in view of the inadequate local training services by establishing partnerships outside the territory and strengthening the support arrangements.
6/Facilitating the establishment of the research laboratory

Saint Martin suffers from structural disadvantages linked to its remoteness, island status and the small size of its territory, exacerbated by a strong demographic pressure.

In the case of research and higher education, the area does not have any higher education establishment and therefore local university education services. In order to meet the market challenges and the present and future challenges of the territory, it is necessary to develop high-skilled professionals and researchers.

Postgraduate studies and training for researchers need to be developed, in particular through partnerships with higher education establishments.

- ERDF-ESF priority actions

* Promote the development of post-graduate studies and the establishment of research laboratories (in particular through investment support in the field of research).

2. Institutional development and governance

Social and economic progress and good governance are self-reinforcing processes.

Description of the current situation:

Owing to its well-known stability and social cohesion Saint Martin could benefit from a major development potential and a more encouraging business environment. However, in recent years private-sector investment has remained relatively low compared with other areas in the sub-region. Nevertheless, the geostrategic position and social stability are in themselves huge assets and, consequently, essential for sustainable development.

All the stops therefore have to be pulled out to contribute to the success and to the acceleration of the process of developing Saint Martin's shared prosperity and this is reflected in the “Saint Martin Action Plan” to determine the scope of spatial development. It will ensure the strengthening of existing financing instruments as well as the Collectivity's enhanced capacity.
Political stability and social cohesion are preconditions for galvanising economic activity in the OC of Saint Martin. The Saint Martin, economy notwithstanding its extreme vulnerability to external shocks and climate hazards, should be geared to sustained growth.

We will emphasise the need to promote high-quality environmentally-friendly growth that creates jobs and income.

Civil Protection will be given special attention in order to develop a more proactive approach and increased effectiveness in dealing with the dramatic consequences of the seasonal weather patterns of our geographical area. The disaster management system will be complemented by the adoption of sectoral plans and the operational and organisational capacity-building of civil protection stakeholders on the ground in Saint Martin.

Public security is a major concern for Saint Martin. The OC of Saint Martin, in partnership with the local state services, considers this a priority because it is a precondition for social stability and development.

Several measures will be taken with a determination to promote the stability conducive to the development of income-generating activities and public order. This is an action plan designed to combat insecurity and unrest. The reorganisation of the territory’s security coverage between the territorial police and the national gendarmerie is now a top priority. Security will in any event now be considered a joint responsibility.

In the fields of culture and tourism, Saint Martin has significant assets to develop. In this context, the activities of the OC will aim at structuring and developing the culture and tourism economy, implementing sectoral policies focused on culture and tourism to make these two sectors more able to compete and to make a further contribution to sustainable development. In doing so, efforts will be focused on the development of entrepreneurship and cultural industries and in particular on support for private initiatives, the promotion and protection of cultural heritage, the development of a capacity-building strategy and funding for culture, the upgrading of tourist sites and areas with a viable infrastructure, the promotion of domestic tourism, as a strategic focus for the development of tourism in general, the consolidation of the role of the private sector in the development of tourism and the management of the sector, particularly in the areas of promotion, training and the creation of infrastructure.

In the field of telecommunications, openness to competition will be underpinned by better opportunities and a clear improvement in the provision of services. In our development
strategy, we intend to make ICT a powerful development tool, so as to create the preconditions for building an information society.

Where energy is concerned, Saint Martin's energy balance is characterised by a preponderance of thermally generated electricity, entailing total dependence on hydrocarbons. There is still a clear need to diversify the energy production sources. The new energies approach is unavoidable if the Collectivity is to achieve energy independence in the coming years. Thus the main requirement is for the overseas collectivity to create a strong link between technical and technological innovation and clusters emerging in favour of a competitive economy and sustainable growth.

The development ambitions in this context assume that the private sector is the engine behind the development of our country.

**Description of the objectives to be achieved:**

**1/Promoting the production and distribution of renewable energy sources**

The island of Saint Martin depends on the outside for the production of its electricity essentially based on fossils and this is both costly and environmentally-unfriendly.

With the aim of reducing energy dependence and promoting sustainable development, an examination has to be made of the possibilities for the production and distribution of new renewable energy sources.

The challenge is to reduce the share of fossil fuels in the energy mix, exploring the development of the different sectors (wind, onshore and offshore, photovoltaic and other inter-island modes).

Plans to install wind farms or solar parks have been difficult to achieve up to now, because of the shortage of land and environmental protection concerns in such a small territory dependent on the tourist industry.

- **ERDF priority actions**
  * Feasibility studies on “renewable energies”
    (wind farm, turbine or other inter-island modes)

**2/Promoting energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy.**

The effort to raise awareness among individuals and businesses, through communication campaigns, about the need to curb energy consumption must be maintained and carried out on a permanent basis. Efforts also need to be continued to reduce energy consumption in public buildings (model).

Incentives may be introduced to persuade individuals and businesses to reduce their energy consumption, in particular via financial arrangements. Initial and continuing training paths focused on renewables have to be developed within the territory.
Finally, support should be given for the implementation of transport schemes for integrating sustainable mobility (public transport, car-sharing, multimodal systems, etc.).

- **ERDF priority actions**
  * Studies on alternatives to personal cars
  * Promotion measures, awareness-raising and development
  * Development of the cargo port to receive (store) containers (better carbon balance)

3/ **Supporting investments for adapting to climate change and taking account of natural hazards**

This involves supporting investments for the prevention of natural hazards related to rainwater managed together with the ecosystems of outstanding lakes.

The island of Saint Martin has on its perimeter 16 outstanding lakes classified as Ramsar areas and protected by a BIOTOP decree. These lakes are all located at the bottom of a catchment area (rainwater) in an urbanised area environment. They need to be organised, in particular by means of facilities outlets.

Emphasis should be put on the treatment of rainwater run-offs via grading and the creation of networks for the protection of people in urbanised areas.

Moreover, as regards earthquake risk prevention, reinforcement work for the PABs is to be carried out on the basis of the existing assessments. Saint Martin is covered by the Antilles earthquake plan and in this respect, all schools as well as some public establishments have undergone prior assessments. The results confirm that the work is to be undertaken in more than half of the buildings, with complete restructuring work for some of them.

- **ERDF priority actions**
  * Construction of outlets
  * Creating anti-earthquake standards for public buildings
  * Treating the flow of rainwater in urban areas (studies on assessing risks and works)

4/ **Improving the population's resilience in disaster situations**

Risk prevention and management related to natural disasters (risks of hurricanes, earthquakes, flooding, etc.) are essential issues for the territory. In addition to first aid training and training on how to behave in case of disasters, emphasis should be put on the resilience of the population through awareness-raising campaigns and training.

- **ESF priority actions**
  * Actions to improve resilience and behaviour in relation to risks
  * Training in the operational management of risks and disasters

5/ **Meeting the huge needs for investment in the waste sector**
Local sorting and recovery systems need to be developed. A first waste reception centre has been created in Marigot and a sorting centre is planned for the Grandes Cayes site.

Thought is also going to be given to specialised networks (processing derelict vehicles, pollution control and recovery of spare parts, storage and processing public work waste, etc.).

In the medium term, the processing systems in place will be insufficient as they are subject to the limitations resulting from size of the territory and the shortage of land. Thought should be given to the installation of an incinerator in conjunction with the Dutch part.

- **ERDF priority actions**
  
  * Rehabilitation of landfill sites (processing system)
  * Creation of waste reception centres
  * Preparation of the territorial waste development scheme

- **ESF priority actions**
  
  * Awareness-raising campaign, information campaign on selective sorting, eco-citizenship,

6/ **Meeting the huge needs for investment** in the water sector

- **Production and distribution of drinking water**

  The production of drinking water is based on sea water desalination. Obsolete networks are less than 50% efficient, which raises the price of water to a very high level (EUR 10 /m³). It is therefore important to boost infrastructure to achieve higher efficiency in the region of 80%.

  The huge level of investment cannot be borne by the water charges only. The SDAEP is planning on investments to the tune of EUR 25 million.

- **Collection and treatment of waste water**

  The run-down purification station in the Orléans district has given rise to a European dispute, the revised waste water purification master plan, adopted in May 2013, sets the scene for a disaster situation for the infrastructure under this heading: 5 treatment plants to be created, the corresponding collection and transport networks; However, rehabilitation is a precondition for the building operation. The SDAEU is planning an investment to the tune of €63 million.

- **ERDF priority actions**
  
  * Reorganisation and treatment of rainwater
  * Drainage and treatment of waste water
  * Production and supply of drinking water

7/ **Protecting, promoting and developing the cultural heritage**

  The cultural heritage represents the very identity of a country and its people, whether architectural, linguistic, artistic, folk or intangible. Its protection, its promotion and its development is essential.

  Our island has a wealth of traditional structures and historical monuments that should be conserved. The cultural heritage, including dance, storytelling, cooking, the common language and music, must be disseminated
in the schools and districts by the institutions and the voluntary sector. The accessibility of cultural heritage inevitably involves the rehabilitation or even enhancement of the built-up heritage (Fort Louis, the St Jean sugar works, the Spring sugar works, the Moho engraved rocks, churches). This enhancement approach also involves the territory's tourism development strategy.

- **ERDF priority actions**
  
  * Developing and rehabilitating the built-up heritage (e.g. historical buildings and sites, crafts market, etc.)

  * Enhancement of the cultural heritage

### 3. Defining tools to achieve better results.

**Description of the current situation: sustainable tourism.**

The sustainable tourism project is part of a drive towards sustainable development and seeks to make Saint Martin a pilot area for a new concept, a new vision and a new culture aimed at developing a rational and sustainable form of tourism to meet the quality needs of increasingly demanding customers, while taking account of the needs of the host country and commitments regarding the conservation of natural resources and the socio-cultural and historical heritage.

This new approach also gives rise to the development of parallel programmes to underpin this initiative of key importance to a mono industry, tourism, the backbone of the Saint Martin economy, which is essentially based on services.

  a. The construction of an international hotel training establishment. Saint Martin is at the crossroads of the Greater and Lesser Antilles and is also a place boasting a natural multilingualism, the gourmet capital of the Caribbean, all assets that will help to boost this sustainable tourism approach.

  b. The development of organic farming providing luxury hotels with fresh local products. This organic farming project would accompanied with a rural family centre whose key theme will promote an agricultural policy, based on well-being and putting ecosystems at the heart of its policies and actions.

**Description of the objectives to be achieved:**

Under the tourism strategy, the territorial collectivity will promote projects involving innovative hotels in terms of the concept (services offered to customers) and their integration into the environment (key principles of sustainable development).

This project is part of the tourism planning and development scheme 2013-2020, both in principle and in terms of the preparatory work for the next strategic programming process for its actual implementation. It is focused on achieving the structural investments necessary for developing the destination and creating a permanent and sustainable tourist industry.
1/Developing quality tourism products to increase the territory’s appeal

Saint Martin has a tourism strategy corresponding to the tourism planning and development scheme 2010-2015 for improving the quality of the tourist facilities available (accommodation...) and developing new tourism products (accommodation etc.) and reception and leisure facilities (cruises, sailing...) to organise what is on offer from Saint Martin as a destination. The emerging strategy for 2015-2020 seeks the operational implementation of the strategic approaches defined in the first one: achieving the structural investments necessary for developing the destination and developing a permanent and sustainable tourist industry.

Moreover, in the context of a targeted aim, the idea is to support the modernisation of the marketing methods and improve the guest house services. This approach is consistent with the continuing need to adopt an official ranking framework that is specific to this type of identity-creating accommodation in the territory.

2/Facilitating the adaptability of companies and workers

In the current social and economic climate, it is important to facilitate the development of vocational training paths leading to qualifications, designed to enhance people's skills in the context of employment and facilitate mobility where employment breaks occur.

The objective is to promote the adaptability of companies and workers to labour market developments.

Support should be given to individual or group schemes based on professionalization and adapting to developments affecting employees.

Sustainable development is also very important to us. It is a dynamic process helping to improve the welfare of human beings. Economic activity and material welfare remain essential but equally important are protecting the environment, cultural integrity and the impact on demographic trends to ensure sustainability.

Climate change has become a concern considered as an essential component of our development strategy. Towards this end, we, in partnership with the nature reserve association and other environmental associations, are keen to grant the highest priority to the implementation of a territorial environment policy, to the adoption of a legislative framework for a sustainable development strategy, the creation of an administrative and management sustainable development structure in cooperation with civil society and the private sector.
Development of trade and foreign economic relations

The growth drivers for the government of the overseas collectivity of St Martin will be a combination of undertakings, services, training centres and different activities, engaged in a dynamic partnership process for the purpose of creating a sound economic fabric conducive to facing up to the competition and creating a labour market area for attracting new activities.

In recent years, events affecting the territory have sapped the morale of investors. We need to convince and reassure people that Saint Martin is still a prime location for investment and the private sector, which is the real driving force behind the economic growth we hope to achieve by 2020.

Funding is crucial for our economic development. An analysis of the constraints on our economic development showed that a major drawback is the banks still not providing sufficient funds to fuel the economy. We must find ways to address this problem. The OC assumes that a company, once created, forms part of the territory’s economic heritage and must not be abandoned to its financial problems. The local government would like to be able to establish a development fund to support and save very small businesses hardest hit by the crisis but whose high economic potential is identified.

In the short term, the development of small and medium-scale infrastructure will be supported by the establishment of a micro-credit system in order to mobilise alternative funding more effectively.

In addition to identifying growth sectors, we are working on the productive cross-fertilisation of viable economic projects initiated by credible promoters and geared towards promising markets. The aim is to support the development of flexible and innovative SMEs/SMIs producing goods and services, and creating jobs.

In the short term a strategy will be developed and implemented for attracting the foreign direct investment, now urgently needed. This will require more information and promotion campaigns in the large investment markets and support for investors who will be established in the OC of Saint Martin.

In parallel with this strategy of economic openness, our efforts will also be focused on active lobbying to strengthen the position of our high-performance companies enterprise in the sub-region and promoting their more effective integration into the international business network, notably through the organisation of trade missions within the Greater Caribbean region. This should have the effect of increasing employment opportunities, reducing
unemployment, increasing the capacity of entrepreneurs, increasing their access to micro funding and new technologies and thereby promoting regional integration by boosting trade through new approaches. Not forgetting that the idea is also for the Collectivity to strengthen the competitiveness of SMEs by offsetting the additional costs of transporting inputs and outputs.

Description of the objectives to be achieved:

1/Stimulating and facilitating business creation and takeovers

In the current economic context and in the light of the difficulties faced by project promoters, including first-time entrepreneurs, in accessing finance and long-term guidance there is a need to lend support to local initiatives by facilitating the creation, takeover or first-time development of companies (very small companies) in growth sectors in Saint Martin.

The idea is to bolster the efforts made by structures such as Initiatives Saint Martin with decisive financial support granted to those who create and take over businesses. Support should be given to financial engineering schemes, including mechanisms for lending to companies, guarantees facilitating their access to loans and risk capital activities.

- **ERDF priority actions**
  * Financial engineering mechanisms

Promoting sustainable transport and removing bottlenecks in key network infrastructures

2/Modernisation and maintenance of the transport infrastructure (roads, airports, seaports)

- **Improvement of the road network**

  An alarming analysis has been made of the state of the Saint Martin road network that is constantly undergoing aggression as a result of the increasing level of traffic in recent years, overloaded lorries, anti-social conduct, accident history figures.

  The assessment of the condition of the roads takes account of the state of the infrastructure, traffic the overview, hydraulic protection, upgrading horizontal and vertical signs. Digital reporting to supply the imminent GIS. Multi-annual programming specifies each sub-task:

  ➢ Crucial extension of the road network for interconnection with the Dutch part and circumventing the conurbations,
  ➢ Renewal of surfacings,
  ➢ Renewal of fibre cement coatings,
  ➢ Annex on carriageway roads, pavements,
  ➢ Horizontal signs,
  ➢ Vertical signs,

  It is also necessary to maintain the efforts undertaken in the context of public lighting and landfills.
Furthermore, the urban transport plan (PDU) will assess transport policy and transport statistics, in particular the “origin/destination of households” within the territory of Saint Martin. The road master plan provides for an investment to the tune of EUR 30 million.

- **Port infrastructure**

  There is a need to consider the development of Marigot bay, including a quay for accommodating average-size cruise ships, and reception facilities for maxi yachts.

  With the cruise terminal corresponding to the cargo port's loading bay it is essential to proceed with a specific development scheme for receiving cruise passengers whose arrival at the quay is their first tourism experience in the area.

  Furthermore, the Grand Case village gourmet experience suffers from a lack of infrastructure and the degradation of the existing infrastructure to accommodate boaters harms the landscape as well as caterers and retailers for whom these customers have always been important.

  These projects should also be seen in the context of the tourism planning and development scheme 2010-2015 as regards the principle and in the preparatory work for the next strategic planning of its practical implementation

- **ERDF priority actions**
  * Road works (interconnection, circumvention, corresponding network, rehabilitation of roads)
  * Preparation of the urban and interurban transport plan
  * Development of the cargo port
  * Completion of an area earmarked for the reception of cruise passengers
  * The Grand Case bay

**4. Determining the new economic opportunities**

**Description of the current situation:**

Sport and leisure activities now pose eminently political, social and economic challenges. Politically, they are real channels for getting closer to people living in neighbouring territories and for regional integration. On the social front, they contribute to well-being and the strengthening of social cohesion. In economic terms they have become genuine creators of employment and currencies (ex. Jamaica). The OC of Saint Martin has no other alternative but to firmly espouse this vision.

Sustainable development is also very important to us. It is a dynamic process leading to the improvement of human well-being. Economic activity and tangible well-being remain essential but protecting the environment, cultural integrity, demographic trends to ensure sustainability of this are equally important.
Climate change has become a concern to deal with as an essential component of our development strategy. Towards this end, we, in partnership with the nature reserve association and other environmental associations, are keen to grant the highest priority to the implementation of a territorial environment policy, to the adoption of a legislative framework for a sustainable development strategy, the creation of an administrative and management sustainable development structure in cooperation with civil society and the private sector.

In addition to the preservation and management of natural resources, sustainable development also involves the expansion of opportunities for people to gain access to resources and welfare factors promoting equity.

The diverse sources of funding for the economy and the optimisation of the system for mobilising budget resources are factors enabling local government to meet the development funding needs. This strategy is the reference instrument for funding sustainable development in Saint Martin.

The OC seeks to mobilise resources for boosting international cooperation, regional integration, rehabilitation and the promotion of the image of Saint Martin in the Caribbean region, France and the rest of the world.

Saint Martin has improved its policy of openness in recent years and has demonstrated the commitment of its representatives to step up Saint Martin's contribution to the regional integration process and its continuing involvement in the debate on the establishment of the CSM&E (Caribbean Single Market and Economy).

Towards this end, the OC plans to: **strengthen cooperation with Sint Maarten and Anguilla, our two closest neighbours, strengthen its participation in major relevant international fora in the Caribbean region, participate in consolidating the process for solving major crises and combating cross-border crime, the spread of weapons and drugs.**

**Description of the objectives to be achieved:**

- Improving access to information and communication technologies (ICT), their use and quality

1/ Establishing an ambitious “Saint Martin digital” project
Saint Martin faces a significant gap in digital infrastructure (high-speed services, cable broadband services and a very poor quality infrastructure in general).

The objective is to help organise the territory and develop the economy based on information and communication technologies (ICTs). ICTs must serve both businesses and citizens and also enable the modernisation of public services. This project must be broken down into several components (cooperation, development of digital technology in schools, e-government, etc.).

- **ERDF priority actions**
  - Networking of local archives
  - Develop access to SIGs (public and private partners)
  - Creation and improvement of websites, acquisition of software
  - Digital development of a videoconferencing centre

2/Developing open distance learning (ODL) or e-learning

The objective is to develop e-learning and open and distance learning courses (ODL), in particular university courses, to overcome the lack of educational services in the territory and disadvantages connected with its island status.

The opening of the training system to new training schemes and the use of information and communication technologies provides great scope for innovative initiatives with a view to adapting training more closely to the needs of the population.

Indeed, this method of training can respond to a specific need while adapting to the requirements of the public (students, jobseekers, employees, etc.).

- **ESF priority actions**
  - ODL training activities (academics, CNAM, etc.)
  - ODL territorial vocational training programme

- **Promoting employment and supporting labour mobility**

3/Supporting entrepreneurship

As part of the economic revitalisation effort and in order to stimulate the appetite for the creation of activities in Saint Martin, emphasis should be put on creating viable projects and the vital support for promoters throughout their entrepreneurial adventure. The ultimate aim is to increase the survival rate of companies which have passed the point of 3 years of operations and have reached a viable break-even point.

The aim is to support the development of business incubators providing technical and financial support, advice and services to those considering starting a business. This idea is to provide storage or business facilities, shared logistical services and back-up services (advice, training, etc.) for reasonable fees during the first years after the creation of the undertaking.

- **ERDF priority actions**
* Business start-up support
* Creation of business incubators

4/Developing structures coming within the scope of the public employment service

The very high number of jobseekers in the country requires the strengthening of government employment policies.

Within the territory, the Pôle Emploi is the sole body covered by the public employment service. Initially, it will allow the emergence of new structures to further strengthen the entity. During a second stage, it will be necessary to provide its structures with effective tools for offering support and specific follow-up for jobseekers.

- ERDF priority actions

* Creation of structures for the public employment service
* Provide the structures with materials earmarked for the public employment service

5/Developing individual aid for training and mobility as well as supporting the VAE

The current context implies the creation and/or consolidation of financial support schemes for young people and adult jobseekers (as a priority) or employed people in precarious situations so as to define a vocational project by providing individual training leading to qualifications in order to find sustainable employment. The development of appropriate measures in favour of employees assumes an extensive partnership between the different stakeholders, including with approved organisations run jointly by employers and unions.

The validation of acquired experience (VAE) should be encouraged to give the public better social advancement opportunities by making the most of skills people acquire throughout their careers.

Furthermore, the state has now assigned LADOM the responsibility for mobility management. However, it does not meet all the needs resulting from Saint Martin's two-fold insularity. Certain operations required by the integration processes are not covered by those arrangements. Thus, flexible flanking measures need to be established.

- ESF priority actions

* System of individual training aid and bearing the costs ancillary to training (accommodation, transport, catering, etc.)
* Aid system for the mobility of jobseekers (outside the scope of LADOM)
* Measures aimed at promoting and supporting the VAE

6/Resocialising and further mobilising young people furthest from the labour market in order to improve their employability

In the current context support measures are required to ensure the firm labour market integration of young people not working, not studying and not undergoing training.
Many young people do not have any in-company experience enabling them to land a first job. This drawback added to the absence of autonomy and motivation calls for the establishment of effective tools for rehabilitation, lending support in finding employment.

- **ESF priority actions**

  * Initiatives to forge closer links between young people and the business world (like the employment-holiday scheme “lend a hand”)

- **Promoting social inclusion and combating poverty**

  7/Creating social institutions for the coverage of autonomy and educational activities

- **Care for the disabled**

  Saint Martin currently has no structure to lend support to disabled adults. The “children” sector has only one SESSAD (Specialist home education and healthcare service) with 40 places and 8 specialist teaching classes. Cases of people with disabilities being kept at home in inappropriate or even undignified conditions are now being identified. Therefore, the creation of places in the territory is necessary to address the serious lack of structures and services for disabled people.

- **Care for the elderly**

  Saint Martin has a low level of facilities in reception centres for dependent elderly people. The sole EHPAD establishment for accommodating elderly dependent people in Saint Martin proposes 40 beds 3/4 of which are for receiving people originating from the Dutch part and is extremely inconsistent with the current needs of local dependent people. There is therefore a need for additional EHPAD places and for the creation of specific places (people with neuro-degenerative diseases, day care or temporary care).

- **Care for minors at risk**

  The aim is to develop and ensure the quality of the placement services provided by the child social welfare entity. The investment level has to be boosted, whilst ensuring its quality and relevance for the needs of children (creation of places, creation of care “channels”). A child care institution (MECS) which caters for repeated stays has to be created.

- **Local reception facilities in the districts**

  In order to provide a service offering reception facilities, information and guidance or initial care to people in the districts local receptions structures have to be established (solidarity and family centres - MSF).

- **ERDF priority actions**

  * Creation or extension of establishments for the elderly (EHPAD)
  * creation of establishments for young people and disabled adults EMI/IMPRO
  * Creation of reception and care establishments for at-risk minors, MECS
  * Territorial centre for disabled people
  * Creation of “solidarity and family centres in the districts
8/Developing health and social training services to deal with staff shortages or enable people in employment to provide better care services

A shortage of specialist care and reception services and a lack of facilities and staff is reported throughout the territory. The definition of a health and social training development scheme will help with the adoption, consistent with the key needs, of training measures to be established in the short and medium term to deal with the shortage of staff.

This item represents a promising labour market area towards which young people in the territory should be steered.

- Eligible ERDF actions
  * Construction and facilities focused on local health and social training under the health and social training development scheme

- ESF priority actions
  * Initial and continuing training measures for staff in medical and social establishments, particularly with a view to adapting to new professional developments

9/Promoting active inclusion and measures for making people more attentive to the social and solidarity-based economy

The convergence between the supply and demand situation for jobs within the territory highlights the extent to which there is a serious mismatch. Since 2009 there has been a steep rise in the number of jobseekers, particularly among the most vulnerable people, accompanied by sectors experiencing shortages and new promising activities (outreach activities, landscape gardening...). This situation has resulted in a continuing effort to develop the reintegration of people through work (AEI) services in the territory of Saint Martin. It aims to foster the increase in AEI services and, above all, organise the professionalization of the sector through combined objectives in keeping with appropriate inter-institutional cooperation:

- Professionalize IAE stakeholders in the field
- Strengthen the territorial network and the local partnership for the development of the IAE.

- ESF priority actions
  * Guiding support staff benefiting from IAE structures towards positive employment opportunities
  * Strengthening the technical support for the IAE-PFIL structures
  * Awareness-raising campaigns focused on the development of people services
  * Organisation of awareness-raising events and the development of the social and solidarity-based economy
  * Support or coaching activities and bringing people undergoing the reintegration process in contact with companies
  * Organisation of events (of the trade fair kind) related to services and measures preventing insecurity
10/Creation and rehabilitation of playgrounds and local facilities.

Socio-cultural and sporting facilities that are obsolete and therefore no longer meet the standards for engaging in the various disciplines safely. For the development of our young people, the process of practicing sports and being engaged in cultural activities should become a vehicle for integration and for success. The creation of master plans for sports, culture and young people will help in the bid to adopt a coordinated policy with actions defined and the appropriate means for providing all the districts with facilities close at hand.

- ERDF priority actions
  * Creation and work on upgrading sports facilities
  * Construction and refurbishment of local facilities
  * Achieving youth, sport and culture master plans

In addition to the preservation and management of natural resources, sustainable development also involves the expansion of opportunities for people to gain access to resources and welfare factors promoting equity.

To address the challenge of promoting strong growth while respecting the principles of sustainable development we will strengthen the measures for facilities values relating to discipline, probity, transparency and efficiency in the management of public affairs.

The diverse sources of funding for the economy and the optimisation of the system for mobilising budget resources are a factor enabling local government to meet the development finance needs. This strategy is the reference instrument for funding sustainable development in Saint Martin.

- Cooperation:

  The OC seeks to mobilise resources for boosting international cooperation, regional integration, rehabilitation and the promotion of the image of Saint Martin in the Caribbean region, France and the rest of the world.

  Saint Martin has improved its policy of openness in recent years and has demonstrated the commitment of its representatives to step up Saint Martin's contribution to the regional integration process and its continuing involvement in the debate on the establishment of the du CSM&E (Caribbean Single Market and Economy).
Towards this end, the OC plans to: strengthen cooperation with Sint Maarten and Anguilla, our two closest neighbours, strengthen its participation in major relevant international fora in the Caribbean region, participate in consolidating the process for solving major crises and combating cross-border crime, the spread of weapons and drugs.

Conclusion

A high-quality future depends on never ceasing to surprise. United together, we have the capacity to successfully manage the development process to create a better situation in Saint Martin. The development of this territory has always been a history of challenges. The progress made over the last two decades is not a flight of fantasy but the result of boldness and faith in the capacity of Saint Martin to overcome barriers, to build and innovate.