

# ***Cross-Border Cooperation in West Africa:***

*Support to integrated and sustainable  
development and cross-border  
cooperation between Macaronesia, Cape  
Verde and Senegal*

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*The information, opinions and views expressed in this report are those of the AEBR and other players (when indicated) and do not represent the official position of the European Commission.*

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## Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACCC	<i>Adaptation to Climate Change in Coastal lands (project)</i>
ACPP	<i>Asamblea de Cooperación por la Paz (Peace Cooperation Assembly) (Spanish NGO)</i>
ADB	<i>African Development Bank (in French BAD)</i>
ADF	<i>African Development Fund (in French FAD)</i>
AEBR	<i>Association of European Border Regions</i>
ALG	<i>Liptako-Gourma Development Authority</i>
ARFE	<i>Association des Régions Frontalières Européennes</i>
AU	<i>African Union</i>
AUBP	<i>African Union Border Programme</i>
BAD	<i>Banque Africaine de Développement (in English ADB)</i>
BCEAO	<i>Banque Centrale des Etats d'Afrique Occidentale (Central Bank of African States)</i>
BOAD	<i>Banque Ouest Africaine de Développement (West African Development Bank)</i>
CBC	<i>Cross-border co-operation</i>
CEDEAO	<i>Communauté Economique Des Etats de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (in English ECOWAS)</i>
CEN-SAD	<i>Community of Sahel-Saharan States (Communauté des Etats Sahélo-Sahariens)</i>
CER	<i>Communautés Économiques Régionales africaines (in English REC)</i>
CILSS	<i>Comité permanent Inter-Etats de Lutte contre la Sécheresse dans le Sahel (in English: Permanent Inter-States Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel)</i>
CIP	<i>Cross-border Initiatives Programme</i>
CSAO	<i>Club du Sahel et de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (in English SWAC)</i>
DED	<i>Deutscher Entwicklungsdienst</i>
ECOWAS	<i>Economic Community of West African States</i>
EDF	<i>European Development Fund (in French FED)</i>
ENDA Diapol	<i>Environnement et Développement - Prospectives et Dialogues Politiques (Environment and Development – Policy Dialogue and Perspectives)</i>
ERDF	<i>European Regional Development Fund (in French FEDER)</i>
EU	<i>European Union</i>
FAD	<i>Fond Africain de Développement (in English ADF)</i>
FED	<i>Fonds européen de développement (in English EDF)</i>
FEDER	<i>Fonds européen de développement régional (in English ERDF)</i>
FOGAR	<i>Forum of Global Associations of Regions (Forum Global d'Associations de Régions)</i>
GEF	<i>Global Environment Facility</i>
GIZ	<i>Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (Society for International Cooperation) (German Agency of Cooperation)</i>
HDI	<i>Human Development Index</i>
ITC	<i>Instituto Tecnológico de Canarias (Canarias Institute of Technology)</i>
MAC	<i>Madeira-Açores-Canaries</i>
MDG	<i>Millennium Development Goals (in French OMD)</i>

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MKK (MK2)	Maradi-Katsina-Kano
MOT	Mission Opérationnelle Transfrontalière
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development (Nouveau Partenariat pour le Développement de l'Afrique)
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
OCDE	Organisation de coopération et de développement économiques (in English OECD)
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (in French OCDE)
OMD	Objectifs du Millénaire pour le développement (in English MDG)
OMVG	Organisation pour la mise en valeur du fleuve Gambie
OMVS	Organisation pour la Mise en Valeur du Fleuve Sénégal
ONG	Organisation non gouvernementale
P2P	People to People
PAPIL	Projet d'appui à la petite irrigation locale (Project to Support Small Local Irrigation)
PIT	Programme d'Initiatives Transfrontalières
PLATFORMA	Plateforme européenne des autorités locales et régionales pour le Développement (European Platform of Local and Regional Authorities)
PNUD	Programme des Nations Unies pour le développement (in English UNDP)
PSD	Private Sector Department
REC	Regional Economic Community (in French CER)
SKBo	Sikasso (ML), Korhogo (CI), Bobo Dioulasso (BF)
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprise
SWAC	Sahel and West Africa Club (in French CSAO)
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
TAH	Trans-African Highway
UE	Union européenne
UEMOA	Union Économique et Monétaire Ouest Africaine (in English WAEMU)
UNDP	United Nations' Development Programme (in French PNUD)
UNESCO	UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
WABI	West African Borders and Integration Initiative (Frontières et intégration en Afrique de l'Ouest)
WAEMU	West African Economic and Monetary Union (in French UEMOA)
WAMZ	West African Monetary Zone
ZEI	Zentrum für Europäische Integrationsforschung
ZMAO	Zone monétaire de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (in English WAMZ)





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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY****EN****1. Introduction**

The study “**Cross-Border Cooperation in West Africa: Support to integrated and sustainable development and cross-border cooperation between Macaronesia, Cape Verde and Senegal**” was carried out by the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR) for the European Commission, Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy (DG Regio) between December 2012 and September 2013. The study was led by Martin Guillermo, Secretary-General of AEBR and the core project team comprised of Haris Martinos (Senior Expert), Jean-Louis Sanka and Alejandro Hernández Rivero (Junior Experts) and Marie-Lou Perou (Coordinator).

**2. Objectives, methodology and tasks**

According to the study specifications its object was “to support the preparation of an **Action Plan** for the development of cross-border cooperation and the enhancement of social, cultural, economic, and environmental sustainable development along the Western African seaboard ... placing particular emphasis on promoting the active participation of regional and local actors ...”.

The study built on the previous EU study “**Opportunities for CBC in West Africa**” which was carried out by AEBR in 2011-2012 and the EU “Transnational Cooperation Programme Madeira-Açores-Canarias 2007-2013” (**MAC Programme**), which supports some 50 projects involving a large number of West African partners.

The **desk research** of the study covered the abundant literature on West African borders as well as the growing institutional literature documenting the initiatives and decisions of the African Union (notably the AU Border Programme), ECOWAS and UEMOA, inter-state agreements and various interventions.

The **fieldwork** focused on Senegal and Cape Verde. It included an **online survey** through which 55 questionnaires were obtained (40 from stakeholders in Cape Verde and Senegal, and 15 from lead partners of MAC programme projects, mostly from the Canary Islands). Additionally, 40 face-to-face **interviews** were conducted with stakeholders in Senegal and Cape Verde exploring in greater depth their experience, factors that facilitate or constrain CBC, fields with the greatest potential for CBC, methods of support to CBC and lessons learned from various interventions to date.

**3. Findings**

The survey and interviews have shown that there is substantial **experience and interest in the broader field of cross-border cooperation**: in the case of Senegal mainly with Gambia and Guinea-Bissau; in Cape Verde predominantly with the Canary Islands; and in Macaronesia (mostly the Canary Islands) with Cape Verde.

The **greatest potential for CBC** is seen in the field of environment, followed by the areas of culture (Senegal) and tourism (Cape Verde and Macaronesia).

Regarding **factors facilitating CBC**, Senegal stakeholders attach top priority to the cultural and linguistic affinity, closely followed by shared awareness/management of problems (which comes top in **Cape Verde**, followed by EU and government support). Macaronesia responses prioritise transport.

The main **constraining factors** in Senegal refer to lack information, inadequate transport connections and delays at border controls. The lack of stability has been emphasised at interviews as a major constraint. Transport related constraints (inadequate connections, delays and costs) stands out in the responses from Cape Verde and Macaronesia.

Overall, there is a clear **geographical differentiation** in the type of cooperation and CBC potential:

- **between MAC (especially Canary Islands) and Cape Verde** there is widespread cooperation but less tangible results, and a strong transnational / knowledge transfer / Europe orientation;
- **between Senegal and continental West African countries** CBC is “under construction” but with potential for concrete results. It is oriented towards “regional integration” and “peace and security” with actions at both state level (harmonisation / normalisation) and local level (joint actions across land borders);
- **between Cape Verde and Senegal** it is limited but with potential to build on shared interests (maritime/fisheries) and people links (diasporas).

#### 4. Conclusions

The **potential** for cross-border cooperation contributing to sustainable development and regional integration is **great**, for many fields and types of cooperation, **but** it is **under-exploited**.

The **key conditions** for CBC to develop and succeed are **cultural and linguistic affinity**, a good degree of **security and stability**, and **proximity** that makes it possible to cooperate in many different fields and pursue joint actions, and involves lower costs.

There is a growing recognition of CBC in West Africa (“institutional base” and “political trust”) to be built upon and a great variety of initiatives and projects worth nurturing. However, much energy in existing interventions goes to rather “abstract” activities with relatively little concrete results on the ground benefiting people. Thus, it is essential that **in future more should be done** for:

- achieving small and fast practical actions with results on the ground in various sectors, through local cross-border partnerships and direct people involvement;
- strengthening cooperation at regional and inter-state level for sharing and learning;
- building good links between state and local level for an enabling framework and synergies.

It is also important to **explain better** to national policy makers **the added value of “cross-border cooperation”** (and that it should not be confused with “international cooperation”) and to promote the mainstream forms of CBC, i.e. direct cooperation and joint actions by local actors from various sectors (local government, NGOs, business, etc) on either side of a border within a shared “cross-border space”.

Finally, it is essential for “cross-border cooperation” to be recognised as an important dimension in the efforts to achieve peace, stability, sustainable development and regional integration. As such, it should be accorded a higher profile than so far. For this reason the AU’s “African Borders Day” of 7 June should be supported *per se* and, furthermore, it should be adopted globally as the “**International Day of Integration across National Boundaries**”, as it has been proposed by AEBR to the European Union, the Andean Community of Nations, MERCOSUR, the Central American Integration System, several national governments in Europe and America, and the General Assembly of the United Nations, after informing the AUBP.

## 5. Action Plan

It is suggested that the Action Plan should be a fairly flexible package of interventions, at two inter-connected levels, with a medium-to-long term time horizon, as outlined below.

First, **at regional level**, the aim should be to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the full range of existing initiatives, by promoting and facilitating the sharing of experience, learning and mutual support among national and sub-national level actors and researchers engaged in CBC.

This part of the Action Plan should be under the aegis of the **African Union Border Programme and ECOWAS**, and it should be operationally coordinated by a “**CBC Working Group**” led by technical support attached to AUBP and/or ECOWAS, such as currently provided by GIZ to the AUBP.

Relevant activities at this level could be supported financially from different donors (including development programmes and banks) and even private sponsors, and could include:

- the promotion of a **West Africa platform/network for the exchange of information and experience**, which could be combined with training, information sessions, study visits (in Africa and in Europe), etc and could be facilitated by an experienced organisation like AEBR;
- support to existing and new **transnational programmes and regional initiatives**, such as a new MAC Programme for 2014-2020 (e.g. with partner search, project development), initiatives in areas of common interest (e.g. maritime cooperation), development of an EGTC-type instrument, promotion of CBC in Public Administration schools and research programmes.

Second, **at sub-national level**, the aim should be to nurture and enhance spontaneous and endogenous CBC activities on the ground and build local capacities for more substantial and structured ones in the future, based on cross-border partnerships and local development strategies.

This part of the Action Plan could take the form of **a regional “CBC Programme” for West Africa under the forthcoming 11<sup>th</sup> European Development Fund (EDF)**, which could provide TA and Small Projects Fund(s) to support “people-to-people” actions on the bilateral or trilateral borders of the participating countries. Once the basic CBC institutional capacity is in place, it could additionally support common infrastructures (e.g. health centres, schools, agricultural produce storage / processing, roads) and other more substantial projects.

This programme could initially cover only a **small group of countries** with a good degree of cultural/linguistic affinity, proximity and stability with a view to rolling it out gradually.

## **6. Recommendations**

The main recommendations that stem from this study are addressed principally to the European Commission and the African Union and are set out below.

It is recommended that:

1. The European Commission should present to the African Union the proposals for an Action Plan comprising actions at regional and sub-national levels for the development of CBC in West Africa, as outlined in this report.
2. The African Union should consult the territories involved, including regional organisations and West African countries on the objectives and components of the Action Plan, and on its geographical scope (participating countries).
3. The African Union should request GIZ and AEBR to elaborate, in conjunction with other actors as appropriate, a detailed proposal for the Action Plan following consultations with EU (EDF) and other donors, including technical specifications, implementation arrangements and funding.
4. The European Commission and the African Union should jointly organise a consultative workshop to consider the GIZ/AEBR proposals and make recommendations concerning the finalisation of preparations for the Action Plan.
5. The AEBR, should encourage communication and advocacy activities in West Africa on the added value of “cross-border cooperation” and, in conjunction with other international organisations and national authorities, should continue to actively support the adoption globally of 7 June as the “International Day of Integration across National Boundaries”.

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**RESUME ANALYTIQUE****FR****1. Introduction**

L'étude « **Coopération transfrontalière en Afrique de l'Ouest: soutien au développement intégré et durable et à la coopération transfrontalière entre la Macaronésie, le Cap Vert et le Sénégal** » a été réalisée par l'Association des Régions Frontalières Européennes (ARFE) pour la Commission européenne, Directorate-général Politique régionale et urbaine (DG REGIO) entre décembre 2012 et septembre 2013. L'étude a été menée par Martin Guillermo, Secrétaire général de l'ARFE et l'équipe de projet composée de Haris Martinos (Senior Expert), Jean-Louis Sanka et Alejandro Hernández Rivero (Junior Experts) ainsi que Marie-Lou Perou (Coordinatrice).

**2. Objectifs, méthodologie et missions**

Selon les spécifications de l'étude l'objet en était de soutenir la préparation d'un Plan d'action pour le développement de la coopération transfrontalière et le renforcement du développement durable social, culturel, économique et environnemental le long du littoral ouest-africain, tout en mettant un accent particulier sur la promotion d'une participation active d'acteurs régionaux et locaux.

Cette étude a été réalisée à la base de l'étude de l'UE « **Possibilités de coopération transfrontalière en Afrique de l'Ouest** » réalisée par l'ARFE de 2011-2012 et du Programme de coopération transnationale de l'UE Madère-Açores-Canaries 2007-2013 (**Programme MAC**) couvrant une cinquantaine de projets impliquant un grand nombre de partenaires ouest-africains.

La **recherche documentaire** effectuée dans le cadre de l'étude, a couvert la littérature riche sur les frontières ouest-africaines ainsi que les sources littéraires croissantes institutionnelles documentant les initiatives et décisions de l'Union Africaine (notamment le programme frontière de l'UA), CEDEAO et UEMOA, des accords interétatiques et de diverses interventions.

Le travail effectué sur le terrain s'est concentré sur le Sénégal et le Cap Vert, comprenant une enquête en ligne dont ont résulté 55 questionnaires complétés (40 d'acteurs au Cap Vert et au Sénégal et 15 de partenaires chef de file de projets du programme MAC, avant tout des Îles Canaries). En plus, 40 interviews sur place étaient réalisées avec des acteurs au Sénégal et au Cap Vert, pour explorer d'une manière plus approfondie leur expérience, les facteurs facilitant ou empêchant la coopération transfrontalière (CT), les domaines les plus appropriés pour la CT, les méthodes pour soutenir la CT et les leçons apprises des diverses interventions réalisées jusqu'à présent.

**3. Constatations**

L'enquête et les entretiens ont montré une **expérience** considérable et beaucoup d'**intérêt pour le large champ de la coopération transfrontalière** : dans le cas du Sénégal cela concerne pour la plupart la Gambie et la Guinée-Bissau, au Cap Vert principalement avec les Îles Canaries et en Macaronésie (notamment les Îles Canaries) avec le Cap Vert.

Le **plus grand potentiel pour la Coopération transfrontalière** se trouve dans le domaine de l'environnement, suivi par ceux de la culture (Sénégal) et du tourisme (Cap Vert et Macaronésie).

Les parties prenantes du Sénégal donnent la plus grande priorité aux affinités culturelles et linguistiques comme **facteurs favorables à la CT**, suivie de près par la conscience et la gestion partagée des problèmes (classé au premier rang par le **Cap Vert**, suivi par l'UE et le soutien gouvernemental). Les réponses de Macaronésie classent le transport comme priorité.

Comme principaux **facteurs restrictifs** de la part des parties prenantes sénégalaises est mentionné le manque d'information et les inadéquates connexions de transport ainsi que les délais aux contrôles frontaliers, le manque de stabilité étant souligné au cours des interviews comme important obstacle. Au Cap Vert et en MAC les principaux facteurs restrictifs sont perçus comme **liés au transport** (connexions inadéquates, attentes interminables et coûts).

En général, il existe une claire **différentiation géographique** dans l'étendue et le type d'actions de Coopération ainsi que le potentiel pour la Coopération transfrontalière qui peut être résumée comme suit :

- **Entre MAC (notamment les Îles Canaries) et le Cap Vert** il existe une coopération très étendue, dont les résultats sont moins tangibles. La coopération y est de nature transnationale, impliquant le transfert de connaissances avec une orientation venant de l'Europe ;
- **entre le Sénégal et les pays continentaux d'Afrique de l'Ouest** les actions de CT sont toujours « en voie de construction », mais disposent d'un réel potentiel pour atteindre des résultats concrets. Leur orientation relève de « paix et sécurité » et « intégration régionale » avec des activités aussi bien au niveau étatique (harmonisation / normalisation) que local (actions conjointes transfrontalières aux frontières terrestres) ;
- **Entre le Cap Vert et le Sénégal** une telle coopération est actuellement limitée mais jouit d'un véritable potentiel de développement (maritime/pêche) et de forts liens populaires (diasporas).

#### 4. Conclusions

Le **potentiel** de la CT contribuant au développement durable et à l'intégration régionale est **élevé** et cela vaut dans de nombreux domaines et types de coopération, **mais** il est **sous-exploité**.

Les conditions clé afin que la CT se développe et soit couronnée de succès sont **l'affinité culturelle et linguistique**, un degré élevé de **sécurité et de stabilité** ainsi que la **proximité** rendant possible la coopération dans beaucoup de domaines et la poursuite d'actions conjointes au coût peu élevé.

La reconnaissance de la CT en Afrique de l'Ouest est croissante (« base institutionnelle » et « confiance politique ») et constitue une base solide. Il y a une grande variété d'initiatives et de projets qui valent d'être soutenus. Par contre, au niveau d'interventions en cours, trop d'énergie est consommée dans le contexte d'activités plutôt « abstraites » sans trop de résultats concrets sur le terrain au bénéfice des populations. Par conséquent, désormais il convient tenir compte davantage de :

- Mener à bout de petites actions rapides et pratiques dans plusieurs secteurs, à l'aide de partenariats transfrontaliers directs et en impliquant les citoyens ;

- renforcer la coopération aux échelons régional et interétatique pour le partage et la formation ;
- établir de bons liens entre les échelons étatique et local pour créer un cadre et des synergies appropriés à la CT.

Il est important de mieux expliquer aux décideurs politiques nationaux **la valeur ajoutée de la « Coopération transfrontalière »** (à ne pas confondre avec la « Coopération internationale ») et de promouvoir les formes intégrées de la Coopération transfrontalière, par ex. la coopération directe et l'action commune d'acteurs locaux issus de divers secteurs (gouvernements locaux, ONG, affaires, etc.) des deux côtés de la frontière au sein d'un « espace transfrontalier » partagé.

Il est aussi essentiel de reconnaître à la « Coopération transfrontalière » une importante dimension des efforts vers la paix, la stabilité, le développement durable et l'intégration régionale. En tant que telle, elle devrait gagner une plus grande valeur emblématique que jusqu'à présent. Pour cette raison la « journée des frontières africaines » de l'Union Africaine du 7 juin devrait être soutenue en soi et de plus devrait être globalement adoptée comme « **Journée internationale de l'intégration au travers des Délimitations frontalières nationales** », comme cela a été proposé par l'ARFE à l'Union européenne, à la Communauté des nations andines, au MERCOSUR, au Système d'intégration d'Amérique centrale, à différents gouvernements nationaux en Europe et en Amérique et à l'Assemblée Générale des Nations Unies, après en avoir informé l'AUBP.

## 5. Plan d'action

Il est suggéré que le Plan d'action soit un vraiment flexible pack d'actions à deux niveaux interconnectés, à l'horizon moyen/long terme, comme expliqué ci-dessous.

D'abord, **au niveau régional**, le but devrait être d'augmenter l'efficacité de toute la gamme d'initiatives existantes, en promouvant et facilitant le partage d'expériences, l'apprentissage et le soutien mutuel parmi les acteurs des niveaux national et sous-national ainsi que des chercheurs du secteur de la CT.

Il convient que cette partie du plan d'action se passe dans le cadre du **Programme Frontière de l'Union Africaine et de la CEDEAO**, et qu'elle soit coordonnée du point de vue opérationnel par un « **groupe de travail de CT** », dont le soutien technique soit lié au AUBP et / ou CEDEAO, comme c'est actuellement le cas de la GIZ pour le AUBP.

Les activités pertinentes à ce niveau pourraient être soutenues financièrement par différents donateurs (incluant les programmes de développement et les banques) et encore des sponsors privés et pourrait comprendre :

- La promotion **d'une plateforme/d'un réseau ouest-africain pour l'échange d'informations et d'expériences**, qui pourrait être combiné avec une formation, des sessions d'information, des visites d'étude (en Afrique et en Europe), etc. et pourrait être facilité par une organisation expérimentée telle que l'ARFE
- le soutien à **des programmes transnationaux et des initiatives régionales** tels que le nouveau Programme MAC pour 2014-2020 (par ex. la recherche de partenaires, le développement des projets), des initiatives dans les domaines d'intérêt commun (par ex. la Coopération maritime), le développement d'un instrument de type GECT, la promotion de la

Coopération transfrontalière dans les écoles d'administration publique et les programmes de recherche.

Deuxièmement, **au niveau sous-national**, le but devrait être de promouvoir et de renforcer des actions spontanées et endogènes de CT sur le terrain et établir des capacités locales pour faciliter la réalisation d'actions plus substantielles et structurées à l'avenir, se basant sur des partenariats transfrontaliers et des stratégies de développement locales.

Cette partie du plan d'action pourrait se manifester sous forme de « **Programme CT** » **régional pour l'Afrique de l'Ouest dans le cadre du 11<sup>ème</sup> Fonds européen de développement (FED)**, offrant de l'assistance technique et des petits fonds pour soutenir des projets « people-to-people » aux frontières bilatérales et trilatérales des pays participants. Après l'établissement de la capacité institutionnelle de base en matière de CT, ce programme pourrait également soutenir les infrastructures communes (p. ex. centres de santé, écoles, stockage et traitement de produits agricoles / routes) et d'autres projets plus substantiels. Ce programme pourrait au début couvrir un petit groupe de pays ayant un bon degré d'affinité culturelle/ linguistique, de proximité et de stabilité pour ainsi poursuivre en étapes un développement ultérieur.

## 6. Recommandations

Les principales recommandations découlant de la présente étude sont avant tout adressées à la Commission européenne et à l'Union Africaine et sont énumérées ci-dessous.

Il est recommandé que :

1. La commission Européenne devrait présenter à l'Union Africaine des propositions de Plan d'action caractérisées par des actions au niveau régional et infranational pour le développement de la Coopération transfrontalière en Afrique de l'Ouest ainsi qu'il est mis en lumière par le présent rapport.
2. L'Union Africaine devrait consulter les territoires concernés, incluant les organisations régionales et les pays ouest-africains selon les objectifs et les composantes du Plan d'action et ses domaines d'application géographique (pays participants).
3. L'Union Africaine devrait requérir le GIZ et l'ARFE afin d'élaborer une proposition de Plan d'action détaillée suivant les consultations avec l'Union Européenne (FED) et autres donateurs, incluant les spécifications techniques, les arrangements de mise en œuvre et le financement.
4. La Commission Européenne et l'Union Africaine devraient organiser conjointement un atelier consultatif afin de considérer les propositions du GIZ/de l'ARFE et faire des recommandations concernant la finalisation des préparations pour le Plan d'action.
5. L'ARFE devrait encourager les activités de communication et de plaidoyer en Afrique de l'Ouest concernant la valeur ajoutée de la « Coopération transfrontalière » et, en conjonction avec d'autres organisations internationales et des autorités nationales, devrait continuer à soutenir activement l'adoption mondiale du 7 juin comme « Journée internationale de l'intégration au travers des frontières nationales ».



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## SUMÁRIO EXECUTIVO

PT

### 1. Introdução

O estudo " **Cooperação Transfronteiriça na África Ocidental: Apoio ao desenvolvimento integrado e sustentável e cooperação transfronteiriça entre a Macaronésia, Cabo Verde e Senegal** " foi realizado pela Associação das Regiões Fronteiriças Europeias ( ARFE ) para a Comissão Europeia, Direcção- Geral de Política Regional e Urbana ( DG Regio ), entre dezembro de 2012 e setembro de 2013. Martín Guillermo, Secretário Geral da ARFE, dirigiu o estudo, e os membros do equipe principal foram Haris Martinos (perito sênior), Jean-Louis Sanka e Alejandro Hernández Rivero (peritos juniors) e Marielou Perou (coordenadora).

### 2. Objetivos, metodologia e tarefas

De acordo com as especificações, o seu objeto de estudo foi "o apoio à preparação de um **plano de acção** para o desenvolvimento da cooperação transfronteiriça e a valorização do desenvolvimento social, cultural, económico e ambiental sustentável ao longo da costa da África Ocidental... com especial ênfase na promoção da participação activa dos actores regionais e locais... ".

O estudo fundamentou-se no trabalho da UE "**Oportunidades para a Cooperação Transfronteiriça na África Ocidental** ", realizado pela ARFE em 2011-2012 e no " Programa de Cooperação Transnacional Madeira- Açores -Canárias 2007-2013 " (**Programa MAC**), que apoia cerca de 50 projetos que envolvem um grande número de parceiros do Oeste Africano.

A **pesquisa documental** do estudo cobriu a abundante literatura sobre as fronteiras do Oeste Africano, bem como a crescente literatura institucional que documenta as iniciativas e decisões da União Africana (nomeadamente o Programa de Fronteiras da UA), da ECOWAS e da UEMOA, acordos inter- estaduais e diversas outras intervenções.

O **trabalho de campo** centrou-se no Senegal e em Cabo Verde. Incluiu um **inquérito online**, através do qual foram obtidos 55 questionários (40 das partes interessadas em Cabo Verde e Senegal e 15 provenientes de parceiros principais de projectos do programa MAC, na maior parte das Ilhas Canárias). Além disso, foram realizadas 40 entrevistas pessoais com as partes interessadas no Senegal e em Cabo Verde, explorando com maior profundidade a sua experiência, os factores que facilitam ou produzem constrangimentos à cooperação transfronteiriça, áreas com maior potencial, métodos de apoio à cooperação e lições aprendidas a partir de várias intervenções realizadas até o momento.

### 3. Constatções

A pesquisa e as entrevistas demonstraram que há uma **substancial experiência e interesse no domínio da cooperação transfronteiriça**: no caso do Senegal, principalmente com a Gâmbia e Guiné-Bissau; em Cabo Verde, predominantemente com as Ilhas Canárias; e na Macaronésia (principalmente as Ilhas Canárias) com Cabo Verde.

O **maior potencial de cooperação transfronteiriça** é visto no domínio do ambiente, seguido pelas áreas da cultura (Senegal) e turismo (Cabo Verde e Macaronésia ).

Em relação aos **fatores que facilitam a cooperação transfronteiriça**, os *stakeholders* do Senegal dão prioridade à afinidade cultural e linguística, seguida de perto pela consciencialização/gestão dos problemas (que está em primeiro lugar em **Cabo Verde**, seguida pelos apios da UE e do Governo). As respostas fornecidas pela Macaronésia dão prioridade aos transportes.

Os principais **fatores de constrangimento** no Senegal referem-se a falta de informação, ligações de transportes inadequados e atrasos no controlo nas fronteiras. A falta de estabilidade tem sido enfatizada em entrevistas como um grande constrangimento. Os constrangimentos relativos aos transportes (conexões inadequadas, atrasos e custos) destacam-se nas respostas de Cabo Verde e da Macaronésia.

Em geral, há uma clara **diferenciação geográfica** na forma de cooperação e no potencial da cooperação transfronteiriça:

- **entre MAC (especialmente nas Ilhas Canárias) e Cabo Verde** existe uma cooperação generalizada, mas com resultados menos tangíveis, e uma forte transferência de conhecimento / orientação Europeia;
- **entre o Senegal e os países continentais do Oeste Africano**, a cooperação transfronteiriça está "em construção", mas com potencial para resultados concretos. Está orientada para a "integração regional" e "paz e segurança", com acções, tanto a nível estadual (harmonização / normalização) como local (ações conjuntas através das fronteiras terrestres);
- **entre Cabo Verde e o Senegal** ela está limitada, mas com potencial para se construir em torno de interesses comuns (marítimos / pesca) e ligações entre pessoas (diásporas).

#### 4. Conclusões

O **potencial** de contribuição da cooperação transfronteiriça para o desenvolvimento sustentável e a integração regional é grande, em muitos campos e tipos de cooperação, **mas** está **subaproveitado**.

As **condições fundamentais** para que a cooperação transfronteiriça se desenvolva e tenha sucesso são a **afinidade cultural e linguística**, um bom grau de **segurança e estabilidade**, e a **proximidade**, o que torna possível cooperar em muitos campos diferentes e buscar ações conjuntas, envolvendo baixos custos.

Há um reconhecimento crescente de cooperação transfronteiriça na África Ocidental ("base institucional" e "confiança política"), a ser construído sobre uma grande variedade de iniciativas e projetos em que vale a pena apostar. No entanto, uma parte importante da energia gasta em intervenções existentes vai para actividades "abstratas", com resultados concretos que beneficiem as pessoas relativamente diminutos. Assim, é essencial que, **no futuro, mais** deva ser feito para:

- alcançar ações práticas pequenas e rápidas com resultados no terreno em diversos setores, por meio de parcerias transfronteiriças locais e com um envolvimento directo das pessoas;

- reforço da cooperação a nível regional e inter-estatal para partilha e aprendizagem;
- construção de boas relações entre o Estado e o nível local, constituindo um quadro propício ao aproveitamento de sinergias.

É também importante explicar melhor aos decisores políticos nacionais o **valor acrescentado da "cooperação transfronteiriça"** (e que não deve ser confundida com a "cooperação internacional") e promover as formas tradicionais de cooperação transfronteiriça, ou seja, uma cooperação directa e ações conjuntas realizadas pelos agentes locais de diversos setores (governo local, ONGs, empresas, etc) em ambos os lados de uma fronteira dentro de um "espaço transfronteiriço" compartilhado.

Finalmente, é essencial que a "cooperação transfronteiriça" seja reconhecida como uma dimensão importante nos esforços para alcançar a paz, a estabilidade, o desenvolvimento sustentável e a integração regional. Como tal, deve-lhe ser reconhecido um perfil maior do que até agora. Por esta razão, o "Dia das Fronteiras Africanas" da UA, que se comemora a 7 de Junho, deve ser apoiada *per se*, devendo ainda ser adotado mundialmente como o "**Dia Internacional da Integração além-fronteiras nacionais**", como foi proposto pela ARFE à União Europeia, pela Comunidade Andina de Nações, pelo MERCOSUL, pelo Sistema de Integração Centro-Americana, por vários governos nacionais na Europa e América, e pela Assembleia Geral das Nações Unidas, depois de informar o AUBP.

## 5. Plano de Acção

Sugere-se que o Plano de Acção constitua um pacote bastante flexível de intervenções, em dois níveis inter-conectados, com um horizonte temporal de médio a longo prazo, como a seguir se descreve.

Em primeiro lugar, a **nível regional**, o objectivo deve ser o de aumentar a eficiência e eficácia de toda a gama de iniciativas já existentes, promovendo e facilitando a partilha de experiências, a aprendizagem e o apoio mútuo entre os atores e pesquisadores nacionais e sub-nacionais, envolvidos na cooperação transfronteiriça.

Esta parte do Plano de Acção deve estar sob a égide do **Programa de Fronteiras da União Africana e da ECOWAS**, e deve ser operacionalmente coordenado por um "Grupo de Trabalho da cooperação transfronteiriça", liderada tecnicamente pela AUBP e/ou ECOWAS, tal como actualmente é assegurada pela GIZ para o AUBP.

Atividades relevantes a este nível poderiam receber apoio financeiro de diferentes proveniências (incluindo programas de fomento e bancos) e até mesmo de patrocinadores particulares, podendo incluir:

- a promoção de uma **plataforma / rede da África Ocidental** para a troca de informações e experiências, a qual podia ser combinada com formação, sessões de informação, visitas de estudo (em África e na Europa), etc. e ser facilitada por uma organização experiente como a ARFE;
- apoio a **programas transnacionais existentes e novos e iniciativas regionais**, como um novo programa de MAC para 2014-2020 (por exemplo, com a procura de parceiros, desenvolvimento de projetos), iniciativas em áreas de interesse comum (por exemplo, a cooperação marítima), o desenvolvimento de um instrumento do tipo de AECT, a promoção da

cooperação transfronteiriça nas escolas sob administração pública e programas de investigação.

Em segundo lugar, **a nível sub-nacional**, o objetivo deve ser o de estimular e melhorar as atividades da cooperação transfronteiriça espontâneas e endógenas no terreno e criar capacidades locais para outras mais substanciais e estruturadas no futuro, com base em parcerias transfronteiriças e em estratégias de desenvolvimento local.

Esta parte do Plano de Acção pode assumir a forma de um "**Programa de cooperação transfronteiriça**" regional para a **África Ocidental no âmbito da 11<sup>a</sup> edição do Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento (FED)**, o que poderia fornecer TA e fundos para Pequenos Projetos " pessoa-a-pessoa " nas fronteiras bilaterais ou trilaterais dos países participantes. Uma vez que a capacidade institucional básica da cooperação transfronteiriça está activa, poderia também apoiar infra-estruturas comuns ( por exemplo, centros de saúde, escolas, armazenamento/ processamento de produtos agrícolas, estradas ) e outros projetos mais substanciais.

Este programa poderia inicialmente cobrir apenas um pequeno grupo de países com um bom grau de afinidade cultural / linguística, proximidade e estabilidade, com vista a implantá-la gradualmente.

## 6. Recomendações

As principais recomendações que resultam deste estudo são dirigidas principalmente à Comissão Europeia e da União Africana e são a seguir expostas.

Recomenda-se que:

1. A Comissão Europeia presente à União Africana propostas para um plano de acção que inclua acções de nível regional e sub-nacional para o desenvolvimento da cooperação transfronteiriça na África Ocidental, conforme descrito neste relatório.
2. A União Africana deve consultar os territórios em causa, incluindo as organizações regionais e países da África Ocidental sobre os objectivos e componentes do plano de acção e no que respeita ao seu âmbito geográfico ( países participantes).
3. A União Africana deve solicitar ao GIZ e à ARFE que elaborem, em conjunto com outros atores, se necessário, uma proposta detalhada para o Plano de Acção, após consultas com a UE (FED) e outros contribuintes, incluindo as especificações técnicas, medidas de implementação e financiamento.
4. A Comissão Europeia e a União Africana devem organizar conjuntamente um workshop consultivo para considerar as propostas da GIZ / ARFE e fazer recomendações sobre a finalização dos preparativos para o Plano de Acção.
5. A ARFE deve incentivar as atividades de comunicação e consultoria na África Ocidental sobre o valor acrescentado da " cooperação transfronteiriça " e, em conjunto com outras organizações internacionais e as autoridades nacionais, deverá continuar a apoiar activamente a adopção a nível mundial do dia 7 de junho como o " Dia Internacional da Integração além-fronteiras nacionais ".

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**RESUMEN EJECUTIVO****ES****1. Introducción**

El estudio **“Cooperación Transfronteriza en África Occidental: apoyo al desarrollo sostenible e integral y a la Cooperación Transfronteriza entre la Macaronesia, Cabo Verde y Senegal”** fue elaborado por la Asociación de Regiones Fronterizas Europeas (ARFE) para la Comisión Europea, Dirección General de Política Regional y Urbana (DG Regio) entre diciembre de 2012 y septiembre de 2013. Martin Guillermo, Secretario General de la ARFE, ha dirigido el estudio, formando parte del equipo principal Haris Martinos (Experto Senior), Jean-Louis Sanka y Alejandro Hernández Rivero (Expertos Junior) y Marie-Lou Perou (Coordinadora).

**2. Objetivos, metodología y tareas**

Los terminos de referencia del estudio señalaron como objeto del mismo “apoyar la preparación de un **Plan de Acción** para el desarrollo de cooperación transfronteriza (CTF) y la mejora del desarrollo social, cultural, económico y medioambiental sostenible a lo largo de la costa occidental africana ... con un énfasis particular en la promoción de la participación activa de los actores locales y regionales...”.

Este estudio se planificó siguiendo las recomendaciones del estudio previo **“Oportunidades para la CTF en África Occidental”**, realizado por la ARFE para la UE en 2011-2012, y el Programa de Cooperación Transnacional de la UE Madeira-Azores-Canarias 2007-2013” (**Programa MAC**), que apoya unos 50 proyectos en los que participa un gran número de actores de África Occidental.

Durante el **trabajo de documentación** de este estudio se revisó abundante literatura sobre las fronteras de África Occidental, así como el creciente número de literatura institucional documentando las iniciativas y decisiones de la Unión Africana (particularmente el Programa de Fronteras de la UA), ECOWAS y UEMOA, acuerdos interestatales y distintas intervenciones

El **trabajo de campo** se centró en Senegal y Cabo Verde. Se incluyó una **encuesta online** de la que se obtuvieron 55 cuestionarios (40 actores de Cabo Verde y Senegal, y 15 de los socios principales de proyectos del programa MAC, sobre todo de las Islas Canarias). Además se realizaron 40 **entrevistas** presenciales realizadas a actores de Senegal y Cabo Verde, explorando en profundidad su experiencia, los factores que facilitan o dificultan la CTF, los campos con mayor potencial para la CTF, los métodos de apoyo a la CTF y las lecciones aprendidas de distintas intervenciones hasta la fecha.

**3. Hallazgos**

La encuesta y las entrevistas han mostrado que hay una **experiencia e interés sustanciales en el gran campo de la cooperación transfronteriza**: en el caso de Senegal sobre todo con Gambia y Guinea-Bissau; en Cabo Verde predominantemente con las Islas Canarias; y en la Macaronesia (sobre todo las Islas Canarias) con Cabo Verde.

El **mayor potencial para la CTF** se observa en el ámbito del medio ambiente, seguido por la cultura (Senegal) y el turismo (Cabo Verde y la Macaronesia).

En lo que respecta a los **factores que facilitan la CTF**, los participantes de Senegal otorgan la máxima prioridad a la afinidad cultural y lingüística, seguida de cerca por la toma de conciencia y gestión compartida de los problemas (que es el factor principal en **Cabo Verde**, seguido de cerca por el apoyo gubernamental y europeo). En las respuestas de la Macaronesia se prioriza el transporte.

El principal **factor limitante** en Senegal tiene que ver con la falta de información, las inadecuadas conexiones de transporte y los retrasos en los controles fronterizos. La falta de estabilidad ha sido puesta de relevancia en las entrevistas como una de las mayores limitaciones. Otros limitantes relacionados con los transportes (conexiones inadecuadas, retrasos y costes) sobresalen en las respuestas de Cabo Verde y Macaronesia.

En general, hay una evidente **diferenciación geográfica** tanto en el tipo de cooperación como en el potencial de CTF:

- **Entre la zona MAC (en especial las Islas Canarias) y Cabo Verde** hay una amplia cooperación, pero pocos resultados tangibles, y una fuerte orientación a la transnacionalidad, la transferencia de conocimiento y a Europa;
- **entre Senegal y los países continentales de África Occidental** la CTF está "en obras", pero hay potencial para la obtención de resultados concretos. Se orienta a la "integración regional" y "la paz y la seguridad", con acciones tanto a nivel estatal (armonización/normalización) como a nivel local (acciones conjuntas a través de las fronteras terrestres);
- **entre Cabo Verde y Senegal** es limitada, pero con potencial para construir sobre los intereses compartidos (marítimos/pesca) y los vínculos personales (diásporas).

#### 4. Conclusiones

El **potencial** de CTF que contribuya al desarrollo sostenible y la integración regional es **grande**, en muchos campos y tipos de cooperación, **pero** está **poco explotado**.

Las **condiciones clave** para que la CTF se desarrolle y tenga éxito son la **afinidad lingüística y cultural**, un buen nivel de **seguridad y estabilidad**, y la suficiente **proximidad** que hagan posible cooperar en muchos ámbitos y dedicarse a las acciones conjuntas. Esto implica, además, menores costes.

Hay un amplio reconocimiento de la CTF en África Occidental ("base institucional" y "confianza política") que puede construirse sobre una gran variedad de iniciativas y proyectos que merece la pena ser fomentados. Sin embargo, gran parte de la energía de las intervenciones existentes se destina sobre todo a actividades de carácter "abstracto", con relativamente pocos resultados concretos en el terreno que benefician a las personas. Por ello, es esencial que **en el futuro se haga más** en relación con:

- conseguir pequeñas y rápidas acciones prácticas con resultados en el terreno en diversos sectores, mediante asociaciones locales transfronterizas y la implicación directa de la gente;
- el fortalecimiento de la cooperación para compartir y aprender a nivel regional e interestatal;
- la construcción de buenos vínculos entre los niveles estatal y local para un marco y unas sinergias factibles.

También es importante **explicar mejor** a los políticos nacionales **el valor añadido de la "cooperación transfronteriza"** (la cual no debe confundirse con la "cooperación internacional") y promover las formas convencionales de CTF, por

ejemplo la cooperación directa y las acciones conjuntas de los actores locales de distintos sectores (gobiernos locales, ONGs, empresas, etc.) a cada lado de la frontera dentro de un “espacio transfronterizo” compartido.

Por ultimo, es esencial para la “cooperación transfronteriza” que sea reconocida como una dimensión importante de los esfuerzos para la paz, la estabilidad, el desarrollo sostenible y la integración regional. Como tal, debe reconocérsele un mayor perfil que hasta ahora. Por esta razón, la declaración del 7 de junio como “Día de las Fronteras Africanas” por parte de la Unión Africana debe ser apoyada *per se* e incluso debería ser declarada a nivel mundial como el “**Día Internacional de la Integración a través de las Fronteras Nacionales**”, tal y como ha sido propuesto por la ARFE a la Unión Europea, la Comunidad Andina, el MERCOSUR, el Sistema de la Integración Centroamericana, varios gobiernos nacionales de Europa y América, y la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas, tras informar oportunamente al Programa de Fronteras de la Unión Africana.

## 5. Plan de Acción

Se ha sugerido que este Plan de Acción debe constituir un paquete bastante flexible de intervenciones a dos niveles interconectados, con un horizonte temporal a medio y largo plazo, tal y como se explica a continuación.

En primer lugar, **a nivel regional**, el propósito debe ser incrementar la eficiencia y la efectividad del amplio rango de iniciativas existentes, promoviendo y facilitando que se compartan experiencias, aprendizaje y el apoyo mutuo de los actores e investigadores nacionales y sub-nacionales implicados en la CTF.

Esta parte del Plan de Acción debe ser tutelado por el **Programa de Fronteras de la UA y ECOWAS**, y debe ser coordinado de forma operativa por un “**Grupo de Trabajo de CTF**” liderado por el apoyo técnico del PFUA y/o ECOWAS, tal y como la GIZ hace en la actualidad con el PFUA.

Las actividades más relevantes a este nivel pueden ser apoyadas financieramente por diferentes donantes (incluyendo los programas y bancos de desarrollo) e incluso por patrocinadores privados, pudiendo incluir:

- la promoción de una **plataforma/red para el intercambio de información y experiencias en África Occidental**, que puede combinarse con formación, sesiones informativas, visitas de estudio (en África y en Europa), etc. Esto puede facilitar una organización experimentada como la ARFE.
- El apoyo a los **programas transnacionales y las iniciativas regionales** nuevas y existentes, tales como un nuevo Programa MAC 2014-2020 (por ejemplo, con búsqueda de socios, desarrollo de proyectos), iniciativas en áreas de interés común (como la cooperación marítima), el desarrollo de un instrumento similar a las AECTs, la promoción de la CTF en las escuelas de administración pública y los programas de investigación.

En segundo lugar, **a nivel sub-nacional**, el objetivo debe ser fomentar y fortalecer las actividades de CTF endógenas y espontáneas en el terreno, y construir capacidades locales para que sean más sustanciales y estructuradas en el futuro, basadas en asociaciones transfronterizas y estrategias de desarrollo local.

Esta parte del Plan de Acción podría tomar la forma de un “**Programa de CTF regional para África Occidental dentro del inminente 11º Fondo Europeo de Desarrollo (FED)**”, que podría aportar asistencia técnica y un fondo para pequeños

proyectos *people-to-people* en las fronteras bilaterales o trilaterales de los países participantes. Una vez conseguida la capacidad institucional básica en CTF, pueden apoyarse adicionalmente infraestructuras conjuntas (centros de salud, colegios, almacenes para la producción y procesado agrícola, carreteras) y otros proyectos más sustanciales.

Este programa podría cubrir inicialmente un pequeño número de países con un buen grado de afinidad cultural y lingüística, proximidad y estabilidad, con vistas a ampliarlo de forma gradual.

## **6. Recomendaciones**

Las recomendaciones principales que surgen de este estudio se dirigen principalmente a la Comisión Europea y la Unión Africana, y pueden encontrarse a continuación.

Se recomienda que:

1. La Comisión Europea debe presentar a la Unión Africana propuestas para un Plan de Acción, incluyendo acciones a nivel regional y sub-nacional para el desarrollo de la CTF en África Occidental, tal y como se describe en el presente informe.
2. La Unión Africana debe consultar a los territorios implicados, incluyendo a las organizaciones regionales y los países de África Occidental, sobre los objetivos y elementos de dicho Plan de Acción, así como sobre su ámbito geográfico (países participantes).
3. La Unión Africana debe solicitar a la GIZ y la ARFE que elaboren, junto con aquellos actores que se considere oportuno, una propuesta detallada de Plan de Acción, tras consultas con la UE (FED) y otros donantes, incluyendo una serie de especificaciones técnicas, y los preparativos para su financiación y ejecución.
4. La Comisión Europea y la Unión Africana deberían organizar conjuntamente un taller que considerara las propuestas de la GIZ y la ARFE y formulara recomendaciones sobre la finalización de los preparativos para el Plan de Acción.
5. La ARFE debe estimular actividades de comunicación y apoyo en África Occidental sobre el valor añadido de la cooperación transfronteriza y, junto con otras organizaciones internacionales y autoridades nacionales, debe continuar apoyando activamente la adopción mundial del 7 de junio como "Día Internacional de la Integración a través de las Fronteras Nacionales".



## 1. INTRODUCTION

The study "***Cross-Border Cooperation in West Africa: Support to integrated and sustainable development and cross-border cooperation between Macaronesia, Cape Verde and Senegal***" was carried out by the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR) for the European Commission, Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy (DG Regio). It commenced in December 2012 and was completed by September 2013.

The present ***Final Report*** presents the main results, outcomes and conclusions of the study for the consideration of the European Commission.

The report is structured in five main sections:

- **Section 2** presents the objectives and scope of the study and its methodology and work plan, and describes briefly the work that has been carried out.
- **Section 3** presents the findings arising from the desk research and fieldwork of the study, covering: a historical perspective of border issues and regional integration institutions in West Africa; specific fieldwork findings on sectors with CBC potential, factors constraining or facilitating CBC; and, general findings on types of CBC interventions, lessons drawn and geographical differentiation.
- **Section 4** draws conclusions concerning a SWOT analysis of CBC on the West African seaboard and sets out the strategic direction of initiatives and interventions in support of the development of cross-border cooperation between the countries of the seaboard of West Africa.
- **Section 5** outlines an Action Plan and its components for the development of CBC and sustainable development along the West African seaboard.
- **Section 6** highlights a number of recommendations addressed principally to the European Union and the African Union on taking forward the conclusions and proposals for action of the study.

The main part of the report is accompanied by six ***Annexes*** providing more detailed information pertaining to relevant literature and the fieldwork carried out as part of this project.

## 2. OBJECTIVES, METHODOLOGY AND TASKS

### 2.1 Objectives and Methodology

#### ***Objectives and Scope of the Study***

According to the Specifications of the study "the object of this contract is to support the preparation of an ***Action Plan*** for the development of cross-border cooperation and the enhancement of social, cultural, economic and environmental sustainable development along the Western African seaboard".

The Specifications also stress that "the Plan will place particular emphasis on promoting the active participation of regional and local actors, as well as nongovernmental organisations and is intended to make a positive contribution to future developments".



Map of West African States

In line with the Specifications the study built on two pillars:

- First, the EU study **"Opportunities for CBC in West Africa"** which was carried out by AEBR in 2011. This included a literature review and analysis of various other sources of information and offered a SWOT of CBC at Africa and West Africa levels, as well as a proposal of roadmap for the development of cross-border cooperation in West Africa.
- Second, the EU "Transnational Cooperation Programme Madeira-Açores-Canarias 2007-2013". Known as **"MAC Programme"**, includes Priority Axis 3 "Third Countries Cooperation and Great Neighbourhood" which has the largest allocation of programme funds (43%) and has been supporting over 50 cooperation projects, involving a large number of West African partners, mostly from Cape Verde and Senegal.

The current study seeks to go into **greater depth** in the area under research than the previous EU/AEBR study. It also seeks to propose the broad lines of an Action Plan that can be presented to the African Union and other African organisations, particularly the UEMOA. In view of the security situation in parts of West Africa and given the large number of cooperation projects supported by the MAC Programme involving West African partners, mostly from Cape Verde and Senegal, this study is **focused on cross-border cooperation along the West African seaboard**, particularly between:

- MAC (Madeira-Azores-Canarias) and Cape Verde/Senegal/other West African countries
- Cape Verde and Senegal
- Cape Verde and/or Senegal on the one hand, and other West African countries on the other.

The **key outcomes** of the study are expected to be:

- a specific analysis regarding CBC along the West African seaboard.
- the strategic directions for, and the main features of an Action Plan for developing cross-border cooperation and sustainable development along the West African seaboard.

## **Methodology and Work Plan**

The study relied on a combination of methods to accomplish its tasks:

- desk research, including literature and legislation review
- survey work (online survey of stakeholders)
- interviews with relevant actors, and
- other methodological approaches, such as logical framework approach.

The main stages followed by the study can be summarised as follows:

- Project kick-off and preparation of the Inception Report
- Desk research
- Fieldwork and data collection focused on Senegal and Cape Verde, comprising:
  - Online questionnaire
  - Face-to-face interviews with stakeholders
- Synthesis workshop:
  - To validate the analysis of information collected and to contribute to the definition of a broad strategy for the Action Plan
- Elaboration of Action Plan and recommendations, and preparation of the Draft Final Report and Final report.

## **2.2 Tasks Carried Out**

### ***Inception stage***

In its initial stage, the activities of the study focused on the development of the ***Inception Report***. The basis for this report were the Specifications of the study and AEBR's technical offer, a preliminary review of relevant literature, and consultations with the African Union and other partner organisations, using mostly online communication tools.

The Inception Report outlined the context and aims of the study and presented in detail how the tasks of the project would be carried out, including the methodology, organisation, work plan and timetable of the project.

The draft Inception Report was discussed at an informal meeting with DG Regio in Brussels prior to its finalisation as ***Deliverable 1*** of the project.

### ***Task 1: Select Three Experts***

Under this task, the selection of senior and junior experts was completed by AEBR, in line with the requirements of the Specifications and in agreement of DG Regio.

Mr Haris Martinos was designated as the ***Senior Expert***, responsible for coordinating and performing the fieldwork together with the Junior Experts. He also played a major role within the AEBR team of experts in developing the key documents of the study, such as the Draft Baseline Document and Action Plan.

Two ***Junior Experts*** were appointed: Mr Jean-Louis Sanka and Mr Alejandro Hernandez Rivero based, respectively, in Senegal and Cape Verde. They participated in the preparation and carrying out of fieldwork and data collection, and contributed to the literature search and review.

The core project team was led by Mr Martin Guillermo Ramirez as **Project Director**, and included Ms Marie-Lou Perou as **Project Co-ordinator**.

### **Task 2: Identify Relevant Actors in the Border Area and Conduct Interviews**

A review of available information was performed by the project team with contributions from study partners and stakeholders, through literature and legislation review in order to extract the most relevant reliable data. This **desk research** covered a range of relevant documentation including:

- MAC Programme documents, including an analysis of most relevant projects involving Cape Verde, Senegal and other West African countries;
- Recent documentation from AU, ECOWAS and UEMOA, and inter-state agreements and border/cross-border related initiatives.
- Recent research pertaining to West Africa, such as the publications of the West Africa Institute.
- Documentation of relevant EU strategies and initiatives, including the EU Atlantic Strategy and EU Maritime Policy.

A specific output of the desk research was an extensive **bibliography** on cross-border cooperation and border issues in West Africa. It was compiled building on and extending the bibliographical references of the AEBR (2011) study and was further enhanced with inputs from the fieldwork, and is included in **Annex 1** of this report.

The findings of the literature review which are of most relevance to this study are summarised in Section 3.1.

In parallel with the desk research a systematic preparation of the **fieldwork** was undertaken. In close cooperation with the Joint Technical Secretariat of the MAC Programme and other study partners (e.g. ENDA Diapol) it was possible to identify a fairly large number of actors with an involvement in CBC-type activities. The KEEP database of INTERACT Programme was also used to obtain systematically contact details of organisations in the two target countries of Cape Verde and Senegal, as well as in the three MAC regions.

Since it proved possible to establish a reliable database of stakeholder contacts, the fieldwork and data collection was structured in two parts: a small online survey, followed by a number of face-to-face interviews.

The **online survey** was carried out in order to establish a baseline on the main issues to be addressed by the study:

- Experience in cross-border cooperation, including project examples and contact details of people with CBC experience in West Africa
- Fields with the greatest potential for CBC
- Main factors facilitating or constraining CBC.

Respondents were also invited to indicate stakeholders with CBC experience, as well as good examples of CBC initiatives and projects which would be of interest to this study.

The response was as follows:

- 40 questionnaires were returned by stakeholders from Cape Verde (25) and Senegal (15); partners in MAC projects and other stakeholders identified by AEBR and study partners as being engaged in CBC and similar activities.

- 15 questionnaires were returned from lead partners of MAC Programme projects, i.e. organisations based in (mostly) the Canary Islands, the Azores and Madeira.

There was a negligible response from stakeholders in other West African countries which have only a small number of participants in MAC Programme projects.

The questionnaire was developed taking into account the desk research of the study and was issued in French, Portuguese, Spanish and English (see **Annex 2**), and the main findings are summarised in Section 3 (see also **Annex 3**).

In addition to the survey, some 40 **face-to-face interviews** were conducted by the senior and junior experts of the project team with stakeholders in Senegal and Cape Verde, including some who had responded to the survey. They were semi-structured interviews within the framework of the survey questionnaire and the draft interview guide which was presented in the Inception Report.

The issues explored during the interviews were:

- on the one hand, similar to the questionnaire, covering in greater depth CBC experience, constraints and potential, and
- on the other hand, methods of support to CBC and lessons learned from various interventions to date which could be of relevance for an Action Plan for CBC in West Africa.

The **interviewees** were drawn from a wide range of sectors, including national, regional and local authorities, various public agencies, civil society organisations and NGOs, universities and research centres, and the economic sector (see **Annex 4**). Summary notes of interviews are included in **Annex 5** of this report.

The analysis of the information provided a series of findings and conclusions. The latter crystallised a **SWOT** analysis concerning CBC, specifically along the West African seaboard, which offered the basis for a **problems, objectives and strategy analysis**. This led to the strategic directions for the formulation of an Action Plan for the development of CBC.

### **Task 3: Organise a Workshop**

The interim results of the study were considered at a **synthesis workshop** held on 7 June 2013 in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, hosted by one of the project partners, *Casa África*.

A working document entitled "**Baseline Document for Cross-Border Action in the Western African seaboard**" was produced for this purpose, including main preliminary findings and conclusions, and an Action Plan outline. The draft was distributed prior to the meeting to all relevant stakeholders and invitees. It was presented at the workshop using a PowerPoint presentation and was discussed in detail.

Key points discussed at the workshop included:

- Lessons: what is best in West African CBC experience to date; what is lacking / could be learned from CBC experience in the EU?
- Should the Action Plan be at two levels (regional and sub-national)? What should be its main components?
- Which countries should be in the core group of a "CBC Programme" for the West African seaboard?
- How best to nurture regional level cooperation and sharing? What are the capacities and what should be the role of regional organisations?
- How best to nurture regional (state) / local links?

#### **Task 4: Prepare an Action Plan**

The elaboration of the Action Plan continued building on the outcomes of the workshop. A paper summarising the main findings and conclusions of the study and the proposed Action Plan outline was circulated widely to project partners and key stakeholders for consultation. This provided further inputs to the Action Plan. The **Action Plan** forms part of the Final Report (see Section 5) and provides the guidelines for developing CBC between the countries of the West African seaboard and specific actions over a medium-to-long-term timescale. For each of the main actions, a specification of objectives, activities, expected results, duration, funding and management has been developed.

The **Draft Final Report** was developed presenting the main findings, conclusions and recommendations, as well as the draft Action Plan. It constituted **Deliverable 2** of the study and was submitted by AEFR to the European Commission and the African Union for consultation. After fine-tuning, the present **Final Report** represents **Deliverable 3**.

### **3. FINDINGS**

#### **3.1 Literature Review: Border Issues and Regional Cooperation Institutions**

As already mentioned in Section 2, the study compiled an extensive bibliography and reviewed a number of scientific publications and institutional documentation. This allows a historical perspective on border issues, including cross-border cooperation, and a brief presentation of the institutional foundations of CBC in West Africa.

The information obtained by the study is essentially qualitative and contains a significant body of publications on cross-border cooperation. It consists of conference reports, working papers, scientific publications (articles and books), reports of expert meetings, government press releases, reports of activities of agencies focused on cross-border cooperation, notes syntheses, notes of workshops, etc. They fall into two broad categories: the scientific literature based on empirical experience and institutional literature that describes the historical and politico-institutional processes regarding cross-border cooperation.

There is an abundance of **academic/scientific publications** on West African borders (and more generally on African borders) covering historical, political, cultural and other aspects, including cross-border cooperation. Much of this literature is focused on border conflicts and the continuing burden of artificial borders and institutional differences created by the colonial past.

Interstate conflict over boundaries has been relatively frequent. These disputes have sometimes escalated, and in some cases reached full-scale war. There are many aspects in the origin of these conflicts; some factors have made them difficult to be solved after years; and others have contributed to their lower potential for open conflict.

The development of democracy and supra-national integration processes have improved the prospects for territorial dispute settlement in some cases, but in other instances democratic practices and procedures have intensified bilateral conflicts between states over boundaries or territorial issues. In any case, supranational institutions (the African Union and the RECs especially) and some countries' commitment to the use of peaceful means are contributing to generate an environment prone to solve the conflicts.

Some African countries have made a good use of international aid and now face new development challenges including governance and democracy, strengthening of supranational mechanisms and more “South-South” cooperation. This spirit is also perceived when talking about international boundaries, but not that much on the ground. Local trends prevail, as well as centralistic approaches, with very few exceptions. On the other hand, ancient cultures still are present in some border areas, overcoming the dictates of the Berlin Conference (1884-1885) and further international conferences, and opening another suggesting field to build cross-border concepts over pre-colonial entities. The territories covered by the Yoruba groups, or societies “on the move” like the Touareg and Mauri paint very interesting pictures to tackle cross-border cooperation, despite recent conflicts as the case of the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad, the Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa, or Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb.

Nevertheless, the global picture of the progress achieved so far towards regional integration in West Africa is not very encouraging. As documented in a publication of ZEI (Tolentino C. & Vogl M. (eds.) 2011) “in spite of high aspirations of politicians, little progress has been achieved with regard to regional economic integration and the regional exchange of goods”.

The extensive scientific literature also offers insights into the cultural, economic and other dimensions of borders and cooperation across borders. Based on empirical data analysis examines historical processes and in some cases concrete projects, as well as offering forward looking perspective and, importantly, describes the benefits of cross-border cooperation, its feasibility and the different obstacles to it.

The work of ENDA Diapol released in 2007 on **cross-border dynamics in West Africa**, highlights the different levers of cross-border cooperation. By “summarizing” the West African region into three entities (Senegambia, SKBo, MK2), it offers geographical, cultural, economic and historical facts of relevance to cross-border cooperation. It further points out that cross-border cooperation is based on local initiatives and endogenous dynamics.

This approach is supported by a number of subsequent writings —by Tandia (2012), Sanka (2010), Walther and Retaille (2011), Marcelino (2011)— which focus on mobility and reciprocity across borders. This is a factual necessity that provides impulse and synergies leading to cross-border cooperation. The socio-spatial phenomena are thus co-constructed and co-experienced by partners on either side of the border and demonstrate a strong cultural base in cross-border links.

The economy is also an important stimulus. Several authors - CILSS (2009, 2010, Zeller, 2010; Walther, 2012) - have focused on the economic and inclusive dimension of boundaries. The border has become a valuable resource to exploit like the raw materials and fishery resources and, in this context, trade is a primary dimension of cross-border cooperation, as evidenced Samaila (2012). Therefore, cross-border cooperation is rooted in the local dynamics and initiatives (Mounkaila, 2010; Sanka, 2009; Zeller, 2010). Nevertheless, this is not always the case between adjacent border areas and, as noted above, there are places of tension, antagonism and conflict (Titeca & Vlassenroot 2012; Tandia, 2012B; Johnson, 2010A). However, even border conflict in some cases creates links, such as the dynamics of the illicit trade, as pointed out by Wittmayer & Büscher (2010).

What is most relevant in these scientific writings is that they reveal the dynamics of cross-border cooperation as a process developed from the bottom, with the top just giving it an institutional and legal basis.

### **Supranational and multilateral institutions**

The literature review paints a picture of CBC taking place in West Africa in a rich institutional landscape.

According to the AEBR (2011) study the most visible actions in favour of cross-border cooperation (CBC) are those included in main African integration agendas. In this framework, it is very challenging to analyse most relevant efforts to promote CBC, paying special attention to the gradual involvement of the sub-national level and the growing supranational endeavour (multilateral, continental and/or international). The main role up to now corresponds to supra-national institutions, as it is the case of the **African Union (AU)** and the **Regional Economic Communities (RECs)**. The AU has constituted a Conference of Ministers in charge of Border Issues, implements the African Union Border Programme (AUBP) since 2007 and established a normative framework for the facilitation of CBC in the continent as a main tool for integration. In 2011, the AU designated the 7<sup>th</sup> June as the African Borders's Day<sup>1</sup>.

The RECs are groupings of African individual countries by sub-regions with the objective of achieving greater economic integration. They are considered as the building blocks of the AU and are the main actors in the implementation of the strategy "New Partnership for Africa's Development" (NEPAD) aimed to provide an overarching vision and policy framework for accelerating economic co-operation and integration among African countries. Eight RECs are recognised by the AU; in the case of West Africa, the **Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS, 1975)**.

ECOWAS (CEDEAO in French) was founded by the Treaty of Lagos on 28<sup>th</sup> May 1975 with the mission to promote economic integration across the region. It is a grouping of 15 West African countries where a few members have come and gone over the years. Current members are Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo.

The activities of the **ECOWAS** include the promotion of cross-border cooperation. In 2005, ECOWAS prepared a draft convention on cross-border cooperation, which was tabled before a meeting of experts from member States in November 2006. The "Convention on cross-border co-operation in the ECOWAS area" was approved and these efforts have had a snowball effect in that the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA), the Inter-States Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS) and the Liptako-Gourma Development Authority (ALG) have all launched cross border cooperation initiatives.

To ensure the sustainability of its cross-border activities, the ECOWAS Commission integrated CBC issues in its organisational structure within its Free Movement of Persons Department. Then, the AU Commission expressed interest in learning from the West African experience to facilitate CBC at the continental level. A Steering Committee and a West African Experts Working Group were set-up. In May 2009, a stakeholders meeting of the ECOWAS CBC Programme took place in Abuja (Nigeria), where cross-border actors discussed next steps and priority actions. The Programme's aim is to bring regional integration and local populations closer together by empowering border areas.

The **West African Economic and Monetary Union** (usually known as **UEMOA** from its name in French), is a customs and currency union between eight members

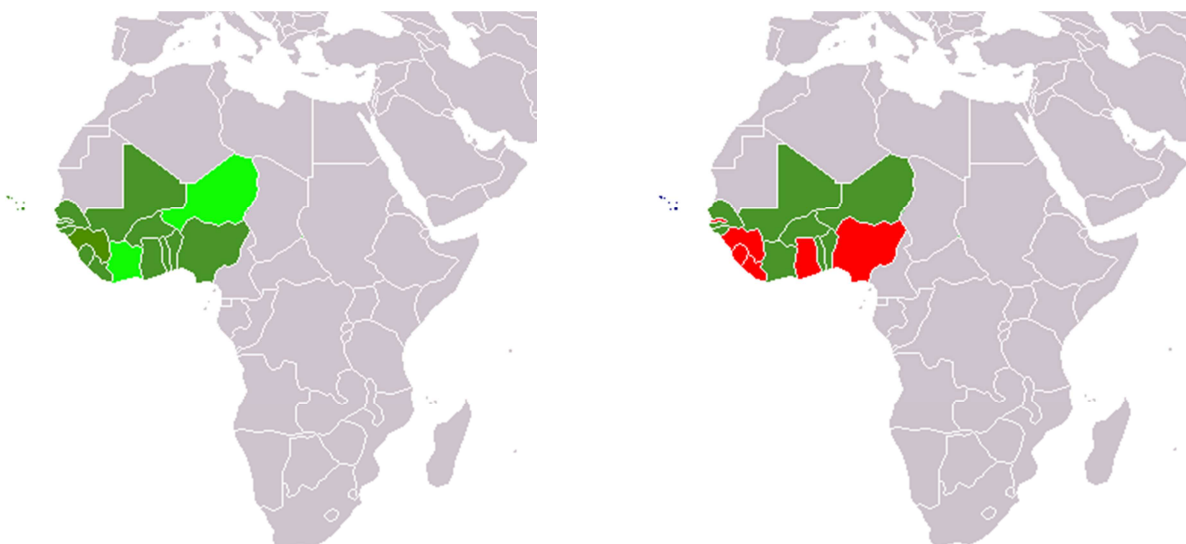
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<sup>1</sup> A process has been initiated by the AEBR to establish the African initiative of the 7<sup>th</sup> June as a global one: the Declaration of the International Day of Integration across National Boundaries by the UN General Assembly (Note from the AEBR Secretariat).



of ECOWAS (Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo; Guinea-Bissau, lusophone, became the 8<sup>th</sup> member in 1997). It was established by a Treaty in Dakar on 10<sup>th</sup> January 1994 to promote economic integration among countries that share the CFA franc as a common currency, issued by the Central Bank of West African States (BCEAO).

The **West African Monetary Zone (WAMZ)** is a group of 6 countries (Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone) within ECOWAS that plan to introduce a common currency, the Eco, by the year 2015. Nigeria, the Africa's largest oil producer and most populous country, leads the WAMZ since its foundation in 2000. All members are English-speaking countries apart from Guinea (Conakry, Francophone). Along with Mauritania, Guinea opted out of the CFA franc currency, shared by all other former French colonies in West and Central Africa. A future goal is for the CFA franc and Eco to merge into a common and stable currency for all of West and Central Africa. The launch of this new currency is being developed by the West African Monetary Institute, based in Accra (Ghana). However, several of the WAMZ's countries currently suffer from weak currencies and chronic budget deficits.



Map of ECOWAS with member states in dark green and states with suspended membership in light green  
Patrick Braga, 2010.

(GNU Free Documentation License)

■ UEMOA  
■ WAMZ

There are some other transnational cooperation structures, which are worth mentioning for the purpose of this study, due to their relevance in promoting efforts for the joint management of natural resources belonging to several countries, including the following:

- Senegal and Mauritania have cooperated successfully with Mali under the **Organisation for the Development of the Senegal River** (*Organisation pour la Mise en Valeur du Fleuve Sénégal*, OMVS), which was formed in 1972 as a flood control, irrigation, and agricultural development project.
- The **Gambia River Development Organisation** (*Organisation pour la mise en valeur du fleuve Gambie*, OMVG) was created in 1978 between Gambia and Senegal with the objective to manage the river Gambia as a natural resource. In 1980 Guinea joined the OMVG, and Guinea-Bissau is also a member, even if it is not riparian of the Gambia, but lies in its basin.

The activities of the supranational and multilateral institutions have given rise to a growing **institutional literature** documenting the initiatives and decisions of African organisations and various other initiatives. The AU border programme, ECOWAS and UEMOA initiatives, framework agreements, such as the one for the delimitation of maritime (continental shelf) borders between Senegal, Cape Verde and four other West African countries, represent the core of such documentation.

Since the 2000s, the number of publications increased reflecting the growing interest in issues of cross-border cooperation in the context of integration and development. Cross-border cooperation is a necessity and its realisation is essential as emphasised by the African Union (2009). From 2007, it is seen as a framework for **combining conflict prevention with the promotion of development** (African Union, 2007).

Throughout the institutional literature, the security aspects are crucial. For instance, the fact that the border programme of the African Union in 2007 focuses on a combined theme of "Preventing conflicts, promoting integration" is significant and noteworthy. The two inter-related components appear clearly in this programme: the first is operational (conflict prevention) and the second is political (promoting integration). The institutional literature shows a political, territorial and economic interest in cross-border cooperation. On a purely political level, an initiative of delimitation and demarcation of borders by 2017 and at the economic and territorial level, cross-border cooperation should be achieved through local cross-border initiatives. Similarly, ECOWAS's PIT (*Programme d'initiative transfrontalière*) is pursued with a focus on "peace and security".

The development dimension that allows cross-border cooperation is strengthened by the vision of the Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA), which considers the region as a coherent territory (UEMOA, 2010). The adoption of a spatial regional plan where the border areas should play a pivotal role in development is an illustration of this approach.

From the institutional literature review it is also worth noting some specific recent developments of relevance to this study:

- Documents concerning the AU Border Programme:
  - Report of the preparatory meeting of Government experts, 3rd Conference of African Ministers in charge of border issues, Niamey (Niger), 14-15 May 2012. (Point 13 (vi) of the report suggests the finalisation of the cross-border cooperation guide under preparation by the Commission, taking into account of the specificities of Island States).
  - Declaration on the African Union Border Programme, 3rd Conference of African Ministers in charge of border issues, Niamey (Niger), 17 May 2013. (Point 11 (viii) recommends the application of specific arrangements to the situation of Islands States).
- Law concerning the ratification by Senegal of the sub-regional cooperation framework-agreement between the government of Senegal and its counterparts in five neighbouring countries on the fixing of their external 200 sea mile limits on the continental shelf" (*'la fixation des limites extérieures de leur plateau continental au-delà de 200 milles marins'*) which was signed on 21 September 2010 in New York, USA.
- Agreement between Sierra Leone and Guinea, reached with the assistance of Norway on 29 March 2013, allowing these two countries to fix limits of their maritime zones.

### 3.2 **Fieldwork Findings**

The results of the online survey (see **Annex 3**) and face-to-face interviews (see **Annex 5**) provide a full picture of the state of play of CBC between Macaronesia (Madeira-Açores-Canarias) and West Africa and within the seaboard countries of West Africa, especially involving Senegal and/or Cape Verde on which the fieldwork was focused.

#### **CBC experience**

The survey has shown that there is substantial experience and interest in the broader field of cross-border cooperation. The first percentage (below) shows the proportion of respondents who have participated in CBC activities or projects, and the second the countries with which their experience has been gained:

- Senegal: 87% have CBC experience with a wide range of other countries (mostly with Gambia & Guinea-Bissau)
- Cape Verde: 87% have reported CBC experience mostly (62%) with the Canary Islands
- MAC (Madeira-Açores-Canarias): 93% have reported CBC experience predominantly (64%) with Cape Verde.

The respondents mentioned more than 50 CBC projects and this is a further indication of their interest in, and knowledge of CBC:

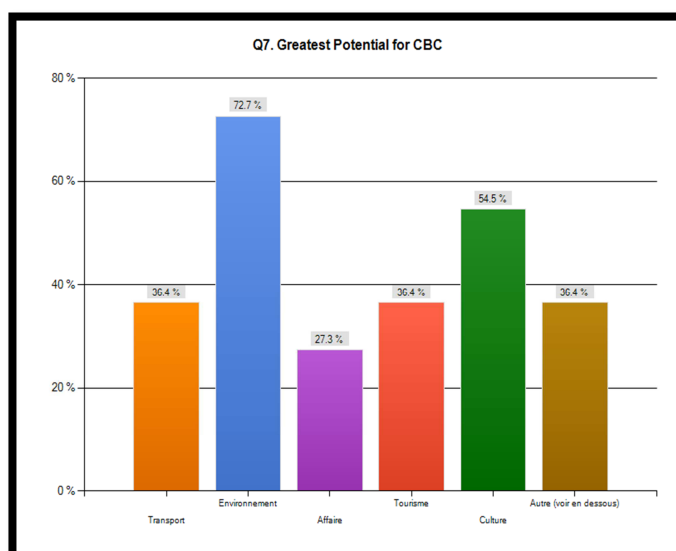
- 17 projects listed by Senegalese respondents, 15 by Cape-Verdean, 26 by respondents from the MAC regions. Some of the projects were mentioned by several respondents (see **Annex 3**).

This experience is widespread among various sectors: state (central government departments and agencies), regional/local government, NGOs, universities and research centres; but less so among business organisations (chambers, etc.) which are focused at national level activities.

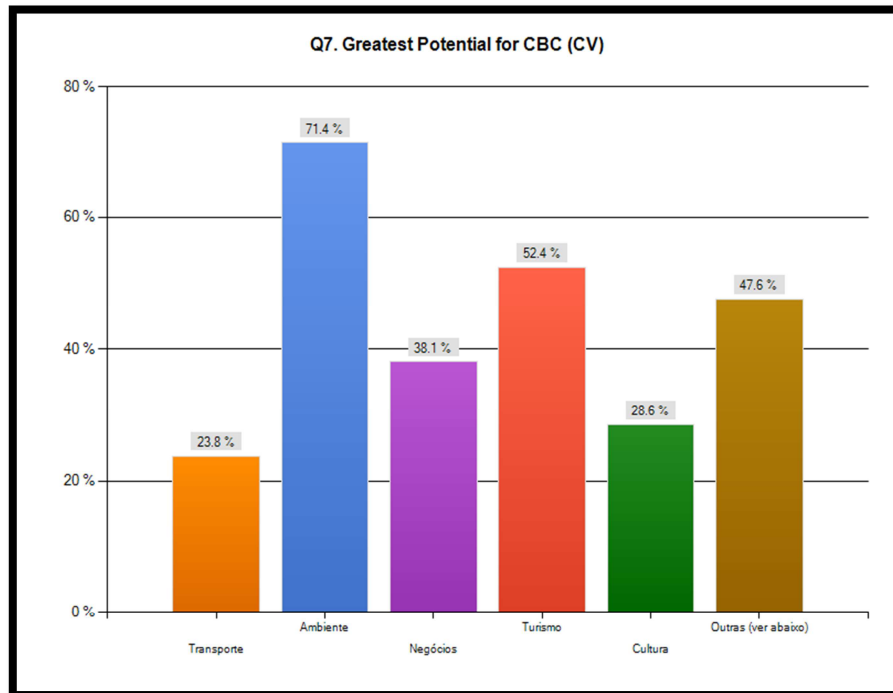
It should be stressed that this experience refers to formal (institutional) CBC initiatives and projects. The study interviews and the literature review suggest that informal / spontaneous CBC activities are widespread and tend to involve several categories of actors: local government (*collectivités locales*), media (local radio), civil society organisations (typically women's and youth associations), local traders ("75% of economic activity is in the informal sector") and "always the village chief" who exercises great influence.

#### **Greatest Potential**

In the case of **Senegal** stakeholders the greatest potential for CBC is seen in the areas of **environment** and **culture** (see chart).



**Environment** is also the area with the greatest potential according to **Cape Verde** stakeholders (see chart below), followed by **tourism**. The same potential (environment and tourism) is seen by MAC stakeholders.



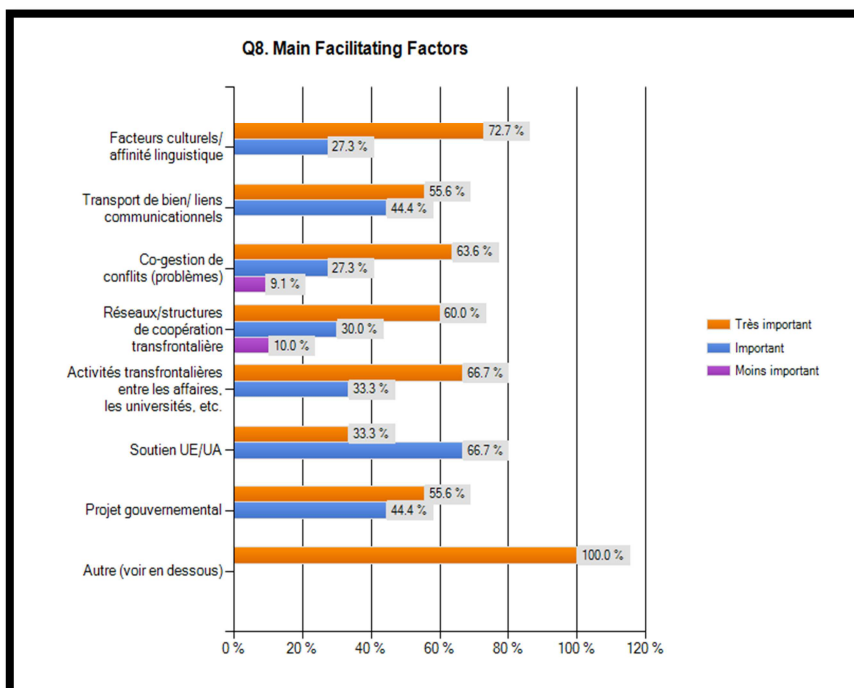
A great many other fields are considered by stakeholders to offer potential for cross-border cooperation. They include (not in any order of priority): culture, business/trade, research, health, education, land management, conflict prevention, water, agriculture/food processing, fisheries, land management, renewable energy.

Some of the fields are very broad and multi-faceted. For instance, the "environment" encompasses management of natural resources, water, climate change, etc; "culture" could cover cinema, theatre, music, and even media (e.g. cross-border community radio); the "socio-economic sector" would include schools, health centres, markets, etc.; and "maritime issues" could include fisheries, maritime transport, protection of marine ecosystem, and even maritime surveillance.

Largely unexploited opportunities are seen to exist in building on the links of immigrant communities and diasporas. Similarly, some stakeholders referred to opportunities for cooperation between businesses as a follow up to other CBC activities, and even joint business ventures have been suggested, such as between Cape Verde and Senegal entrepreneurs, exploiting raw materials and processing them for national markets and export.

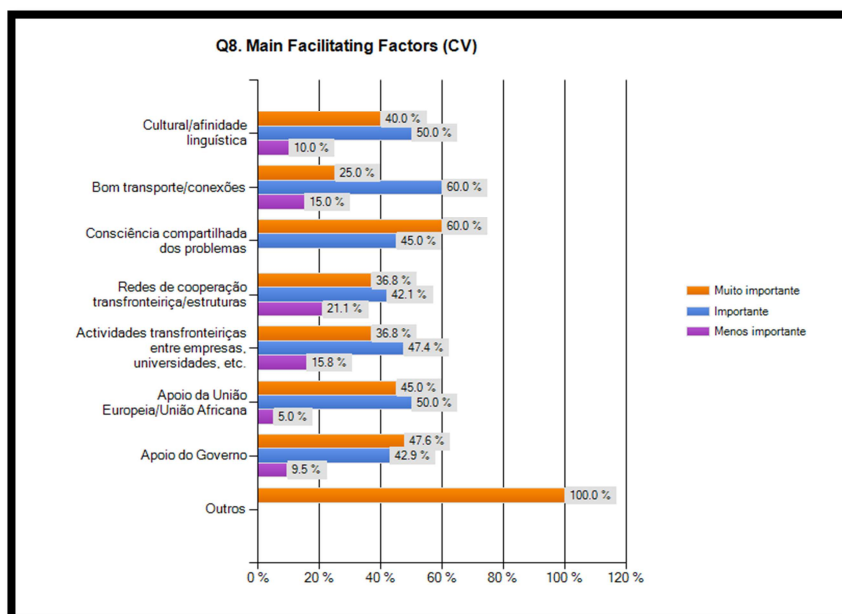
### **Facilitating Factors**

**Senegal** stakeholders attach the highest priority to **cultural and linguistic affinity** (73%) as a factor facilitating CBC, closely followed by **shared awareness/management of problems**, and the **pre-existence of CBC networks and activities**, for instance, between universities or businesses (see chart below).



In **Cape Verde** the shared awareness/management of problems comes top, and **EU and government support** follows (see chart below).

A different emphasis is noted in MAC responses, which prioritise good transport, followed by CBC networks and EU support as the most important facilitating factors.



A number of other factors stood out in the responses of the participants in the survey and the interviews.

**"Geographical location"** and **"geographical proximity"** were generally emphasised by stakeholders as conditions favourable to the development of CBC.

A broader formulation of these points has been used by many of the stakeholders who referred to **"common objectives/purpose"** and **"common interest"** as the main driving force for cooperation. This is, of course, neither static nor finite; hence

the existence of “political dialogue” is seen by several stakeholders as an important enabling factor.

In the case of Cape Verde, other dimensions, related to the above, were stressed by the interviewees, notably the “historic cooperation” with the Canary Islands and “geographical similarities”, such as insular conditions, climate and limited resources. This assessment was reciprocated by Canarian contributors to the study.

At the local level, in border areas, the “common interest” applies *par excellence* to the scope for jointly resolving day-to-day problems through cross-border cooperation.

Good political and economic stability of countries, and transparency in public administration and a “low rate of corruption” are also viewed as favourable conditions for cross-border cooperation activities to emerge and succeed.

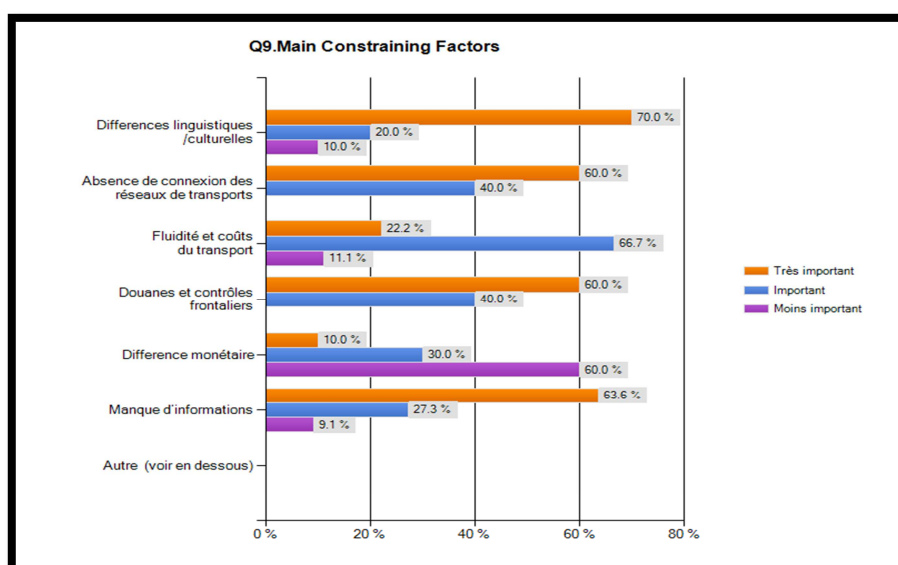
Other, more specific, factors have been mentioned. “Different levels of knowledge”, such as between Cape Verde and the Canary Islands, and the motivation to gain knowledge are sometimes seen as a strong motivation for engaging in cooperation activities, a view shared by Canarian contributors who have enumerated a long list of areas where Cape Verde is lagging behind and can benefit from the knowledge and experience of the Canary islands (e.g. in recycling, waste and water treatment, organising a network of health centres). Conversely, several stakeholders expressed concern about such (MAC-Cape Verde) imbalance and felt that more South-South cooperation is needed.

Availability of well trained technicians/experts has also been mentioned as a condition for successful participation in CBC projects.

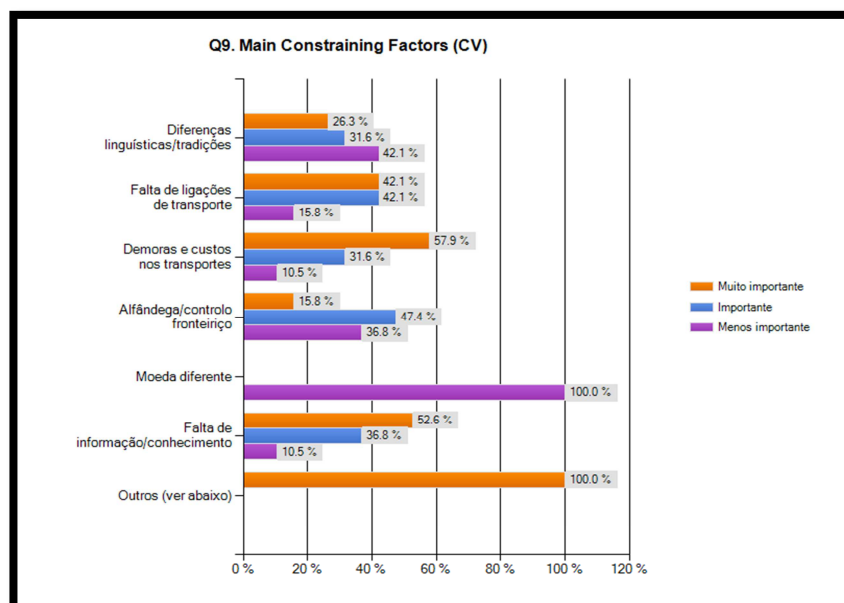
### Constraining Factors

Consistently with the above, **cultural and linguistic differences** stand out as the main constraining factor according to **Senegal** stakeholders, followed closely by **lack of information** (potential partners in other countries, funders’ requirements, etc.), **inadequate transport connections** and **delays at border controls** (see chart below).

Interviews with stakeholders have also emphasised the lack of stability as a constraint, as well as the differences in institutional structures and traditions (due to differing colonial background, e.g. between the Gambia, Senegal and Guinea-Bissau).



In **Cape Verde** and MAC the key constraining factors are seen to be **transport related** (inadequate connections, delays and costs), followed by lack of information (see chart below).



Various obstacles were discussed in the interviews with stakeholders; some of them particularly serious. First, the combination of some of the factors represents a major barrier to cooperation. For example, a Cape-Verdean stakeholder mentioned the bad experience of a cooperation project between Cape Verde and Senegal/Mali due to language differences and poor transport links.

Second, there are some negative conditions which inevitably have an overall negative effect on the development of cross-border cooperation. The “lack of fluidity” of people and goods has been repeated on many occasions (no free movement; not fully open borders). Similarly, references to security problems and illegal cross-border activities were widespread. In the same vein, the lack of a legal or institutional basis for CBC and the still outstanding ratification of CBC conventions are seen as having a negative effect.

Inadequate transport links tend to be, by themselves, a major obstacle to cross-border cooperation. This is the case of maritime transport between Cape Verde and Senegal (there are no regular shipping connection between the two countries). The bad state of roads in the border areas of continental West African countries is generally recognised as a major drawback to cross-border trade and cooperation (and is acknowledged in the high priority accorded by the EU to support the improvement of several major inter-state road axes, between Senegal and neighbouring countries).

Many interviewees mentioned that capacity to participate in projects and accomplish their objectives is lacking, and have highlighted weaknesses in project management and monitoring and, especially, in financial management “which is always a problem”. This was corroborated from the MAC perspective with remarks, such as, “they don’t know how to organise”.

It is generally recognised that local governments have limited resources to participate in CBC and, moreover, according to some interviewees, “cooperation is centralised by Governments which don’t take account of the opinions and real problems of municipalities”. Nevertheless, local governments tend to have competences (as against resources) and these are used for “light” forms of cooperation like city-twinning with foreign partners.

Lack of finance for pilot projects and a lack of project preparation facility (for instance, for MAC Programme projects) are serious constraints on West African organisations wishing to become active partners in projects funded by the EU and other donors.

### 3.3 **General findings**

#### **Types of interventions**

The literature review and the fieldwork are pointing to a broad pattern of actions of a cross-border nature. For the purposes of this study one can distinguish four main types of intervention, in terms of the activities they support and the way in which they are initiated.

First, **transfer of knowledge** actions are usually of a “North-South” orientation, initiated outside of Africa, and covering a wide range of fields. Such actions are widespread.

Second, **parallel actions**, in different countries/areas, are quite common and have the following key characteristics:

- they take the form of projects in “tangible” fields such as environment, urban improvements, etc.;
- they are normally combined with transfer of knowledge;
- they tend to be the result of external initiative and funding, with West African organisations being junior or partners.

Third, **harmonisation or normalisation** programmes, usually involving regional or inter-state initiative (land and maritime border demarcation, customs harmonisation, security measures, etc.).

Fourth, **action on the ground across borders** which emanates from either inter-state “contractual” initiatives or local endogenous / spontaneous initiatives. In both cases, it involves local actors engaging directly in joint actions in a wide range of fields (health, education, markets/trade, agricultural produce storage/processing, etc.).

It should be stressed that these are formal/institutional interventions. In connection with the last (fourth) type, it should be noted, as already mentioned above, that there is a multitude of informal / spontaneous CBC activities involving partners from contiguous border areas who come from different sectors (local government), Civil Society Organisations, local traders, traditional authorities, etc.).

Regarding the above types of action it should be noted that:

- the first two, correspond to “transnational cooperation” or “inter-regional cooperation” or “cross-border cooperation” on distant maritime borders as known within the scope of the European Territorial Cooperation (or sometimes even “twinning” between municipalities);
- the third is also of a “transnational cooperation” nature as it involves national-level state actors;
- the fourth corresponds closely to the ETC model of “cross-border cooperation”.

#### **Lessons from interventions**

There are no systematic evaluation studies on which to base an assessment of good or bad practices. However, some indicative lessons can be drawn, based on the assessments of the stakeholders consulted.



Senegal and (especially) Cape Verde stakeholders participating in **MAC programme projects** have consistently highlighted a number of weaknesses, which can be summarised as follows:

- no involvement in the inception and design of the projects;
- no direct contact/cooperation between West African partners;
- lack of (significant) financial support; and
- slow implementation.

A MAC Programme project that stands out representing good practice is ISLHÁGUA, led by the *Instituto Tecnológico de Canarias, S.A.* (ITC). The project encourages the efficient use of water, the knowledge and control of the quality of drinking water and the prevention of water-borne diseases, capacity building in the assessment and control of marine, drinking and regenerated water quality, the promotion of the use of adapted technology for the treatment, purification and regeneration of residual waters and the desalinization of sea water with greater energy efficiency. The ISLHÁGUA project is a unique case where the West African partners receive support from EDF for complementary activities to those funded by ERDF under the MAC Programme.

Other projects of a transnational cooperation nature, outside the MAC Programme, have been noted in the fieldwork as generating tangible results. An example is "ACCC" which concerns adaptation to climatic and coastal changes in West Africa and operates in selected coastal areas in five countries (including Senegal and Cape Verde) under the aegis of GEF, UNESCO, UNDP and UEMOA.

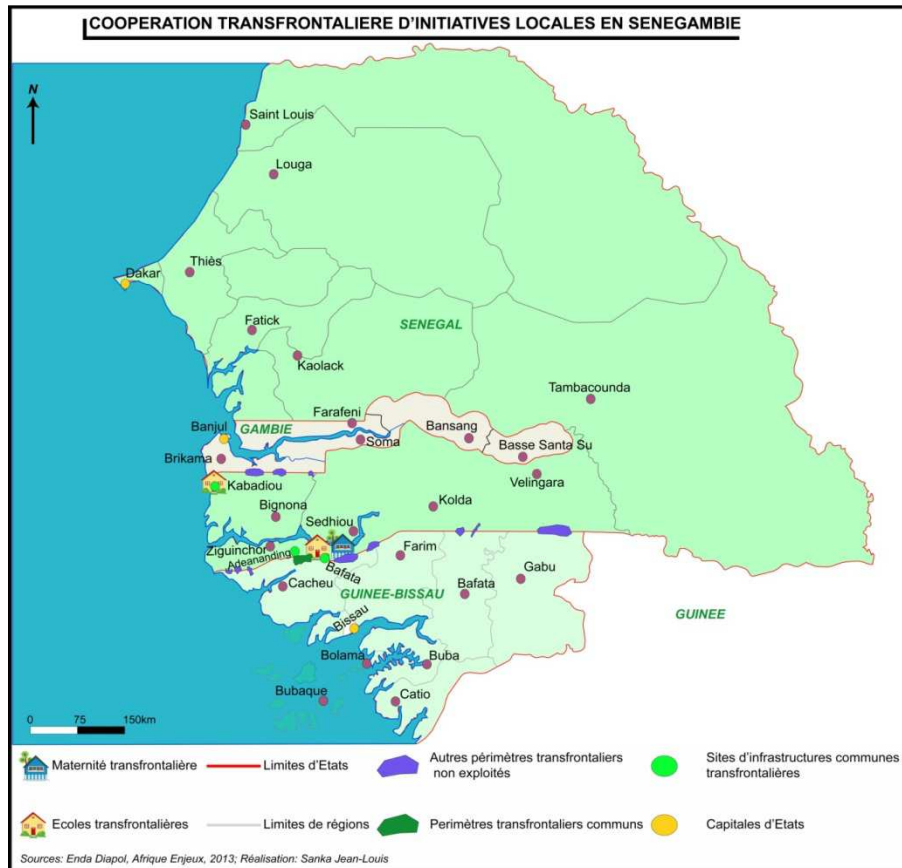


ACCC Project: *Adaptation au Changement du Climat en zone Côtière*

Actions initiated and implemented by **regional organisations**, although generally welcome, tend to attract criticism as they suffer from delays and lack of sufficient capacities (financial and human resources) for managing their implementation.

In the case of programmes promoting and supporting **cross-border cooperation on-the-ground**, there are interesting and tangible examples of results achieved on-the-ground that benefit local people, as in the case of "Senegambia" (see map below):

- Construction of a primary cross-border school between Senegal and Guinea-Bissau.
- Construction of a cross-border maternity unit between these two countries.
- Water retention basins in the framework of PAPIL (small irrigation project).
- The Implementation of cross-border projects for tracking livestock.
- Joint exploitation of bamboo.



*CBC school of Bafata between Senegal and Guinea-Bissau. The school has more than 200 students. It was built by Afrique Enjeux with the help of a Spanish NGO (ACPP).*

Other examples of tangible results of CBC mentioned by stakeholders during the fieldwork include a common fish processing unit between Gambia and Senegal and a cross-border project conducted between local border communities involving a development project in the mango sector in the border territory SKBo (Sikasso-Korhogo-Bobo Dioulasso) between Mali, Ivory Coast and Burkina Faso.

The AUBP is an interesting example of method of intervention, involving a capacity building component which provides support to cross-border local actors in the development and conduct of local cross-border development projects, including the borders between Senegal and the Gambia, Guinea and Mali. Further examples of CBC initiatives in the region are presented in **Annex 6**.

### **Geographical differentiation of interventions**

Overall, there is a clear **geographical differentiation** in the extent and type of cooperation actions and the potential for cross-border cooperation, which can be summarised as follows:

- **Between MAC (especially Canary Islands) and Cape Verde:**
  - There is widespread cooperation but the results are less tangible.
  - The cooperation is of a transnational nature, primarily involving the transfer of knowledge with a Europe orientation.
- **Between Senegal and other continental West African countries:**
  - The CBC actions are still “under construction” (not far advanced) but with potential for achieving concrete results.
  - Their orientation is “peace and security” and “regional integration”.
  - At state level there are mainly actions to promote harmonisation (e.g. in customs) and normalisation (e.g. in post-separatist situations).
  - At local level they ultimately involve joint actions across land borders (e.g. search for joint solutions to problems, construction of common infrastructure).
- **Between Cape Verde and Senegal:**
  - Such cooperation is currently limited but with potential to develop, building on shared maritime interests (marine environment, maritime transport, surveillance, fisheries, etc.) and strong people links (Cape-Verdean diaspora in Senegal and vice versa).

## **4. CONCLUSIONS**

### **4.1 SWOT Analysis of CBC**

This section brings together the main findings as they apply to the West African seaboard and places them against the background of the overall SWOT for West Africa.

The SWOT analysis of CBC along the West African seaboard focuses on the main strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats which have stood out in the findings of the previous section as being particularly relevant to the development of CBC in the West African seaboard. A degree of simplification has been necessary in view of the significant differences that have been observed between CBC across the land borders of the continental West African countries and CBC between Cape Verde and Macaronesia (especially Canary Islands).

### SWOT of CBC along the West African Seaboard

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural and linguistic affinity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural, linguistic, institutional differences</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shared awareness / management of problems; common interest</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inadequate transport connections (poor roads, no regular maritime transport)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local initiatives and endogenous dynamics;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of information (about potential partners, sources of funding, etc)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traditional cross-border trade (markets) and other economic activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delays at border controls; no free movement of people and goods</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traditional/cultural/religious cooperation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local government excluded/marginalised (cooperation centralised by Governments)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growing bilateral/trilateral treaties and agreements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insufficient capacities to participate in CBC activities</li> </ul>

Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Geographical location / proximity / historic links</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crime across borders: smuggling (weapons, goods), trafficking (persons, drugs), terrorism</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential for CBC in many sectors (environment, culture, tourism, etc)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of stability, security problems</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-existing CBC activities and networks (between universities, enterprises, etc)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of legal and institutional basis for CBC</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EU &amp; government support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of finance for project preparation and pilot actions</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good governance</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desire to learn/benefit from more advanced countries /areas</li> </ul>	

The above is a crystallised analysis applicable to the West African seaboard and should also be seen in the broader context of West Africa, since the Action Plan may include a broader regional dimension. The following SWOT of the West Africa CBC is taken from the AEBR (2011) study.

### SWOT of West African CBC

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growing bilateral/trilateral treaties and agreements</li> <li>• Traditional/cultural/religious cooperation (important role of traditional authorities functioning across borders)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• implementation up to now rather weak</li> <li>• lack of information</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• long and large rivers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• extreme climate in some areas</li> <li>• no bridges, but traditional crossing</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• growing border crossings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• difficult border crossings and poor infrastructures</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• some international and local airports</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• no international connections enough</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• regional roads</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• no highways</li> <li>• no railways (very few)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• important transport on roads</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• long waiting time at border crossings</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• simplified system for export (including traditional and informal)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• separate border facilities</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• some important cities on both sides of the border</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• mostly large rural areas</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• city-centres are improving, as well as secondary cities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• low attractiveness of many cities and villages</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• growing accommodation capacity in large cities (also improved quality)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• business and touristic travel still weak</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• strong agricultural sector as a source for export</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• exports depending on one sector</li> <li>• difficulties for export/import (customs clearance)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SMEs and innovation sector developing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• weak service sector</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• interaction between decentralised CBC and the national/multi-national level</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• weak involvement of regional/local authorities in national activities</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• many cross-border activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• mainly one-off activities</li> <li>• mainly informal CB networks</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• relatively strong cooperation at project level</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• isolated activities</li> <li>• no long term approach/ strategy</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• regional/local level and social partners involved in CBC on the ground</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• no permanent structures</li> <li>• voluntary structures doubled</li> <li>• missing legal instruments for cooperation</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• tourism development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• mostly national promotion</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• good consultancy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• lack of own knowledge at regional/local level</li> <li>• potentials of regional/local actors poorly developed</li> </ul>

Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a test case for successful CBC in West Africa</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>crime across borders: smuggling (weapons, goods), trafficking (persons, drugs), terrorism</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>growing role of ECOWAS and UEMOA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>few national investments in border areas</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>free trade zone / single currency</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>asymmetric benefits for both sides of the border</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>railway projects under planning (?)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>still weak border control</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>starting up joint border controls (training programmes, veterinarian control) (?)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>illegal activities (drugs, smuggle, crime-related, illegal migration, trafficking)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>great efficiency in dealing with priority problems in a CB basis (eg, common grain storage facilities, disease eradication programmes, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>negative attitude amongst locally based State officials (eg customs officers) towards cooperation</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>twin cities with a gateway function, and connecting metropolis trade routes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>development limited to the border</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>growing economic and technical knowledge, particularly from agro-industries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>strong dependency on mono-agricultural and agriculture and livestock (tensions)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>dynamic cross-border labour market</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>slow implementation</li> <li>(weak) frequent labour migration</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>strong feeling of the need of CBC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>long distances (very much time-consuming) for CBC</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>attractive touristic conditions in some areas (pilgrimage routes, ...)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>weak security at the borders</li> <li>fear of corruption and criminality</li> <li>growing violent actions and terrorism (conflicts, attacks, kidnapping)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>strong feeling in politicians</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>cross-border education mostly absent</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>cross-border health</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>health system</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>growing industry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>special institutions involved, but strategic approach rather weak (national focus)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>open labour market</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>poor working conditions</li> <li>informal mobility</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>potential for cross-border tourism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>cross-border touristic infrastructure rather weak</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>development of twin-cities to commercial gateways</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>improvements only in the border area and not in the whole region</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>growing CB projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>no systematic/strategic involvement in cross-border development</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bi- (and multi-) national Committees,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>poor participation of sub-national level</li> </ul>

From the findings of the present study and the above analysis two key conclusions are drawn of central importance to defining a strategic direction for the development of cross-border cooperation in West Africa.

First, the **potential** for cross-border cooperation contributing to sustainable development and regional integration is **great** and this applies to many fields, many categories of actors, many types of cooperation (transnational as well as CBC across maritime and land borders). However, this potential is grossly **under-exploited**, notwithstanding the large variety of cooperation activities noted by the study.

The evolution of CBC and its prospects for development should be seen against an overall unfavourable background. On the one hand, there are general obstacles that have not yet been overcome, such as the artificiality of many of the African borders reflecting the colonial period to which illegal cross-border activities and security issues have been added in recent years. On the other hand, there is the limited success of many years of regional integration efforts which have achieved little with regard to economic integration and flows of trade.

The realisation of the potential for cross-border cooperation should take into account the lessons drawn from existing interventions, which (to some extent) explain the reasons for this potential not being fully exploited and provide some pointers for the strategic direction of the Action Plan:

- There is a growing recognition of cross-border cooperation (“institutional base” and “political trust”) as a crucial dimension of efforts aimed at peace and security, development and regional integration. This relatively new context needs to be better understood and built upon.
- There is a great variety of initiatives and projects worth nurturing.
- Much energy in existing interventions goes to initial and rather “abstract” stages: agreements, regional/national commissions, conferences and other events, with relatively little concrete results on the ground benefiting people.
- Many interventions tend to be top-down, conceived and imposed from the top and lacking:
  - links to the local level (e.g. relying on *ad hoc* visits to the border areas) and crucially to the spontaneous cross-border activities and endogenous dynamics;
  - cross-border delivery mechanisms (e.g. reliance on national commissions).

Second, the **key conditions** for CBC to develop and succeed fall clearly in a small number of categories:

- **Cultural and linguistic affinity** is of paramount importance and exists in abundance across many of the West African borders.
- A good degree of **security and stability** is a precondition for a favourable state-level framework for CBC at local level. **Good governance** “from top to bottom” would be an important factor in CBC succeeding and becoming sustainable. These conditions have taken root in some West African countries but overall they are in short supply in the region.
- **Geographical proximity** and good transport communications make it possible for a wide range of stakeholders to cooperate across borders and pursue joint actions in a large number of fields. Such close contact involves lower costs, allows larger numbers of stakeholders to participate in (and benefit from) CBC activities, and facilitates an on-going cooperation based on longer-term strategies rather than isolated projects.

#### **4.2 Towards a strategy for the development of CBC**

The above conclusions provide a basis for a strategy for the development of cross-border cooperation in the countries of the West African seaboard.

A strategy for action in favour of cross-border cooperation needs to address issues of high complexity. It follows that the appropriate interventions will inevitably require a degree of complexity and capacities (institutional and financial) higher than typically the case in West Africa. To this effect the EU experience and resources would need to be relied upon.

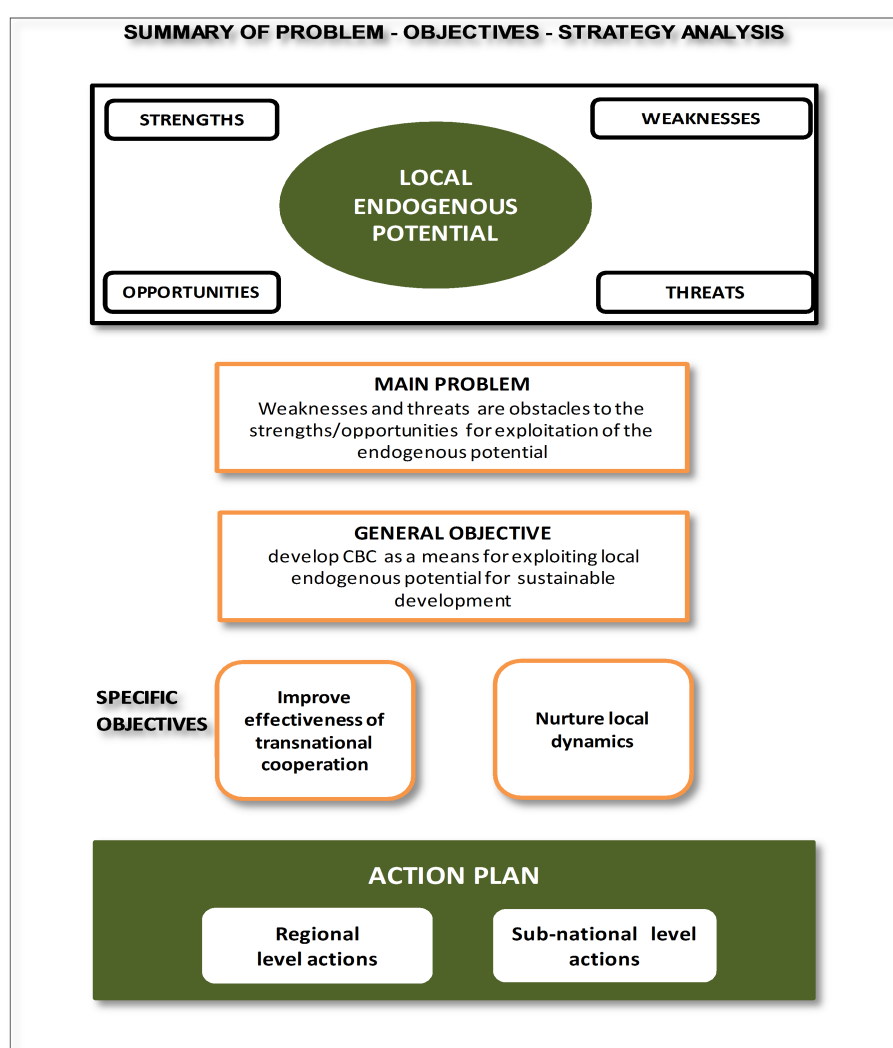
The **strategic approach** that emerges is based on three pillars.

First, the strategy should be based on a clear understanding that CBC is not a goal *per se*, but a means towards sustainable multi-faceted development and regional integration.

Second, the strategy should seek ways to add value and to gain from synergies between the various types of cross-border, transnational and other actions that are being pursued at different levels and regional/sub-regional groupings.

Third, the strategy should accord priority to nurturing local endogenous processes, create strong top/bottom links with CBC initiatives pursued at supranational level, and aim for results on the ground.

This approach is illustrated in the following chart:



Taking into account the above key conditions for CBC to develop and succeed, **the direction of the Action Plan** should be to focus:

- on the one hand, on actions at sub-national level:
  - in a group of countries with affinity, proximity and (a reasonable degree of) stability and good governance;



- aiming at small and fast practical actions with results on the ground in various sectors, through local cross-border partnership and direct people involvement, building on and enhancing local initiatives and endogenous processes;
- building good links between the national (state) and local levels for achieving an enabling framework;
- on the other hand, on strengthening cooperation at regional and inter-state level for sharing / learning and synergies between various initiatives and programmes.

The Action Plan will need a longer-term perspective building on a fairly large number of complementary actions, rather than a single project.

Effective **communication and advocacy** need to be an important transversal dimension in all the actions of the Action Plan. It is important to explain better to national policy makers **the added value of "cross-border cooperation"** (and that it should not be confused with "international cooperation") and to promote the mainstream forms of CBC, i.e. direct cooperation and joint actions by local actors from various sectors (local government, NGOs, business, etc.) on either side of a border within a shared "cross-border space".

It is also essential for "cross-border cooperation" to be recognised as an important dimension in the efforts to achieve peace, stability, sustainable development and regional integration. As such, it should be accorded a higher profile than so far. For this reason the AU's "African Borders Day" of 7 June should be supported *per se* and, furthermore, it should be adopted globally as the **"International Day of Integration across National Boundaries"**, as it has been proposed by AEBR to the European Union, the Andean Community of Nations, MERCOSUR, the Central American Integration System, several national governments in Europe and America, and the General Assembly of the United Nations, after informing the AUBP.

While fine tuning this draft report and the action plan, a project led by the General Direction for Relations with Africa of the Government of the Canary Islands is to be followed up particularly: the European project "AFRICAN" (Canary islands with West Africa: a Partnership Strategy) is aimed at strengthening and developing a common cooperation strategy between the Canary islands and West African Neighbour countries, specially Cape Verde, Senegal, Morocco and Mauritania (partners of the AFRICAN project). Its main objective is to develop a debate between the partners and work together in order to identify areas of cooperation of common interests (win-win approach) and produce a final strategy report (AFRICAN Strategy Report) that could serve as an input for the contents of the new MAC Programme 2014-2020 (cooperation between Macaronesia regions and third countries). Its conclusions are expected in the summer 2014, but a coordination with the present study is under way.

## **5. ACTION PLAN**

### **5.1 Main features**

The main elements of an Action Plan for the development of CBC along the West African seaboard are presented below.

It is suggested that the Action Plan should have a medium-to-long term time horizon and, in indicative terms, it should be developed for the **period 2014 – 2020**.

It should be a fairly flexible **package of consistent and reinforcing actions**. Some of them could take the form of multi-annual programmes or projects, whilst other actions could involve “light” and on-going activities, such as networking. However, each component should have its own, clearly defined, implementation arrangements.

The interventions of the Action Plan should be at two inter-linked levels:

- **regional level actions** for whole of West Africa; and
- **sub-national level actions** in cross-border areas of a group of West African countries.

## **5.2 Action Plan Components at Regional Level**

Regional level actions of the Action Plan should be for the whole of West Africa, including all member countries of ECOWAS and should also be open to other countries, such as Mauritania. The potential involvement of the EU MAC territories (i.e. the three EU archipelagos of Canary Islands, Madeira and Azores) and potentially other EU countries would be advantageous both in terms of the knowledge they can bring as well as human and financial resources. This type of participation could create a good balance between “North-South” and (increasingly) “South-South” cooperation.

The Action Plan should encompass at regional level a wide range of transnational activities, some of which would be on-going and some would be new. There are opportunities to associate with different programmes and initiatives, and to offer a platform and practical mechanisms for sharing and learning. The aim should be to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the full range of existing initiatives, by promoting and facilitating the sharing of experience, learning and mutual support among national and sub-national level actors and researchers engaged in CBC.

### **Structure**

This part of the Action Plan should be under the aegis of the **African Union Border Programme and ECOWAS** (and other structures such as UEMOA), and it should be operationally coordinated by a **“CBC Working Group”** led by technical support attached to AUBP and/or ECOWAS, such as currently provided by GIZ to the AUBP. This type of institutional arrangement should allow it to play several roles:

- **direct role in legal / institutional** matters, as is currently the case with the AU and regional organisations, but also take new initiatives, e.g. promotion of an ECTG-type instrument;
- **umbrella role** for sharing experience and knowledge from miscellaneous programmes and pilot actions, with MAC and other European inputs;
- **steering committee** role for the “West Africa CBC Programme” (see below).

### **Activities**

Relevant activities at this level could be supported financially by different donors (including development programmes and banks) and even private sponsors, and could include:

- the promotion of a **West Africa platform/network for the exchange of information and experience**, which could be combined with training, information sessions, study visits (in Africa and in Europe), etc and could be facilitated by an experienced organisation like AEBR;

- support to existing and new **transnational programmes and regional initiatives**, such as a new MAC Programme for 2014-2020 (e.g. with partner search, project development), initiatives in areas of common interest (e.g. maritime cooperation), development of an EGTC-type instrument, promotion of CBC in Public Administration schools and research programmes.

Several of these activities will be facilitating and enhancing existing ones, whilst some of them will be new initiatives (see below) that can be introduced progressively, under the coordination and support of the "CBC Working Group", when the required financial and human resources and participants' interest and commitment have been assured.

#### **New Regional Level Activities to be Promoted as Part of the Action Plan**

- **West Africa platform for the exchange of information and experience:**
  - Aims: sharing experience, learning and mutual support
  - Scope: ECOWAS/UEMOA countries (plus other African countries and MAC)
  - Participants: national and sub-national stakeholders engaged in CBC (including, politicians, administrators, researchers, development workers, etc.)
  - Activities: networking, training, information sessions, study visits, etc.
  - Funding: international or bilateral donors, development banks, private sponsors
  - Management/facilitation: by international organisation
- **Potential regional-level CBC capacity building initiatives:**
  - Research: evaluation studies and good practice database/publications
  - Facilitation of transnational cooperation: partner search, transnational project development, new thematic initiatives in areas of common interest (e.g. maritime issues)
  - Introduction of CBC in Public Administration Schools / Programmes
  - Promotion of Local Development Agents programmes for CBC (or introduction of CBC in existing programmes)

### **5.3 Action Plan Components at Sub-national Level**

The central component of the Action Plan should be a programme of active support to cross-border cooperation activities at sub-national level, across the borders of several West African countries. Such a **regional (multi-country) programme** is referred to below as the **"West Africa CBC Programme"**.

For the programme to succeed the participating countries should meet, as far as realistically possible, the conditions identified in the conclusions of this study (cultural/linguistic affinity, stability, proximity). In view of the prevailing conditions

in West Africa, it would be appropriate to consider starting the programme with a small core of countries and subsequently rolling it out. Ideally this should be done once the programme mechanisms are established and fully functioning, more countries meet the basic conditions and there are some good practice models to help newcomers learn by example and catch up. A decision as to the composition of the initial group of participating countries should be reached nearer to the launch of the programme to take account of the up-to-date situation and the outcome of the consultations with national authorities (and their capacity and willingness to participate).

This type of programme will need funding from a major donor. The regional part of the EU's EDF would be a suitable financial instrument. **In the previous 10<sup>th</sup> EDF the regional component was under-spent**, reflecting the pre-eminence of national/sectoral priorities and the greater complexity in implementing regional programmes. The new 11<sup>th</sup> EDF is expected to come into effect in 2014 and would again offer the opportunity to support **multi-country actions**, so long as their added value (over and above country specific actions) and the efficacy of the implementation can be demonstrated. Thus, a systematic and thorough preparation would be necessary, including those areas highlighted below.

Regarding the definition of eligible areas, it should be accepted that it will be unrealistic to aim for a standardised definition, for instance, at province or county level. Both politic-administrative differences and geography (land borders, borders defined by rivers, or maritime ones) call for a flexible approach, adaptable to local conditions.

This could be based on the concept of "cross-border space", covering areas on either side of an international border that will be defined pragmatically, taking into account geographical, cultural and institutional characteristics. Ideally, these areas should be small enough to allow local stakeholders to engage directly in the programme.

For similar reasons, a "variable geometry" should be accepted regarding the membership of cross-border partnerships, so long all main sectors (local government, traditional authorities, civil society organisations, business, etc.) are adequately represented.

In Phase I priority should be accorded to raising awareness and capacity building, as well as establishing the institutional mechanisms of the programme and a good articulation between state and local levels. The experience of the GIZ capacity building work under the AUBP, and any other relevant experience from other programmes, could be particularly useful in these matters.

The handling of grand aid can be very slow and bureaucratic and susceptible to abuse. Hence, in Phase I the emphasis should be on using only very small grants through the operation of "Small Project Funds". There is sound experience with such instruments in the EU, where they are commonly used for "people-to-people" projects, particularly in cross-border areas by cross-border structures such as the "euroregions". This has been explained in a recent position paper by the AEBR ("People-to-People-Projects – Their significance and contribution to the success of cross-border (INTERREG A) programmes", April 2013).

### **“West Africa CBC Programme” (Phase I)**

- **Scope:** All bilateral borders of participating countries
- **Purpose:** Awareness raising and capacity building
- **Activities:** Technical Assistance and Small Project Fund(s) for people-to-people (P2P) projects
- **Expected results:**
  - Local cross-border partnership(s) – multi-sector, variable geometry (to accommodate different institutional structures and traditions on different sides of the border)
  - Common cross-border vision and (if possible) local development strategy
- **Duration:** 3+ years
- **Funding:** EDF Regional Programme (11<sup>th</sup> EDF)
- **Management:**
  - Steering Committee including representatives of EU & African organisations
  - Service contract or agreement

It should be expected that although the programme will evolve but not all countries and border areas are likely to move at the same speed. Those advancing well should become eligible for more substantial, albeit still small, joint projects of direct relevance to socio-economic development.

Phase II should be reserved for those achieving certain important milestones, such as a functioning local partnership, and agreement on a local development strategy (or at least a clearly expressed vision for cross-border cooperation). A good working relationship with the state level in both countries (or three countries in the case of triple borders) could be another precondition for receiving support for more substantial actions under Phase II.

### **“West Africa CBC Programme” (Phase II)**

- **Scope:** selected borders with established cross-border partnership and agreed vision or local development strategy
- **Purpose:** Capacity building and socio-economic development
- **Activities:**
  - Technical Assistance
  - Small Project Fund(s): people-to-people and common infrastructure projects
- **Expected results:**
  - Improved socio-economic infrastructure, as per local development strategy (e.g. education, health, road access to markets, agricultural produce processing)
  - Higher incomes and living standards
- **Duration, funding, management:** as for Phase I

## 6. RECOMMENDATIONS

The main recommendations that stem from this study are addressed principally to the European Commission and the African Union and are set out below.

It is recommended that:

- 1 The European Commission should present to the African Union the proposals for an Action Plan comprising actions at regional and sub-national levels for the development of CBC in West Africa, as outlined in this report.
- 2 The African Union should consult the territories involved, including regional organisations and West African countries on the objectives and components of the Action Plan, and on its geographical scope (participating countries).
- 3 The African Union should request GIZ and AEBR<sup>2</sup> to elaborate a detailed proposal for the Action Plan following consultations with EU (EDF) and other donors, including technical specifications, implementation arrangements and funding.
- 4 The European Commission and the African Union should jointly organise a consultative workshop to consider the GIZ/AEBR proposals and make recommendations concerning the finalisation of preparations for the Action Plan.
- 5 The AEBR, should encourage communication and advocacy activities in West Africa on the added value of “cross-border cooperation” and, in conjunction with other international organisations and national authorities, should continue to actively support the adoption globally of 7 June as the “International Day of Integration across National Boundaries”.

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<sup>2</sup> And eventually other actors, such as those involved in the AFRICAN Project (namely the Lead Partner, the Government of the Canaries), or other European cross-border organizations.

European Commission

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