



Activity Report 2013-2014

Background Elements

This document aims to establish an overview of the activities of the CPMR Atlantic Arc Commission since the General Assembly in Porto (Norte, Portugal) on 16 and 17 May 2013 in light of the General Assembly in Bordeaux (Aquitaine, France) on 24 and 25 April 2014.

This document is divided into four main aspects:

- I. Mobilisation of the Atlantic Arc Commission on the Atlantic Strategy
- II. The Atlantic Arc Commission Working Groups
- III. Participation of the Atlantic Arc Commission in European projects
- IV. Other activities and initiatives of the Atlantic Arc Commission in 2013/2014

I. Mobilisation of the Atlantic Arc Commission on the Atlantic Strategy

I.1. Preparation of the Atlantic Strategy Action Plan

2013 was a year that mainly focused on the Atlantic Strategy, the first Communication on which was published in November 2011 by the European Commission. This Communication announced the holding of an “Atlantic Forum” where all actors and stakeholders could contribute to the drafting of the Strategy Action Plan. In fact, [five forums](#) were held between September 2012 and March 2013 in the five Atlantic Member States, as detailed in our [previous Activity Report 2012/2013](#).

The Atlantic Arc Commission was present at all of these events, whether through the participation of its President (Cantabria Region), its Members or the Executive Secretary. The aim is to ensure that the territorial approach is taken into greater consideration in the Atlantic Strategy [Action Plan](#) adopted by the European Commission on 13 May 2013.

To achieve this, in 2013, the Atlantic Arc Commission voted several **documents to contribute** and react to the Atlantic Strategy Action Plan:

1. The [contribution document from the Atlantic Arc Commission](#) to the European Commission’s Call for Suggestions, voted by the Political Bureau in Nantes on 13 February 2013.
2. A Technical Paper on the [implementation platform](#) of the Atlantic Strategy, presented during the General Assembly in Porto on 16 and 17 May 2013.
3. The [Political Declaration](#) of the Plenary Assembly of Saint-Malo in September 2013 on the implementation of the Atlantic Strategy, in which the Atlantic Arc Commission expressed concern about the weakness of the actions undertaken to make the Atlantic Strategy a reality in the territories.

Following the publication of the Action Plan in May 2013, the European Commission and Portugal organised a [closing conference](#) on 4 and 5 December 2013 in Lisbon, two years after the official launch of the Strategy in the same place. Pauline Caumont, Executive Secretary of the Atlantic Arc Commission, made a [presentation](#) on the involvement of Atlantic Regional Authorities in the implementation of the Atlantic Strategy.

Early in 2014, the European Commission proposed the organisation of new events in the Atlantic States:

- **17/02/2014:** Brussels (Belgium) – [How to access and mobilise EU funds to pursue implementation of the Action Plan for a Maritime Strategy in the Atlantic area](#)
- **17-18/03/2014:** Funchal (Madeira, Portugal) – [Atlantic Action Plan related growth for Outermost Regions of the EU and European territorial cooperation opportunities](#)
- **28-29/04/2014:** Gijón (Spain) – [Atlantic ports, logistics and maritime transport as drivers of economic development](#)
- **13/06/2014:** Liverpool (UK) – [The Atlantic Action Plan: finance opportunities for projects, chances for SMEs](#)

Information on these meetings was sent to all Members of the Atlantic Arc Commission.

I.2. Application in response to DG MARE's Call for Tenders, "Assistance Mechanism for the Atlantic Action Plan"

On 15 October 2013, DG MARE published the Call for Tenders "[MARE 2013/11](#)" aiming to propose an assistance mechanism for the implementation of the Atlantic Strategy.

In line with the discussions that were held during the General Assembly in Porto and following a written consultation of the Political Bureau by email dated 25 October 2013, the Atlantic Arc Commission has drafted a joint response with the consulting firm ECORYS, the firm in charge of preparing the next "Atlantic Area" Operational Programme (ECORYS Spain), who had also won the tender for the preparation of the "Blue Growth" Strategy with DG MARE (ECORYS Ltd).

This application had to be completed within a very tight timescale, insofar as the deadline for the submission of applications was set for 10 December 2013.

The key aspects of the application are as follows:

Leader: CRPM- Atlantic Arc Commission

Partners: ECORYS Ltd and ECORYS Spain

Sub-contractors: given that the Commission requested a focal point service in each Member State, the five following structures have been involved in our application:

- Portugal: Maritime Cluster "Oceano XXI"
- Spain: CEOE Cantabria (with the possible involvement of the Basque Maritime Cluster)
- France: Pôle Mer Bretagne
- Ireland: Border Midland Western Regional Assembly
- United Kingdom: Marine South East Ltd

Associate partner: Atlantic Transnational Network (ATN)

Length of project: 18 months

Budget: €1,049,000 (3 partners and 5 sub-contractors)

All members of the Atlantic Arc Commission were informed by email (22 January 2014) with a link to the [Technical Tender](#) jointly submitted by the CPMR and ECORYS.

To date, as DG MARE has yet not finished the selection process, we still do not know if our application has been successful. We expect a response from DG MARE in the first half of 2014, possibly in the month of June.

II. The Atlantic Arc Commission Working Groups

The Atlantic Arc Commission is organised into several working groups that meet according to current developments in Europe or the regions' interest in taking action on specific issues. The working groups are led by a Region, elected by the General Assembly for a term of two years, renewable once.

All activities of our working groups are accessible via the "[Events - Atlantic Arc Commission Events](#)" section of our website.

II.1 "Atlantic Strategy" Working Group - Chair: Basse-Normandie (2012-2014)

This ad-hoc working group, open to all Member Regions, was created in March 2012 during the Political Bureau in Caen. Basse-Normandie was designated as Chair of this working group during the General Assembly of the Atlantic Arc Commission Santander on 31 May and 1 June 2012.

In 2013, a working meeting of this group was held on **15 January 2013** in order to finalise the Atlantic Arc Commission's [contribution document](#) to the Atlantic Strategy Action Plan. This document was approved by the Political Bureau in Nantes on **13 February 2013**. The group met again on **11 April 2013** in Brussels to carry out an assessment of the mobilisation and to discuss the practical arrangements of the implementation of the Atlantic Strategy in all Regions of the Atlantic Arc Commission.

During the Plenary Assembly in Saint-Malo on **25 September 2013**, Basse-Normandie proposed to cease the activities of the working group, insofar as the Atlantic Strategy Action Plan was adopted on 13 May 2013.

→ Consult the [documents of the "Atlantic Strategy" Working Group](#)

II. 2 "Transport" Working Group - Chair: Basque Country (2013-2015)

The Basque Country Region was re-elected to coordinate the Transport Working Group of the Atlantic Arc Commission at the General Assembly in Porto on 16 and 17 May 2013 for two years.

A meeting was organised in Brussels on **11 April 2013** in response to the [Resolution](#) on the future of TEN-T approved by the Political Bureau in Nantes on **13 February 2013**. During this meeting, the European Commission (DG MOVE) provided an update on the progress of the future Atlantic corridor within the TEN-T.

A consultation by email of the Members of the working group was launched on **19 February 2014** in light of the meeting of the working group on **27 February 2014** in Brussels. The Region of the Basque Country represented the Atlantic Arc Commission in the Transport Working Group meeting organised by the CPMR (refer to the [CPMR website](#)). During this meeting, the European Commission (DG MOVE) announced the establishment of a Forum throughout 2014 to achieve a roadmap for each corridor by the end of 2014.

→ Consult the [documents of the "Transport" Working Group](#)

II.3 "Marine Renewable Energies" Working Group - Chair: Brittany (2013-2015)

During the General Assembly in Porto, Brittany was elected as Chair of this working group following in the footsteps of the Region of Cantabria.

A first meeting of the working group was held on **4 July 2013** in Nantes in the framework of the "Atlantic Power Cluster" project and in parallel to a [European seminar](#) held on 5 July 2013 in Nantes in the scope of the CPMR Working Group "Maritime Industries for Blue Growth".

Another meeting of the working group was held on **19 December 2013** in Brussels, following the [conference](#) on **18 December 2013** organised in the Committee of the Regions by Brittany Region and the CPMR on "Grounds for Energy Transition in European Coastal Regions".

An Atlantic Arc Commission Paper is also being prepared following the publication on **20 January 2014** of the European Commission's Communication "*Blue Energy Action needed to deliver on the potential of ocean energy in European seas and oceans by 2020 and beyond*". This paper will be discussed during an upcoming working group meeting on **24 June 2014** in Brussels.

→ Consult the [documents of the "Marine Renewable Energies" Working Group](#)

II. 4 "Fisheries" Working Group - Chair: Pays de la Loire (2013-2015)

The Chair of this working group also changed during the General Assembly in Porto. The Region of Pays de la Loire took over from Galicia, for a mandate of 2 years (2013-2015), renewable once. A meeting of the working group was organised on **16 May 2013** within the scope of the General Assembly in Porto to discuss in detail the reform of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP).

Following this election, the Region of Pays de la Loire forwarded its work programme to all Member Regions for information (**27 June 2013**) asking them to identify those responsible for fisheries within their Region.

A meeting of the working group was held in Saint-Malo on **25 September 2013** as a fringe meeting of the CPMR General Assembly and the Atlantic Arc Commission plenary to debate the action plan and discuss the agreement on the basic regulation of the Common Fisheries Policy, the revision of the *de minimis* regulation and the issue of aquaculture and planning.

In **early 2014**, discussions took place between the CPMR Secretariat General, the Executive Secretariat of the Atlantic Arc Commission and the Region of Pays de la Loire in order to organise a meeting of the working group in Nantes in **June 2014** on the theme of undulate rays.

→ Consult the [documents of the "Fisheries" Working Group](#)

II. 5 "Atlantic Tourism and Culture" Working Group - Chair: Norte-Alentejo

This working group was established during the General Assembly in Santander in 2012 following a proposal from Cantabria. The Region of Norte, in partnership with Alentejo, was elected to coordinate the working group during the Plenary Assembly in Bialystok on **3 October 2012**. The work programme for two years was presented during the General Assembly in Porto on **16 and 17 May 2013**.

Following an initial internal meeting between the Region of Norte and the Executive Secretariat on **31 May 2013** in Porto, an email was sent to all Members of the working group on **4 June 2013** in order to mobilise potential partners to respond to the Call for Proposals from DG Enterprise and Industry on transnational tourism based on European cultural and industrial heritage (Ref. 69/G/ENT/PPA/13/411). Unfortunately, the very short timescale for the deadlines prevented the Atlantic Arc Commission from participating in this call for proposals.

Finally, at the invitation of the Region of Asturias, the first official meeting of the working group was held in Gijón on **7 and 8 April 2014**. A [summary of conclusions](#) is available on the website to allow all Regions to get involved in the future of this working group.

→ Consult the [documents of the "Atlantic Tourism and Culture" Working Group](#)

II. 6 "Innovation" Working Group – Chair: Presidency

During the General Assembly in Porto on **16 and 17 May 2013**, the Presidency proposed the revival of the Innovation Working Group in the context of the preparation of the Smart Specialisation Strategies by all Member Regions. This mobilisation follows the first meeting in Bordeaux on **20 and 21 November 2012** in partnership with the European Commission's Smart Specialisation Platform.

As a follow-up to this first meeting, a seminar was organised in Brussels on **11 December 2013** on the theme "*How to establish synergies between RIS3 and the Atlantic Strategy?*" during which the Regions were able to present their strategies and interact with representatives of the European Commission.

→ Consult the [documents of the "Innovation" Working Group](#)

Participation in CPMR Working Groups

The Atlantic Arc Commission actively participates in CPMR Working Groups, either through the direct involvement of its Regions, or as a Geographical Commission within the framework of intercommission Working Groups (TEN-T Intercommission Working Group, Research and Innovation Intercommission Working Group, Fisheries Intercommission Working Group, etc.). The Atlantic Arc Commission has in particular participated in the meeting of the CPMR Transport Working Group on **21 March 2013** and **27 February 2014** and the meeting of the Fisheries Working Group on **23 April 2013**. The Atlantic Arc Commission (particularly the Region

of Aquitaine) participated in the seminar on the Structural Funds and the preparation of operational programmes in partnership with DG REGIO on **30 October 2013**.

Following the election of the Region of Pays de la Loire as the Alternate Representative of the President of the Atlantic Arc Commission in the CPMR Political Bureau at the General Assembly in Porto, Mr Clergeau, Vice-President of the Region of Pays de la Loire participated in two meetings of the CPMR Political Bureau, on **7 June 2013** in Malmö (SE), and **14 February 2014** in Leiden (NL).

Cantabria also represented the Atlantic Arc Commission during the CPMR General Assembly on **25/27 September 2013** in Saint-Malo (FR).

Cf. [link](#) to the CPMR activities.

III. The participation of the Atlantic Arc Commission in European projects

- **“Atlantic Power Cluster”**

The Atlantic Arc Commission is fully involved in the **Atlantic Power Cluster** project, within which it has conducted a study on regional guidelines for marine renewable energies. The transnational feedback conference was organised on **4 July 2013** in Nantes, in parallel with a meeting on maritime industries organised by the CPMR and the Region of Pays de la Loire.

The Atlantic Arc Commission participated in project meetings held on 28 and 29 April 2013 (Porto, Portugal), 4 and 5 July 2013 (Nantes, France), 17 and 18 September 2013 (Edinburgh, UK) and 18 and 19 February 2013 (Bordeaux, France)

The Executive Secretary also presented the APC project at a Conference in La Rochelle (FR) on **14 November 2013**.

Project completion is scheduled for August 2014. Further information: <http://atlantic-power-cluster.eu>

- **“Digital Atlantic” (ex AAPUBSERV)**

The Atlantic Arc Commission rejoined the Digital Atlantic project for a six-month extension period (October 2013-April 2014) to ensure the dissemination of the project and to organise its final conference. This project aims to strengthen the e-accessibility of public services in the Atlantic Area.

The CPMR Atlantic Arc Commission participated in project meetings held on 9 October 2013 in Dublin (Ireland), on 27 November 2013 in Derry (Ireland), on 23 January 2014 in Letterkenny (Ireland), 13 March 2014 in San Sebastian (Spain), 9 April 2014 in Santander (Spain) and 24-25 April 2014 for the final conference in Bordeaux (France).

Further information: <http://www.digital-atlantic.eu/>

- **“ARCOPOL Platform”**

This 18-month project is a continuation of the ARCOPOL and ARCOPOL Plus projects. Arcopol Platform was approved by the Steering Committee of the Atlantic Area Interreg Programme on **26 November 2013**. Its objective is to prepare the Atlantic Regions for maritime and coastal pollution.

The first kick-off meeting was held on **13 March 2014** in Vigo (Spain).

Further information: <http://news.cpmr.org/cpmr-news/articles-newsletter/launch-of-the-arcopol-platform-project/>

- **“Transboundary Planning in the European Atlantic” (TPEA)**

This project brings together the five Member States of the Atlantic seaboard (Portugal, Spain, France, United Kingdom and Ireland) who replied to DG MARE’s Call for Proposals to develop a project on maritime spatial planning in the Atlantic area. The CPMR Atlantic Arc Commission is an associate partner of the project and participates in some meetings of the Steering Committee.

The Atlantic Arc Commission participated in the Steering Committee meeting on **18 and 19 February 2014** in Belfast (Ireland)

Further information: <http://www.tpeamaritime.eu>

IV. Other activities and initiatives of the Atlantic Arc Commission in 2013-2014

Participation in conferences with various European players

- **Forum do Mar**

The Atlantic Arc Commission has participated in the [Forum Do Mar](#), organised in Porto by Oceano XXI and other Portuguese maritime clusters on the theme of the Maritime Economy on **29/30 May 2013**. This major event in Portugal is open to professionals working in the different key sectors from the maritime economy to the scientific community as well as the general public. During this event, the Atlantic Arc Commission participated in a workshop focusing on the Atlantic Strategy.

- **Atlantic Games**

The Atlantic Arc Commission was represented by its Presidency on **15 July 2013**, at an event held in Viana do Castelo (Portugal).

Further information: <http://www.atlanticgames.eu/>

- **“Notre Europe - Institut Jacques Delors” Conference on the Atlantic Strategy**

At the invitation of the “Notre Europe” Think Tank, the Executive Secretary participated in the conference held on **12 September 2013** in Laval (France) on "The Atlantic Arc, a maritime history above all."

Further information: <http://www.notre-europe.eu/>

- **Monitoring Committee of the Interreg IV-B Atlantic Area Programme**

The Atlantic Arc Commission is involved with the Monitoring Committee for the Interreg IVB Atlantic Area programme. As such, the Executive Secretary attended the meeting of the Steering Committee on **26 November 2013** in Glasgow.

Further information: <http://atlanticarea.ccdr-n.pt/>

- **Conference of the European Movement France**

The President of the Atlantic Arc Commission participated in a meeting organised by the European Movement France in La Rochelle on **7 February 2014**, on the theme “Challenges of the European Union, employment and democracy”.

Further information: <http://www.mouvement-europeen.eu/>