



Survey of Atlantic Regions

An integrated strategy for the Atlantic Arc

1- Information

Since taking up Presidency in June 2008, the Region of Basse-Normandie has lobbied EU bodies and Atlantic stakeholders for the introduction of an integrated territorial development strategy at Atlantic level.

- Objective

During the General Assembly in Santander, the Atlantic Arc Commission set itself the objective of promoting the development of an integrated strategy for the Atlantic Arc. This initiative meets several demands:

- **A strategic approach:** it is necessary to establish with precision the major challenges facing the Atlantic territories and the actions to be developed as a priority in policy areas of a transnational nature such as accessibility, maritime safety, climate change, energy, fisheries, etc.
- **Governance:** the aim is to involve all actors concerned by these policy areas: EU, states, regions and cities as well as key stakeholders of various sector-based policies.
- **Tools:** once the issues and the actors are identified, methods to achieve these objectives and in particular the policies to be implemented, should be considered. The strategy for the Atlantic Arc must therefore contribute to preparing future European policies, including cohesion policy and an integrated maritime policy in particular, but also all those likely to be applied at Atlantic level: transport, research, fisheries, etc.

- Mobilisation of the Atlantic Arc Commission

a- A Technical Paper adopted during the plenary session at Göteborg¹: "An integrated strategy for the Atlantic Arc". The document aims to identify the issues, the conditions and the potential benefits of a strategy for the Atlantic Arc and is to serve as a basis for future reflections.

b- Analysis of the operational programmes of the Atlantic Arc Commission's regions: this work will help to establish an analysis of regional priorities, and how they tie in with the priorities of the Atlantic Area programme, as well as with the policy areas identified in the Atlantic Arc Commission paper. This work is carried out with the support of the *Principado de Asturias* that we would like to thank for its collaboration.

c- Identification and mobilisation of the actors: the objective is to produce a list of the actors likely to contribute to the development and implementation of the strategy: in addition to institutional stakeholders, we can also refer to Atlantic networks (CAAC, ATN, AC3A, RUOA), universities, sector-based organisations (environment, transport, energy, maritime safety, etc).

Member states and the European Commission: their involvement in the process is a *sine qua non* condition for the success of this initiative.

¹ <http://www.arcatlantique.org/index.php?act=1,4,2,50,,,,,en&PHPSESSID=42d849d9223cdb208a045ea6c97de624>

- With regard to the **States**, the Spanish government (which will take up the Presidency of the EU for the first six months of 2010) has been approached, in order that it will seize and support the idea of this strategy. Therefore, an Atlantic delegation, comprising politicians from the Atlantic Arc Commission and the CAAC, visited the Spanish State Secretary for European Affairs Mr López Garrido last September. Contact has also been made with other member states on a technical level. It should also be noted that contact has been made with some **Members of European Parliament** who expressed their interest to support this initiative.
- With regard to the **European Commission**, it is going to seize this issue. Indeed, it plans to publish a **communication** on the Atlantic which could come out by the end of 2010. It is an important step forward as for several years the European Commission has not specifically examined the issues and specific characteristics of this area. The Commission recognises the fundamental role of the Atlantic Arc Commission in this reflection, and this is why we should take action to further develop this document.

DG Mare perceives the Atlantic Arc through two approaches:

- On the one hand, to understand the Atlantic Arc in its **entirety**: the objective is to identify issues which can only be dealt with effectively at trans-national level.
- On the other hand, an approach by **maritime “sub-basins”** in order to identify the specific characteristics of each one of these sub-basins whilst stressing the fact that the work must not result in divisions of this area but help to supplement the comprehensive approach.

The Atlantic perceived through a comprehensive approach	The Atlantic sub-basins ²
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Celtic Seas - English Channel - Bay of Biscay/Iberian Coast - Macaronesia: Canaries, Madeira, Azores

d- Calendar (draft):

- **Date tbc** **Transport Seminar – To be confirmed(tbc)**
- **15-16 April 2010** **Marine Energy Seminar** (Santander, Cantabria)
- **Date tbc** **Innovation Seminar:** within the scope of a CPMR working group meeting
- **Date tbc** **Atlantic stakeholders conference** (Brussels *tbc*)
- **19 May 2010** **Maritime Day** (Gijón, Asturias)
- **1-2 July 2010** **Atlantic Arc Commission General Assembly** (Rennes, Brittany) - *tbc*

- These various actions must help to establish specific proposals capable of further developing the Atlantic Arc strategy. These various initiatives must lead to the development of a strategic document which could be presented during Maritime Day.

- In order to do this, it is important to know the opinion of the members of the Atlantic Arc Commission. We have therefore drawn up the following questionnaire.

² This corresponds to defining the areas of the North-East Atlantic zone which figure in the “Marine Strategy Framework Directive” of 17 June 2008 - Directive 2008/56/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council.

2- Survey

a- First of all, do you agree with the guidelines proposed by the Atlantic Arc Commission: objectives, work programme?

YES ✓ NO

Comments:

The Dublin Regional Authority supports the idea of an Atlantic Arc Strategy which undertakes to meet the challenges of climate change, economic stability and overall security of our waters. The Authority supports the concept that to protect our natural environment and to value its resources are mutually important and considers that our oceans and coasts should be protected, managed, developed and used in a sensitive manner reflecting the interests of all stakeholders. Furthermore, there is an expectation that we must prioritise protection to maintain long term value and this is particularly important with regard to the assets of the waters, e.g., fish stocks and fishing practices; renewable energy possibilities and environmental sustainability.

The Dublin Regional Authority further considers that the overriding objective of the Atlantic Arc Commission should be to develop consensus building between and within the sub-regions and put in place regional management solutions which pertain to this common consensus. For example, reduced fishing efforts should be matched by fleets fishing within the same zones. To this effect, the comments within the technical paper on fishing the CFP and the points raised on governance including intervention to control regional or local resources, is broadly welcomed.

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b- Do you agree with the proposed approach to understand the Atlantic Arc, on the one hand in its entirety, and on the other hand, through its "sub-basins" ?

YES ✓ NO

If yes, do you agree with the proposal to define the geographical areas as follows: Celtic Seas, English Channel, Bay of Biscay/Iberian Coast, Macaronesia (Canaries, Madeira, Azores)?

YES NO ✓

Comments:

The Dublin Regional Authority agrees in principle with the approach of sub-dividing the Atlantic Area into zones of functional maritime cooperation, it does therefore not fully accept the geographical areas, as suggested at this stage.

The Dublin Regional Authority is working with regions on the east coast of Ireland, the west coast of UK and the Isle of Man to develop an Irish Sea Region's strategy. The main purpose of a strategy for the Irish Sea Region is to identify and co ordinate aims and actions of relevant interests in the region, which cannot be addressed at the level of region or member state alone. The intended outcome is for sustainable growth and delivery of effective transnational management of projects and initiatives which would collectively benefit the participant regions within Ireland, UK and Isle of Man. In this regard clarification as to the definition and extent of what constitutes the "Celtic Seas" is required, for example, does this area incorporate the Irish Sea and to what extent will the activities of the Irish Sea Regions be reflected in the structures/management of Celtic Seas sub-basin. Further, governance and departmental arrangements for integrated coastal zone management of the entire Irish coast are not clear. Regardless of the projection of land side administration onto coastal waters for the purposes of ICZM, that is, at local authority, regional or national level, the Irish Sea should be given consideration within the Atlantic Arc.

"Natural regionalisation" - reflecting different sub-regions or natural sea areas, their geographical areas and fish stocks contained therein is a rational delineation. However, there is an equal role for

intra-state regionalisation – that is, where responsibilities are devolved to regions within a member state especially with regard to integrated coastal zone management and the interaction and respective effects upon each other of land use and marine spatial planning.

This is not to undermine or devalue the outstanding fact that maritime policy on a transnational level is best tackled through integrated transnational cooperation and the framework of integrated maritime policy based on a policy of utilising natural sea basins or combinations of sub-basins. Rather it points up the importance of a complementary framework for implementation of combined land use and marine spatial planning.

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c- The success of this initiative depends to a large extent on the involvement of key stakeholders, and in particular the states. In addition to the lobbying action carried out by the Atlantic Arc Commission, does your region plan to take direct action with its national government?

YES ✓ NO

If yes, how? ...

The Dublin Regional Authority has within its institutional capacity the remit to: advise its constituent local authorities and other relevant agencies in the pursuit of: enhanced cooperation and coordination between these bodies, develop regional initiatives and the pursuit of funding opportunities; develop policy papers and submission of these to government departments, EU Committee of Regions, EU Commission and others. Working independently, in cooperation with its partners around the Irish Sea and in cooperation with Atlantic Arc (if appropriate) the Dublin Regional Authority will utilise the information and knowledge acquired in pursuit of regional aims and objectives with regard to Marine Spatial Planning, ICZM, CFP and the Marine Strategy Directive. The regional authority is currently working closely with the Department of Transport and the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government – (two of the main central government departments to which marine functions are mandated) – in the development of an ICZM and a Master Plan for its main bay area ‘Dublin Bay’.

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d- The policy areas presented below are extracts from the document “An integrated strategy for the Atlantic Arc” and are supported by examples of structuring projects. Nevertheless, in order to progress towards more specific proposals, could you quote the priority actions which in your opinion should be implemented in the framework of an Atlantic strategy?

- Environment/climate change

The Dublin Regional Authority considers that with regard to marine spatial planning (ocean zoning), it is imperative to realise that management of coasts and climate change adaptation are at the forefront of Atlantic Arc policy making. Equally and in respect of this it is also essential to realise the importance of the coastal zone, the implications of land use and the need to develop synergies with land use policy through the conduit of established administrative areas for land use planning.

Management of the coasts - An accessible centralised information and management system to capture and disseminate marine data within the Atlantic Arc and across its sub basins would be a practical example of a tangible action for improved marine spatial planning.

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- Energy

The Dublin Regional Authority supports the promotion of the development of renewable marine energies – wind, wave, tidal and biomass.

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- Transport

It is the opinion of the Dublin Regional Authority that the transport objective should be to assess existing transport infrastructure – freight, tourism etc., and link these to potential economic alliances in terms of the capability of these networks and infrastructure.

The suggestions for structuring projects in the technical report are well balanced and tackle the fundamentals required to realise increased trade along multimodal transport corridors.

Transport networks and infrastructure should be climate change proofed. There exists currently a deficit in measures to improve the transport industries environmental performance. The role of enhanced cooperation in facilitating more socially and environmentally sustainable coastal fleets compared to long haul vessels should be considered, for example.

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- Research/Innovation

The Dublin Regional Authority considers that there is a need to strengthen the competitiveness and environmental sustainability of the marine sector by developing a much greater alignment between public sector & third-level research capacity and industry needs inter-regionally across the Atlantic Arc. Joint ventures and cooperation between the regions of the Atlantic Arc will result in a much greater carrying capacity of knowledge interaction and thus innovation.

Exchange and flow of personnel and expertise and joint cooperation between industry and research in terms of commercial activity and technical advancement is proposed.

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- Fisheries

It is the opinion of the Dublin Regional Authority that any structuring policy should give precedence to the need to preserve long term biological and environmental sustainability of fish stocks. The governance aspect is therefore particularly important – and the development of a regionalized-customised but uniform fisheries management approach.

In terms of innovation and cooperation the territories of the Atlantic Arc should work together to form complementary regionalised management and to maximise knowledge transfer such as in the area of utilisation of by-catches.

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- Maritime safety

The Dublin Regional Authority supports the three main areas outlined in the report.

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- Trans-Atlantic Cooperation

The Dublin Regional Authority notes that the “Interim framework for effective coastal and marine spatial planning” published by the US Interagency Ocean Policy Taskforce outlines a set of guiding principles for marine and coastal planning including an ecosystem based approach, consensus building with regard to multiple existing uses, an adaptive and flexible approach to planning with regard to the affects of climate change, and so forth. The transnationality element can be described as any number of factors including historical allegiances and cooperation; traditional and existing transport routes; the global affects of climate change and its impact on food energy, maritime integrity and safety, coastal populations and much more; the transnational affects of pollution and environmental degradation.

The Authority considers that cooperation across sectoral, environmental, economic and other trans-Atlantic boundaries will be enhanced by building a coherent structure within the territories of the Atlantic Arc.

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e- Could you quote events related to maritime policy and/or territorial cooperation which will be held in your region in the coming months?

The Dublin Regional Authority in partnership with the regions of the Irish Sea hosted a workshop on marine spatial planning and regional economic competitiveness across the Irish Sea in November 2009. It is intended that a follow-up workshop will be held on the UK side of the Irish Sea Regions in 2010.

Further, the Irish Sea Regions intend to consult widely with its stakeholders in the development of its Irish Sea Regions Strategy in 2010.

Please send your completed surveys to the following address: fabien.mesclier@crpm.org before the 29 January 2010.