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Dear Readers,

We are living in historic times. Never before has Europe been so divided and so in need of collective action. Nationalistic politics within Europe have created instability for economies and people. The European values of unity and multilateralism are under threat from within Member States and beyond.

Openly extreme, anti-European narratives are prevalent in the public domain, in a continent where such intolerance has previously given rise to authoritarian regimes and led to two World Wars. In this climate of fear and unrest, Europe’s peripheral maritime regions have been at the forefront of actions supporting solidarity, partnership and strengthened territorial cohesion across the continent.

We have argued for a European budget and policies that address Europe’s challenges, while calling for the preservation of the territorial development needed to retain a European project for all citizens, irrespective of where they live. The CPMR has achieved important advances regarding economic, social and territorial cohesion. We have helped to ensure that the European Commission’s proposal for post-2020 Cohesion policy continues to support all regions, and we have played a key role in improving the financial envelope for the connection of Europe’s comprehensive network.

The European maritime agenda remains of crucial importance, as does the climate agenda in relation to energy and clean oceans. On policies addressing the reception and integration of migrants, our regions have shown solidarity, efficiency and readiness and the CPMR is grateful these efforts have been given recognition in new proposals from the European Commission’s DG Home.

We have worked alongside our regions on issues such as marine renewable energy, leading to a cleaner environment and the protection of our coasts; and regional economic development, bringing jobs to Europe’s citizens. The CPMR stands for Europe’s fundamental values, which have secured peace for its citizens and their territories. We will continue our work to bring prosperity and stability to all of Europe’s regions and their neighbours from the North to the South, as well as our new neighbours post-Brexit. Happy reading!
The CPMR focused its lobbying activities in 2017/18 on calling for a strong and modern Cohesion policy after 2020.

The first stage of its lobbying actions focused on the European Commission’s proposals for the Cohesion policy package. Once the Commission’s proposals were published on 29 May, the CPMR’s focus turned to the European Parliament and European Council, as co-legislators in the EU budget negotiations.

At political level, a CPMR delegation, composed of several Presidents of regions, met with President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker, in December 2017.

They urged him to cement the place of Cohesion policy as the main EU strategic investment policy for all regions and citizens after 2020.

During the meeting, the CPMR representatives presented an Open Letter to President Juncker containing five key messages calling for a ‘Modernised Cohesion Policy at the heart of a strengthened European Union’.

At technical level, the CPMR organised two constructive meetings for regions with Marc Lemaître, the European Commission’s Director General, DG REGIO, gaining valuable incite into the Commission’s plans.

At the first meeting, held in January 2018 ahead of the Commission’s policy proposals, the CPMR’s regions shared the key issues at stake with Mr Lemaître.

At the second meeting, held in July 2018 after the Commission’s proposals had been announced, regions outlined their concerns, including fears the policy might become an instrument to incentive national governments to implement structural reforms.
The CPMR developed several documents before and after the announcement of the European Commission's proposals for post-2020 Cohesion policy. These documents provided comprehensive analysis of the key issues at stake for its member regions.

In advance of the proposals, the CPMR published:

- An analysis, in December 2017, on the impact of potential budgetary cuts on Cohesion policy at country level. The analysis makes the case for an ambitious Cohesion policy budget to ensure that the EU continues to support its goals of cohesion, solidarity and investment in all EU regions.

- A note, in February 2018, contributing to the discussions on how to link Cohesion policy with the EU semester and structural reforms in the future.

- A study, in March 2018, to forecast the eligibility of the regions in Cohesion policy, based on the latest Regional GDP statistics.

It shows that the ‘Cohesion for all regions’ scenario, proposed in the European Commission’s Communication on the future EU budget on 14 February, would be of particular benefit to several net contributing Member States to the EU Budget.

Following the proposals, the CMR published:

- A report, in May 2018, outlining its initial views on the Commission’s proposals for the post 2020 Cohesion policy package.

This included concerns about the fragmentation of the policy, the elimination of maritime cross-border programmes, and the introduction of possibilities to transfer Cohesion policy funds to other EU instruments outside of Cohesion policy.

The EU’s chief Brexit negotiator, Michel Barnier, highlighted the key role of the CPMR in developing Cohesion Policy.

Mr Barnier, who was European Commissioner in charge of Regional Policy from 1999-2004, made the statement during a live debate inhosted by Euronews in March 2018, marking 30 years of the policy.
Supported by its member regions, the CPMR also developed proposals for amendments on the different Cohesion Policy regulations which were shared with the European Parliament.

The CPMR and its Islands Commission organised a meeting with the European Parliament’s Searica Intergroup in April 2018.

The meeting was attended by European Commissioner for Regional Policy, Corina Crețu. They joined several MEPs to urge the European Commission to develop a strong post-2020 Cohesion policy with increased recognition of the regional disparities affecting islands.

They called on the Commission to strengthen the future Cohesion policy to tackle economic, social and territorial disparities in all regions, with greater attention focused on the specific conditions of islands.

The CPMR and its island regions explained that Cohesion Policy must deliver legislative and financial conditions to unlock the potential of island regions.
The CPMR has lobbied for Interreg to be preserved after 2020 as a strong and well resourced programme.

It has called on the European Commission to recognise the crucial importance of cooperation across Europe's borders.

In an open letter sent to the Commission in April 2018, the CPMR called for ambitious post-2020 EU budget proposals, recognising the importance of cooperation across Europe's borders, particularly across maritime borders.

However, the Commission's proposals for Interreg included plans to cut Interreg by 12% and merge maritime cross-border programmes into a new transnational 'component'.

Following the Commission’s ETC proposals, the CPMR moved its focus to the European Parliament.

A CPMR delegation met with MEP Pascal Arimont, rapporteur for the ETC regulation, in September 2018, conveying its messages on the future of INTERREG.

The CPMR welcomed the Parliament's draft report, which recognises the need for maritime cross border programmes to be preserved.

Our key Interreg messages

<table>
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<th>Our key Interreg messages</th>
<th>Regions should continue to be at the core of Interreg</th>
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<tr>
<td>Interreg should be reinforced for the post-2020 period</td>
<td>Interreg should be simplified &amp; work better with other EU programmes</td>
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<td>Interreg budget should be ambitious &amp; increased for post-2020 period</td>
<td>Interreg should continue to support cooperation with none-EU countries</td>
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<td>Interreg should continue to have at least 3 distinct, complementary cooperation strands</td>
<td>Interreg should better support macro-regional &amp; sea basin strategies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interreg programmes should continue to be based on territorial needs &amp; adapted to local context</td>
<td>Interreg should better support interregional cooperation on smart specialisation strategies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interreg maritime cross border cooperation programmes should be maintained as a priority</td>
<td>In response the CPMR published <a href="#">10 key messages</a> outlining the importance of Interreg and European Territorial Cooperation (ETC).</td>
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These messages, based on a comprehensive internal study the CPMR had carried out with its member regions, were discussed with members at the CPMR Political Bureau in Pärnu, Estonia, in June 2018.

The CPMR’s messages provide a series of recommendations for European Territorial Cooperation after 2020.

In response the CPMR published [10 key messages](#) outlining the importance of Interreg and European Territorial Cooperation (ETC).

In an open letter sent to the Commission in April 2018, the CPMR called for ambitious post-2020 EU budget proposals, recognising the importance of cooperation across Europe's borders, particularly across maritime borders.
“We need a positive vision for a reformed Europe built on territorial cohesion, solidarity and regional cooperation”

At the end of 2016, the CPMR launched its reflection on the future of Europe, against the backdrop of the wider consideration being undertaken by the European Institutions following the UK Brexit vote.

The first phase of CPMR’s work has been completed, with the adoption of a CPMR Policy Position on the Future of Europe at the General Assembly in Helsinki, in October 2017.

Since then, the CPMR has continued to closely monitor and contribute to key discussions at EU level on Europe’s future, particularly in relation to the future of the EU Budget and the ongoing Brexit negotiations.

The overall aim is to develop a CPRM Political Statement on the role of regions in the future of Europe, which will be released to coincide with the European Commission’s high-level summit in Sibiu, Romania in May 2019, where national leaders will discuss their plans for a stronger, more democratic EU.

The consequences of Brexit and new challenges such as security, climate change and the migration crisis mean the budget has come under severe pressure.

Recognising the impact this could have on traditional policies that are of key importance to its member regions, such as Cohesion policy, the CPMR undertook a series of lobbying actions:

→ A meeting was organised with President of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker in December 2018. A delegation of regional Presidents called for Cohesion Policy to be cemented as the main EU strategic investment policy for all European regions and citizens after 2020.

→ CPMR President, Vasco Cordeiro, took part in a discussion organised by the Committee of the Regions (CoR) with the Commission’s first Vice-President, Frans Timmermans, in January in Brussels. He stressed that cuts to Cohesion policy would lead to the further increase of regional disparities across Europe.

The 2017/18 period has been critical for the future of the Europe and its regions. The European Commission has made key decisions that will change the course of the European project for good.

The adoption in May 2018 of its proposals on the EU Budget for the post-2020 period have been the result of difficult budgetary choices.
CPMR Secretary General, Eleni Marianou, spoke at a meeting of the European Parliament’s Regional Development (REGI) Committee in February 2018, where she presented regions’ concerns about cuts to the Cohesion envelope and the strengthening of the link between the European Semester and Cohesion Policy.

And in March 2018, the CPMR Political Bureau adopted a policy position calling for the European Commission to deliver an ambitious post-2020 EU budget giving regions the leeway needed to realise the EU’s political vision for Europe’s future.

However, the European Commission’s proposals for the EU Budget after 2020, published in May 2018, failed to realise the long-term vision and ambition required to shape Europe’s future.

The CPMR welcomed the proposal to introduce new own resources, but expressed great concern at the absence of vision for Cohesion policy in the proposals. It also outlined its fears regarding a cut of up to 15% to the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund, and a reduction of the budget for the Connecting Europe Facility. In response, it developed:

- A briefing note to help regions make sense of the budget; followed by a more detailed analysis on how the post 2020 EU budget supports CPMR priorities.

The CPMR’s focus has now moved to the European Parliament and the EU Member States. It is urging them to to protect and strengthen the core principles of Cohesion policy.

A key discussion on the future of the EU budget will take place at the CPMR General Assembly in Madeira in October 2018.

Brexit

The CPMR continues to follow the ongoing Brexit negotiations between the UK and the EU and is working to ensure the voice of regions is represented.

In November 2017, political representatives from 20 regions signed a CPMR declaration calling for action to address the disproportionate impact of Brexit on Europe’s regions and key sectors, and expressing their commitment to strong cooperation between Europe’s regions after Brexit.

The ‘Cardiff Declaration’ was agreed at the CPMR’s Brexit Conference ‘European co-operation beyond Brexit’, which was hosted by the Welsh Government.

It followed the CPMR’s meeting ‘Opportunities for cooperation in the Channel area post-Brexit?’, also held in Cardiff on Wednesday 15 November, where a new CPMR cross-Channel Task Force, led by the Normandy region, was set up to foster cross-Channel cooperation between France and the UK.
At the June 2018 meeting of the Channel Task Force, the Ambassador of France to the UK, Mr Jean-Pierre Jouyet, gave his full backing to its actions to build subnational cooperation in the Channel areas following Brexit.

In addition, the CPMR and the Atlantic Arc Commission (AAC) presented positive proposals to Michel Barnier, the European Commission’s Chief Negotiator for the Preparation and Conduct of the Negotiations with the UK, to reduce Brexit’s disproportionate impact on Europe's regions.

At the initiative of the Atlantic Arc Commission, chaired by the Pays de la Loire region, a CPMR delegation met with Mr Barnier in January 2018 to stress regions' fears that Brexit, and particularly a hard Brexit, will have harmful consequences for their territories as well as the importance of continued cooperation between European and UK regions post-Brexit.

The Atlantic Arc Commission also set up a Brexit Task Force, holding several key meetings.

The September 2018 meeting of the Task Force was attended by Sandra Cavallo, from the European Commission’s Task Force for the Preparation and Conduct of the Negotiations with the United Kingdom under Article 50 TEU, who provided Atlantic regions with an update on the negotiations.

The CPMR North Sea Commission’s Brexit Task Force also held several meetings, allowing members from the UK, the EU 27 and non-EU country Norway to share their views on the Brexit process and analyse how it will affect them.

Based on this evidence and other sources, the NSC developed a Brexit impact report for the North Sea Region. Its Executive Committee adopted in November 2017 a Brexit statement advocating the need for new cooperation structures in the North Sea area post-Brexit.

The NSC thematic group for Marine Resources met in Urk in the Netherlands and Peterhead in Scotland to better understand how the fisheries sector will be affected.

Also, in April a ‘Declaration of Friendship & Solidarity’ on Brexit was signed by the CPMR's members Noord-Holland and the Welsh Government, expressing their desire for continued cooperation after Brexit. The declaration was endorsed by the CPMR Political Bureau in Pärnu, in June 2018.

The CPMR, the Brittany Region and the Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence in Rennes are collaborating on a study, led by Jean Monnet researchers, on themes such as European citizenship and the role of regions in the future EU project. It will support the development of the CPMR's Political Statement on the future of Europe.
"Blue growth and the maritime economy must be central to the EU’s future investment priorities"

**BACKGROUND**

The CPMR's activities this year have been developed in line with the objectives in its maritime agenda, presented at the last CPMR General Assembly, held in Helsinki. These activities have been implemented in close cooperation with the CPMR's Maritime Working Group and its Geographical Commissions.

**Supporting ambitious IMP**

The CPMR promoted the principles outlined in its policy position adopted in February 2017 on Seas & Oceans.

It took part in high-level discussions with EU institutions about future EU maritime policies:

- George Alexakis, Vice-Governor of region Crete, and CPMR Vice-President for maritime affairs, took part in a Searica conference in Brussels, following up on the 'Our Oceans' Conference at EU level, with European Commissioner Karmenu Vella, in January 2018;
- CPMR Secretary General, Eleni Marianou, participated in the European Maritime Days conference in May 2018 in Burgas;
- CPMR regions took part in the European Parliament's Searica Intergroup discussions, including topics such as 'Ocean and Feeding the World', marine biotechnologies, circular economy and tourism in Islands, the Baltic Sea, and 'Young Talent and the Blue Economy'.

The CPMR also helped strengthen maritime policy initiatives at sea-basin level.

Working with its Geographical Commissions, it supported sea-basin strategies and the maritime dimension of macro-regional strategies.

**Maritime Investments**

The CPMR worked to influence the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) after 2020. Its technical paper from July 2018 outlines its response to the Commission's EMF proposals. Activities ahead of DG Mare's proposals were:

- Consultation with regions via its working group; site visits to Sicily (Sept 2018) and Flevoland (Feb 2018) involving Pierre Karleskind, Vice-President of Brittany region & Chair of the Fisheries Working Group;
- Pierre Karleskind participated in the conference on post-2020 EMFF, organised by DG Mare and the Estonian Presidency, in Tallinn in October 2017;
CPMR meeting in January 2018, with DG Mare and MEP Clara Aguilera, EP PECH Committee rapporteur on the MFF.

Policy position on the EMFF, adopted by the CPMR Political Bureau in February 2018;

Seminar on post-2020 EMFF in Flevoland in April 2018, hosted by Jan-Nico Appelman, Flevoland Regional Minister for Economic and Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, involving DG Mare & Dutch national authorities;

Participation in a workshop organised by the Galicia region at the European Maritime Days in May 2018;

Activities after the publication of DG Mare’s proposals were:

Claire Hughes, regional councillor, represented the CPMR at a hearing on the EMFF post-2020, organised by the PECH Committee on 20 June 2018;

Press release expressing the CPMR’s fears, discussion at the CPMR Political Bureau in June and publication of a reaction document;

Sending amendments to MEPs;

Active discussions with the CoR’s rapporteur on the EMFF post-2020;

Our principles for post-2020 EMFF that reinforces partnership with regions

Maintain the EMFF as a specific fund to support the Common Fisheries Policy as a priority

Support the Integrated Maritime Policy (IMP), including its actions

Simplify to meet needs of professionals and the regions

Reinforce partnership with the regions at regional, sea basin and European level

Provide EMFF with budget in line with ambitions of the European Union
The CPMR's objective was to influence the future blue investment platform that DG Mare is willing to establish, to improve access to finance for maritime businesses. The CPMR's interest in this platform supports its work on the mobilization of maritime investments, particularly through cooperation projects such as InnoBlueGrowth and Mistral, which involve its Intermediterranean Commission.

As a result, maritime regions were considered in the call for tenders published by Dg Mare, which will enable active synergies with the EIB and the EC. Activities were:

- Meeting in Brussels in May 2018 with Bernhard Friess, Director, DG Mare, and experts from the regions;
- Meeting in Fife in July 2018, as part of the CLIPPER project, led by Pays de la Loire, with Bernhard Friess, Tiina Perho, and stakeholders from Scotland.

The CPMR has been working on the implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), analysing the issues and their solutions. Besides its work on the implementation of the EMFF, this involved work on:

- Exchanging best practices between regions and stakeholder organisations, through EU projects such as SAFER, involving its Atlantic Arc Commission, Co-EVOLVE and PANACEA, involving its Intermediterranean Commission, and DACIAT involving its Balkan and Black Sea Commission.
- Implementation of the landing obligation, discussed at CPMR Atlantic Arc Commission meeting in Brussels on 20 June.

The CPMR called for the launch of a new European strategy for maritime industries, including shipbuilding, marine energies and oil&gas. This work followed up on the European Commission's communication on a new EU industrial strategy, published in September 2017.

In partnership with stakeholder organisations, such as Sea-Europe, the CPMR took an active role in the EESC’s activities of the EESC which in April 2017 adopted an opinion asking for a new European strategy. The CPMR took part in a conference on this topic, organised by their rapporteur in October 2017.

The CPMR also contacted MEPS interested in this issue, including MEPs Gesine Meissner and Sergio Cofferrati, who presented an oral question to the European Commission in August 2018, asking them to propose a new strategy. Activities were:

- This work is led by Tiina Perho, member of the board of the South West Finland regional council. Work is based on a working group, and the activities of the CLIPPER project
- Tiina Perho participated in a conference on 8 October in Brussels, organised by Sea Europe, including CEOs of shipyards and maritime technology companies in Europe, MEPs and Commission representatives.

The CPMR worked to outline the proposals to fight plastic pollution and marine litter, and promote regions’ views in European Commission debates. Activities were:

- A declaration, presented by North Sea Commission President, Kerstin Brunström, was adopted by the CPMR Political Bureau, Pärnu, Estonia, in June 2018;
- On behalf of the CPMR, the SUD Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur region took part in debates on plastic & marine litter, organised by the Searica Intergroup in April 2018;
A beach cleaning exercise took place in June in Fredrikstad, Norway, during the Annual Meeting of the North Sea Commission, and will also happen in October at the CPMR General Assembly.

The CPMR supported cooperation between regions and public-private organisations, involving the development of European cooperation projects. The CPMR and its Geographical Commissions are involved in:

**CleanAtlantic** (Interreg Atlantic Area Transnational Program) led by CETMAR (Galicia), involving the CPMR Atlantic Arc Commission. It improves monitoring, prevent and removing macro marine litter;

**PANACeA** (Interreg Med Programme) involving the CPMR Intermediterranean Commission, aiming to improve management of protected areas in the Mediterranean.

**MEDSEALITTER** project, aimed at developing specific marine litter monitoring protocols;

**CO-EVOLVE**, (Interreg Med Programme), led by Region East-Macedonia and Thrace, involving the CPMR Intermediterranean Commission.

The CPMR's work, led by Cees Loggen, Deputy-Governor of Noord-Holland, follows up on the implementation of the MSP Directive, and focuses on land-sea Interaction and the role of regions in the Directive's implementation.

The CPMR:

- Participated in discussions in Dg Mare's expert group on MSP, in which the CPMR has observer status;
- Took part in activities organised by relevant cooperation projects via its Geographical Commissions: SIMNORAT with its Atlantic Arc Commission; and SIMWESTMED, CO-EVOLVE, PANACeA, PHAROS4MPAS and MED Coast 4 Blue Growth (MC4BG) with its Intermediterranean Commission.
- Began its involvement in the SEANSE project in the North Sea.

The CPMR continues to collaborate with the International Oil Pollution Compensation Funds (IOPC), and with the European Commission on the European Liability Directive (ELD).

**Protection of the Marine Environment & Oil Spills**

The CPMR and its Geographical Commissions have been involved in several actions as part of the Vasco da Gama initiative. First, to influence the maritime dimension of the European Skills Agenda:

- The CPMR participated in DG Mare's Blue Skills Working Group;
- Began to collaborate with the MATES project, led by CETMAR, to develop proposals.

Second, to develop activities supporting operational initiatives with member regions:

- **VDG Summer School** organised by the IMC in July 2018 in Bari in partnership with the University of Bari and Puglia region;
- AAC’s **Blue Biotechnology Master for a Blue Career project** (BBMBC);
- The new Vasco da Gama ‘Youth Mobility’ initiative, which aims to support the mobility of students and job-seekers in Europe.

**Education & Training**

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“Improving accessibility across all territories is crucial for Europe’s future”

**BACKGROUND**

The CPMR’s accessibility campaign continues to promote accessibility in EU transport policy for peripheral, outermost and island regions, and to develop sustainable maritime transport. The CPMR remains the only organisation calling for improving regional accessibility at EU level.

The CPMR’s actions intensified in 2018 as the European Commission announced its proposals for the EU budget after 2020.

This included proposals for two European instruments that are crucial for Europe regions: The Trans European Transport Network (TEN-T) and the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF).

As a result, the CPMR carried out several lobbying activities, both before and after the Commission’s proposals, aimed at ensuring the position of our member regions is incorporated into the proposals.

**Commission proposals for CEF**

The CPMR policy position for the revision of the CEF, agreed with regions in 2017, calls for territorial cohesion and accessibility to be included among the “specific sectoral objectives” for transport in the CEF regulations, and for a higher share of the CEF budget for Europe’s peripheral regions.

This position was widely disseminated to representatives in the European Commission and European Parliament in 2018.

It was also outlined in a letter sent to European Commissioner for Transport, Violeta Bulc, in January 2018, when the Commission was preparing its budget proposals.

Following this, the Commission published the CEF Regulation proposal on 6 June, discussing it the following day with the CPMR Transport Working Group in Brussels.

Responding to the CEF proposal, the CPMR expressed its concern that the CPMR would be limited to around 2% of the EU budget.

It also expressed its worry that improving the accessibility of territories is still not considered a priority objective. On the other hand, it welcomed the emphasis on decarbonisation and digitization, two areas where the regions can play a key role.

As a result of the proposal, the CPMR and its Geographical Commissions developed an analysis of the Annex to the Regulation, which defines the corridors and priority sections of the TEN-T core network.
This analysis led the CPMR to submit a series of amendments to MEPs in September 2018, with the help of its member regions. The CPMR will continue to defend these options during the EU budget's negotiation process with the European Parliament and Member States.

Since its creation in 2014, the CEF has dedicated only 4% of its budget to maritime transport, even though it is a sustainable mode of transport that contributes to the achievement of the EU’s climate objectives. The modal shift from the road to the sea should be given greater priority by DG Move, but this is not the case. As a result, the CPMR has taken action at three levels:

→ Reinforcing the support of the future CEF for port investments, by requesting that they benefit from the same co-financing rate as cross-border projects;

→ Revitalizing the Motorways of the Sea (MoS) policy: the CPMR’s March 2017 proposals were backed by MoS European coordinator, Brian Simpson, but these have not been incorporated into the Commission’s CEF proposal;

→ Under the current criteria, the MoUs are not very accessible to peripheral ports, islands, and connections with third countries within shared sea basins. The CPMR is concerned that their revision is not planned until 2023.
Accelerating the preparation of a European Ecobonus for the maritime sector. The CPMR is in contact with the project leader of ‘Medatlantic Ecobonus’ a project co-financed by the CEF which has been established its preparation.

It is expected that the project will soon present its results and recommendations to the CPMR Transport Working Group.

Taxation of road transport is another way of financing maritime transport, provided the revenue generated by the road can be mobilised for the maritime sector.

This is one of the challenges of the revision of the Eurovignette Directive, currently under negotiation between the Commission, the Parliament and the Council.

On 28 November 2017, the CPMR organised a debate between regions and the Parliament’s rapporteur, Christine Revault d’Allonnes.

It warned that the specificities of the peripheries should be taken into account in a road transport pricing system based on distance travelled.

The CPMR’s priorities, agreed following a 2017 reflection with regions, are: State aid and Public Service Obligations (OSP), greening of air transport, and European financing of airport investments.

As a first step, a group of voluntary regions, consisting of Sardinia, Vasterbotten, Cornwall and Stockholm, was formed. This group met DG Move and DG Competition in April and June 2018 to learn more about the European agenda on state aid and public service obligations.

The CPMR and its regions will be involved in two elements of legislation in 2019: the 2014 State aid guidelines for airports and airlines, and the 2008 air services regulation.

Taxation of Road Transport

Improving Air Accessibility & Connectivity

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The CPMR will also continue its discussions with intergovernmental organisation Eurocontrol.

Eurocontrol has been tasked by the European Commission to develop a European indicator of air connectivity.

Looking forward, before July 2019, the CPMR plans to organise a seminar that will lead to a ‘transversal’ vision of EU action on air transport, supporting territorial cohesion.

The CPMR's Geographical Commissions continue to be active in the field of accessibility and transport, using CPMR's position to support their focus on macro-regional and sea basin strategies in their respective areas.

In addition, the CPMR has intervened in several events, such as the Transport and Logistics Conference dedicated to the Adriatic on 22 March 2018, and the seminar on Brexit issues for Irish ports on 22 November 2017.
Climate Task Force

The Climate Task Force has had a second busy year, with several meetings and political initiatives during 2018.

This work has been carried out under the political lead of Brittany Region (Thierry Burlot, Vice President in charge of Environment, Water and Biodiversity) and Noord Holland (Cees Loggen, CPMR Vice-President and Vice Governor of Noord Holland).

There remains strong interest in its work with over 30 regions regularly participating in its activities.

Three meetings will have been held by the end of 2018:

- **February**: a session focusing on financing of climate action through the EU budget and on the role of regions in implementing the Paris Agreement and COP agendas;

- **23 May**: a day focused on climate resilience exploring opportunities for innovation and economic benefits from climate transformation. This included a Green Week Partner event, with ICLEI.

- **17-19 October**: at the CPMR Annual General Meeting in Helsinki, a review meeting of the year and 2019 planning, with a discussion on the CPMR's position on the Long-Term Strategy for Reducing Emissions.

Developing Partnerships

During 2018 the CPMR consolidated and extended the relationships established with DG Climate in particular and a wide range of networks, think tanks and other sectoral interests in Brussels.

Three examples illustrate this perfectly:

- the questionnaire on resilience of regional infrastructure sent to regions in March/April was prepared in consultation with DG CLIMA’s adaptation unit and came out of discussions with this unit on the capacity of public authorities to cope with (and plan for) the increasing number of extreme climate events being experienced;

- linked to this is the second initiative the Green Week Partner Event organised with ICLEI, who have been working on building resilience in urban areas – DG CLIMA sent three officials to the 23 May Task Force meeting and Partner Event including the Head of the Adaptation Unit;
the signing of a letter to Head of State and Government in June calling for greater ambition on climate action in the EU. The letter was prepared by the Higher Ambition Coalition, an informal network of organisations in Brussels active on climate change (which the CPMR participates in), which is coordinated by CAN Europe one of the networks we have built strong links with over the past year.

Also linked to this was a delegation visit of the Higher Ambition Coalition to meet the Commission’s European Political Strategy Centre.

The CPMR’s Västra Götaland region participated in this meeting on behalf of the Climate Task Force.

At the May 2018 meeting, the Task Force prioritised responding to the European Commission’s consultation on the planned Long-Term Strategy on Reducing Emissions.

The policy position calls for a vision setting out how the EU will meet the Paris Agreement ambitions and not role back on these.

This highlights how regions are already setting more ambitious targets on reducing emissions and achieving carbon neutrality as well as developing innovative policies and approaches to deliver a just transition.

The policy paper also recommends a number of policy actions to be developed in cooperation with the CPMR’s regions.

The CPMR has submitted an application for observer status in the UN’s COP process for climate action, which will take effect from 2019 once confirmed. A number of CPMR regions are planning to attend COP24 in Katowice Poland in November 2018.

These will be determined at the CPMR General Assembly, in Madeira in October and will look to build on the work of the Task Force over the past two years.

Next year, 2019, will be a year of transition, with European Parliament elections, the appointment of a new Commission President and College of Commissioners, and the upcoming implementation of Brexit.
Cohesion, cooperation and action is required to tackle Europe’s migration crisis

The CPMR’s Task Force on Migration has this year taken significant strides forward in its important work on migration management.

The Task Force has worked to strengthen cooperation and partnerships that add value, are innovative and enable more effective migration management and governance.

It has also highlighted the need for cooperation that demonstrates the effectiveness of a multilateral and multilevel governance approach to asylum and migration policies and the key role that regions play in organising the reception and long-term integration of refugees and migrants.

On a positive note, the CPMR has largely welcomed the European Commission’s reinforced budget allocation for migration and asylum in its post-2020 EU budget proposals. It will continue to follow the negotiations to ensure that the level of funding and references to the role of the regions are maintained.

A questionnaire was developed and circulated among CPMR members, with responses received from 22 regions in ten countries. The valuable information in this questionnaire was used to draw-up the CPMR Issue paper ‘Migration and Asylum in EU Regions: Towards a multilevel governance approach’.

The visual mapping, powered by Google Maps, is currently in progress and a beta version will be presented at the CPMR General Assembly in Madeira.

A ‘Survey on the External Dimension’ is in progress to identify regional international cooperation frameworks (involving third countries), networks, programmes and projects in which migration is considered a driver or an important element, and those which can potentially be linked with migration, asylum and mobility.

The results of the survey will feed into a new issue paper on the external dimension of migration and the role of the regions, which will be published by the first half of 2019.
If the potential of regions to help welcome migrants and asylum seekers is to be properly recognised, then a more effective EU migration policy must be developed, taking into account the importance of multi-level governance, including regions in EU decision making.

With the help of consultant Anna Terron, President of Instrategies, the CPMR produced the issue paper ‘Migration and asylum in EU regions: towards a multilevel governance approach’ to address these questions, providing examples of the regional role in migration and asylum policies.

It recommends the need for a multilevel governance and a cross-cutting approach when dealing with migration issues; a proper recast Common European Asylum System (CEAS) acknowledging the Regions role and potential; and the better use, convergence and complementarity of funding instruments and tools such as the current Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) and Cohesion Policy post 2020.

The paper has been presented at high-level events to discuss the migration challenge, including the CPMR's Conference on Migration.

This high-level conference, held in April 2018 in Brussels, was organised with the Attika region and held at the European Committee of the Regions (CoR). It raised the attention of institutions to the need for multi-level governance and the added value of regional and local authorities for more effective results.

Discussion focused on the implementation of the 2015 EU Agenda on migration, the recast Common European Asylum System and the external dimension of migration policies. The successful event involved speakers from local and regional authorities, EU Institutions and other key stakeholders. Rena Dourou, Governor of the region of Attica, represented the CPMR at the event.

One of the most important pilot projects supported by the CPMR is MIPEX Regions. This project, involving several CPMR regions, is led by Catalonia, supported by CIDOB and the Migration Policy Group.

The CPMR also works with organisations dealing with migration, the CoR, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) and the MED INTERREG Programme, OECD and Migration Policy Development (ICMPD).

Following this, in August 2018, Gilles Simeoni, President of the CPMR Islands Commission, and the Corsica Executive Council, published a Declaration, signed by Corsican elected representatives, stressing that Corsica is ready to fulfill its duty of assistance with regard to emergencies.

Paraskevi Michou, Director-General of the European Commission's DG HOME, also sent a letter to the CPMR and its Intermediterranean Commission, expressing agreement with our recommendations on EU migration policies.
EU Budget

Following the announcement of the European Commission’s proposals in May 2018 for the post-2020 EU budget, the CPMR expressed its support for the ambitious envelope proposed for the ‘Neighbourhood & the World’ heading, particularly the new unified Neighbourhood, Development & International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI).

It calls for the involvement of local and regional authorities in the set-up, implementation and possibly the governance of the new programmes, with a territorial impact under this instrument and an adequate budget for cross-border territorial cooperation.

Training: Integrated Territorial Development in the Med

The CPMR Intermediterranean Commission (IMC) organised a training session on an ‘Integrated Territorial Development Approach to the delivery of public services in the Mediterranean’, on 11 and 12 April. This two-day meeting, between the two shores of the Mediterranean, involved nearly 40 selected participants and took place at the ‘Maison’ of the Region Occitania, in Casablanca, Morocco.

The training was organised within the framework of the strategic partnership between PLATFORMA and the European Commission. It was held as part of the activities with southern countries led by the CPMR and the IMC.

It aimed to raise awareness and share knowledge on the adoption of an integrated territorial development approach for the delivery of public services in the Mediterranean.

The training was based on a Handbook developed with the support of expert Federico Martire.

The Handbook provides a training and reference framework on integrated territorial development, addressed to decision-makers and public officials in the basin, with particular focus on the regional and local territorial situations in Morocco and Tunisia.

The IMC will organise a thorough follow-up of Integrated Territorial Development issues through its work with partner organisations such as the UfM and the UNDP.

It supports any initiative to replicate this training in IMC territories and beyond.
Collaboration with nrg4SD

The CPMR, through its IMC, has revived its collaboration with the Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development (nrg4SD), a global network that represents regions in the field of sustainable development.

The IMC fully supports the nrg4SD report ‘Contributions of Regional Governments to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals’, for which it coordinated all answers from CPMR regions, stressing the peculiarities of the territories the CPMR and IMC cover and relevant links to specific Sustainable Development Goals.

The IMC welcomed the presentation of the report during the United Nations’ High Level Political Forum, held in July 2018 in New York. The IMC will ensure the report is disseminated throughout its regional network once it is officially published.

UN Special Event for Local & Regional Authorities

During the 2018 edition of the UN Political Forum there was a Special Event for Local & Regional Authorities. On 16 July, Local and Regional Governments met Member States, representatives of the UN system, Major Groups and stakeholders.

They discuss their important role in localisation and implementation of the 2030 Agenda, in the first Local and Regional Governments Forum.

Several member regions exhibited under the CPMR umbrella on the theme ‘Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies’.

This provided the opportunity for CPMR members to exchange best practices and learn lessons to implement the SDGs, showcasing their outstanding efforts before a large number of stakeholders and institutions, and highlighting their work and contribution to the implementation of the SDGs on the ground.

Study: Evolution of Decentralised Cooperation

The new study ‘Shaping a new generation of decentralised cooperation for enhanced effectiveness and accountability’, was published in December 2017.

It was developed by the CPMR and the Basque Government, under a Strategic Partnership Agreement signed between PLATFORMA and the European Commission.

The author of the study is Agustí Fernández de Losada Passols (Director of Studies at Tornos Abogados).

Romanian Presidency of the EU

The CPMR Vice-President on Neighbourhood Policy is Mr Horia Teodorescu, President of Tulcea County Council, Romania.

Given the upcoming Romanian Presidency of the Council of the EU, in the first semester of 2019, the CPMR will place particular emphasis on the Eastern Neighbourhood.
The **SIMNORAT** project, managed by SHOM, supports the implementation of the MSP Directive by Member States in their marine waters in the North Atlantic region of Europe.

The **SIMWESTMED** project, supports the implementation of the MSP Directive. The project will establish a framework for maritime spatial planning.

The **SEANSE** project, involving the CPMR and its North Sea Commission, along with SHOM, will develop a coherent approach to Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs), with a focus on renewable energy, in support of the effective implementation of MSPs.

**CLIPPER**

*Interreg Europe*

Coordinated by Pays de la Loire, **CLIPPER** implements new ways of supporting SMEs to improve quality upgrading, manufacturing performance and leadership in new markets such as marine renewable energies.

**FARNET 2** is a provision of service contract between DEVNET and the European Commission to provide assistance for the setting-up of a support unit for the European Fisheries Area Network 2014-2020. The CPMR is involved in the organisation of seminars.

**SAFER**, co-financed by the Interreg Atlantic Area Programme through the ERDF, aims to improve the innovation performance of the seafood industry by increasing technology adoption and transnational cooperation.

**CO-EVOLVE**, involving the CPMR and its Intermediterranean Commission analyses and promote the ‘co-evolution’ of human activities and natural systems in coastal zones where tourism is an important activity.

The **CleanAtlantic** project, co-financed by the Interreg Atlantic Area Programme through the ERDF, aims to protect biodiversity and ecosystem services by reinforcing prevention, monitoring and removing marine litter in the Atlantic Area.

The **BBMBC** project has developed a Masters degree, based at the University of la Rochelle in the Region Nouvelle-Aquitaine, exploring the potential benefits of Blue Biotechnologies for health, nutrition and aquaculture.
HERIT-DATA aims to measure and reduce the impact of mass tourism-related human activities on old cities and sites of particular cultural heritage or archaeological interest, including UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

The UFM agreement was established in February 2017 to develop synergies between the CPMR's Intermediterranean Commission and the UfM, focused on developing the blue economy in the Mediterranean basin.

InnoBlueGrowth is building a real community of modular projects dealing with innovation and blue growth, supporting the transnational activities of Mediterranean clusters.

The MITOMED+ project aims to promote the integrated management of maritime and coastal tourism by enhancing knowledge of data, products and services using a set of indicators based on the NECSTouR model.

The PANACeA project aims to improve the management of protected areas in the Mediterranean to enhance and protect biodiversity in the region. The project will build a ‘community’ of nature conservation stakeholders in the Mediterranean.

The Adriatic Ionian Network of Universities, Regions, Chambers of Commerce and Cities (Initiative AI-NURECC) involves the main stakeholders of the Ionian Regions of the Adriatic, who are supporting the implementation of the EUSAIR.

SHERPA involving the CPMR's Intermediterranean Commission, aims to improve the energy efficiency of public buildings in regions across the Mediterranean.

CIVITAS Destinations involves cities in six islands and aims to develop new initiatives to improve their tourism and transport without damaging the environment.
The Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR) brings together some 160 Regions from 25 States from the European Union and beyond.

Representing about 200 million people, the CPMR campaigns in favour of a more balanced development of the European territory.

It operates both as a think tank and as a lobby group for Regions. It focuses mainly on social, economic and territorial cohesion, maritime policies and accessibility.
6, Rue St Martin
35700 Rennes
+ 33 (0)2 99 35 40 50
secretariat@crpm.org
@CPMR_Europe
www.cpmr.org