



## **Maritime Regions contribute to Our Ocean Conference commitments**

Half of the world's population depends directly on our seas and oceans for their livelihoods. And if we take a closer look, we all share this dependency. The seas and oceans are essential to life on Earth. For our food, for our climate, for our water chain, for our travels.

By ensuring our well-being, by regulating our climate, by forging our cultural identity, by hosting an important share of our economic activities, by offering a great potential for sustainable jobs.

The CPMR Regions are on the front line to attest how crucial our seas and oceans are. They were the first to witness the growing impact of human activities, climate change, pollution, and coastal degradation which pose serious threats for our planet.

If the CPMR Regions are on the front line to highlight the growing risks our seas and oceans are facing, they are also on the front line to adapt, to deliver new innovative solutions, to create tailor-made solutions to answer local challenges and to commit to taking action.

Coastal and maritime Regions have been pleased to see, since 2014, Our Ocean conferences inviting world leaders to look forward and respond, delivering high-level commitments and transforming the challenges ahead into an opportunity for cooperation, innovation and entrepreneurship.

As the 2017 edition "An Ocean for Life" was hosted by the European Union in Malta, at the heart of the Mediterranean, Regions are now eager to share their commitment to contribute to OOC work.

This brochure is to show you how the Regions are already engaged in contributing to the Our Ocean Conference's objectives.



## MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

**The Our Ocean Conference is looking for commitments to develop effective regional networks of MPAs, and to support them with sufficient economic resources, technical capacity and participatory sustainable management.**

The CPMR's Regions are fully aware of the interest in Marine Protected Areas for coastal territories. They have understood that the effectiveness of a regional network on MPAs lays in the engagement of all relevant local stakeholders, including the initial users of the area covered, in their conception, design and management.

The knowledge and experience of Regions makes them key actors in the realisation of OOC17 ambitions in terms of MPAs. Over the years, they have developed considerable know-how to:

- Enhance the social acceptance of the MPAs by engaging with impacted maritime actors such as the fishermen;
- Identify the relevant areas to implant MPAs consistently with existing activities and local ecosystems;
- Create functioning management schemes adapted to local realities.

### **Involvement of Fishermen in MPAs management in Catalonia**

In 2013, the fishermen association of Roses decided to establish a no-fishing zone of 52 square kilometres to protect a well-known recruitment ground for hake, a species strongly overexploited in the area. The move came after a de-facto joint research partnership was established with scientists from the Institute of Marine Scientists of Barcelona, and with the support from the Catalan fishing authorities.

Three years later a scientific study showed the measure had been a resounding conservation success as fish bio-mass inside the area had tripled. The success of this initiative is now spreading in the region and fishermen from the neighbouring ports of Palamós and Blanes, working together and with scientists, have decided to establish two new no-take zones, adding a further 50 square kilometres off-limits.

Following the same logic, and based on previous local experience with pilot fisheries, the Government of Catalonia has identified that reforming fisheries governance through establishing a bottom-up management scheme is key to ensuring the recovery of the Mediterranean fisheries sector and the stocks.

The new Decree on the Governance of Maritime Fisheries will enter into force in Autumn 2017. Co-management committees, composed of representatives from the fisheries sector, the administration, science and NGOs, will develop management plans per fishery based on adaptive management and a wider bio-economic approach, and will apply conservation incentives.

The Government of Catalonia has also issued new legislation to half coral fishing licences in 2017 and establish a 10-year exploitation moratorium, starting in November 2017. In parallel, a scientific monitoring scheme has been approved for the duration of the recovery scheme, along with strengthened measures to fight illegal activities.



## CLIMATE CHANGE

**The Our Ocean Conference is looking for commitments to react to and prepare for climate change and rising sea levels, helping communities to adapt and work with nature, not against it.**

Climate change is not a mere hypothesis for CPMR Regions. They have observed the effects proving that ecosystems are changing with:

- Coastal erosion which is becoming more marked because of the rise of sea levels, flooding and the increased frequency of storms;
- Major weather events which are occurring with greater frequency;
- A change in distribution of rainfall in some Regions (Catalunya, Valencia, French Polynesia, Wales for instance);
- Increasing risks of forest fires;
- Changes in species distribution with fish stocks moving northwards, apparition of invasive species and harmful organisms in the last few years.

To react to those observed consequences of climate change, CPMR Regions have taken action for years:

- They have introduced general adaptive strategies, developed risk prevention plans to answer the increasing flood risk;
- They have committed to energy transition, part of the energetic solution to combat climate change lies in peripheral maritime Regions. CPMR Regions are looking to a great potential for renewable energies with sea-based energy production. This engagement for cleaner new sources of energy is stimulating creativity in the territories.

### **Bologna Charter initiated by Emilia-Romagna, Liguria, Occitane, Cataluña, Toscana, East Macedonia and Thrace and Crete**

The Bologna Charter is aimed at strengthening the role of the Coastal Administrations in the context of European policies and initiatives at Mediterranean level. In particular, its action focuses on coastal protection, integrated management, adaptation to climate change.

The Bologna Charter developed a Joint Action Plan. Its general objective is to protect the Mediterranean coasts from coastal erosion and enhance the resilience of coastal areas to climate change. This objective will be accomplished through three pillars:

- Knowledge, research and monitoring the status of Mediterranean coastal areas;
- Integrated Coastal and Maritime spatial planning for the sustainable development of coastal and marine areas;
- Studies and works answering Climate Change adaptation needs along the Mediterranean coasts.

For instance, the Charter inspired the development of the “CO-EVOLVE” project – “Promoting co-evolution of human activities and natural systems for the development of sustainable coastal and maritime tourism in the Mediterranean”.



## SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES

The Our Ocean Conference is looking for commitments to tackle these critical issues, reversing overexploitation and fighting IUU fishing, helping to manage our common resources at sustainable levels, with a long-term, ecosystem-based approach.

For years CPMR Regions have pointed out that a solution for sustainably managed fisheries was laying in their hands. They have seen the transformation of the fishing activity in their territories.

To answer the challenges raising from this transformation they have taken action to:

- Create an efficient fisheries management scheme;
- Develop new fishing gears providing solutions to reduce unwanted catches;
- Protect endangered species;
- Provide the most accurate data to ensure an efficient fisheries management.

### **Involvement of Brittany in the Association of the Great Atlantic Coast**

The Brittany Region, together with the other members, contributes to the work of the Association of the Great Atlantic Coast in favour of sustainable fishing. Various projects, involving professionals and scientists, should facilitate the achievement of Maximum Sustainable Yield (RMD), reduce unwanted catches or reduce the impact of gear on the environment.

The measures concern the testing, on board professional vessels, of devices improving the selectivity of gear (trawl, net, etc.) or fishing strategies to reduce discards. Work is also being carried out to improve knowledge on the survival of Norway lobsters caught in the trawl fishery, as well as on-board practices promoting better survival of this species.

Finally, work should be carried out to analyse the impact of dredges on maërl, a protected area, in order to propose appropriate management measures. The methodology developed can be used in other analyses of interactions between gears and environments.

## Fisheries data collection in Galicia

This commitment is part of the Galician data collection and analysis system, focused on Small-Scale Fisheries (SSF). SSF is a sector with high social, economic and cultural importance for the Galician coastal communities that provides employment to a large number of the population in coastal villages, some of which are totally dependent on this activity.

The aim of the project is to provide the regional public authorities with the most accurate data and analysis in order to manage our common resources at sustainable levels, with a long-term, ecosystem-based approach.

This information allows the public authority to react to the needs of the fisheries stocks and also to the fleet's.

The SSF fleet catches a diverse range of species, and most of them are subject to TACs. The system provides reliable and accurate data for the formulation of public policies.

The project could also be shared as a good practice on data collection developed within the EU with beneficiary public administrations.





## MARINE POLLUTION

The Our Ocean Conference is looking for commitments from public authorities, business and civil society to help reduce contamination and littering, and develop initiatives that make ocean litter prevention, recovery and recycling more efficient. With political will building momentum, this year's Conference aims to see the kind of commitment to action that will finally reverse the trend of ever-increasing marine pollution.

The CPMR Regions have seen a multiplication of green and red tides. They are increasingly concerned about marine litter that impacts both their eco-systems and maritime activities.

A major share of the work to tackle those marine pollution challenges consists of getting every stakeholder on the same line, including the public and the marine users' community as a whole. It is a serious effort to get all maritime sectors from fisheries to marine energy including maritime transport at the same table, with the scientific community, the NGOs.

Regions have engaged themselves in this direction to face their challenges, bringing together maritime actors and land users to find solutions for green tides for instance, encouraging the emergence of shorter distribution chains from production to market on their territory.

### Consume-less project supported by Gozo and Sicilia

Consume-less is an INTERREG Mediterranean project that was developed between the Project Partners following the identification of problems emanating from high tourist influxes, particularly in coastal areas. The lead partner of the project is the Energy and Water Agency in Malta and other project partners are from Italy, Greece, Albania and Spain.

The general objective is to promote smart and sustainable growth in Mediterranean coastal touristic cities based on the development of integrated sustainable energy, water and waste management strategies in Mediterranean cities with high levels of tourism in order to reduce energy and water consumptions and waste generation.

Apart from the creation of a "ConsumelessMed" label, the project wants to promote sustainable tourism models, based on the enhancement of local heritage, natural resources and products and on the promotion of a responsible behaviour of tourists.

## Baltic Sea Challenge supported by Southwest Finland

The Baltic Sea Challenge is a network initiative that invites organisations to commit to protecting the Baltic Sea and their local waters by building their own Baltic Sea Action Plan.

Clean Baltic Sea is a productive Baltic Sea. We recognise that reconciling the need to utilise the sea with efforts to improve its ecological status presents a challenge. We challenge ourselves and our organisations to take action to ensure the good state of the Baltic Sea, in order to strengthen the shared sense of ownership of our waters and the responsibility for their wellbeing.

We take up this shared challenge voluntarily, with actions and cooperation that exceed the requirements of the law and our core operations, in order to reduce our contribution to the nutrient and hazardous substance loading in the Baltic Sea, and to help restore the good status of the sea.

**Vision:** A clean, productive and shared Baltic Sea.





## MARITIME SAFETY

**The Our Ocean Conference is looking for commitments from the industry, international organisations, national and local administrations, research institutions and civil society to tackle maritime security issues, which in turn will improve the conditions for the maritime sector and us all to thrive.**

The CPMR Regions have witnessed repeated oil-spills impacting their natural and socio-economic eco-systems and their image for years. They have suffered the Haven in Liguria (1991), the Sea Empress in Wales (1996), the Erika in Brittany (1999) and the Prestige in Galicia which polluted over 1,000km of Spanish and French coastline (2002).

These series of environmental tragedies on our seas led the CPMR Regions to push for and support the successive Erika Packages. In parallel, many efforts have been deployed to reduce the risk of accidental oil spill at sea. However, for 17 years now, the CPMR and its members have been advocating for the recognition of ecological damage.

This work was launched after the Erika sunk near the shore of Brittany. It would be a strong signal, and a symbolic commitment to protect our seas and oceans to see the EU showing its engagement to the International Community by launching work in this direction during the OOC17.

### **ARCSAR project supported by Nordland**

As a result of the Arctic search and rescue agreement (Nuuk, 2011), there are several on-going initiatives to strengthen maritime safety in the Arctic Ocean.

One of them is a new initiative where partners from the following countries have confirmed their participation in the ARCSAR project; Norway, USA, Iceland, Russia, Germany, UK, France, Finland, Ireland, Italy, Faroes and New Zealand. ARCSAR will establish international best practice and propose innovation platforms for the professional security and emergency response institutions in the Arctic and the North-Atlantic.

ARCSAR will look into the need for enhanced measures to respond to composite challenges faced, including surveillance of and mobilisation in case of threat situations, and emergency response capability related to search and rescue (SAR), environmental protection, firefighting, and actions against terror or other forms of destructive action.

Numerous European companies are involved in maritime operations in the Arctic and will benefit from these initiatives.



## Sustainable Blue Economy

**The Our Ocean Conference is looking for commitments from the industry, national and local administrations, research institutions and civil society to harvest the full potential of the Blue Economy in a smart, sustainable and inclusive way.**

There is no doubt that the sustainable development of the Blue Economy is part of the answer to several challenges we are currently facing. Indeed, it provides solutions for food security, new cleaner energy sources, emerging careers and job opportunities and greener transport alternatives.

The CPMR Regions are at the heart of this great potential. They host most of the activities enabling the development of maritime economy (land-locked territories also play a key role in this regard in several blue value chains). Therefore, they have realised the importance of:

- Developing an integrated strategic approach of the Blue Economy by acknowledging the links between different maritime sectors instead of tackling each of them in an independent manner. This interconnection between maritime activities is echoed in the Regions' Research and Innovation Smart Specialisation Strategies, such as those of Schleswig-Holstein and the Azores, which cover the whole spectrum of the maritime economy.

### Maritime Cluster of West Sweden in Västra Götaland

The Regional Programme for a Sustainable Maritime Sector 2016-2019 will facilitate sustainable growth and development of the maritime sector in Västra Götaland through collaboration between industry, academia and the public sector. These priority areas are used both in the current programme and in the strategies of the Maritime Cluster of West Sweden (<https://www.maritimaklustret.se/en/>).

The cluster serves as an operational platform connected to the programme, with the overarching goal to increase the opportunities for innovation and knowledge-based growth in the maritime sector. The programme deals with marine governance, maritime operations and technology, marine biotechnology, marine energy, seafood and maritime tourism and recreation.

The overarching goals of the programme are to:

- Keep and further develop maritime skills and competitiveness;
- Increase cooperation across sectors and branches;
- Generate long-term collaborations between industry, academia, institutes and public actors, including municipalities and governmental authorities.



**CPMR  
CRPM**

**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.

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