

CONFÉRENCE DES RÉGIONS PÉRIPHÉRIQUES MARITIMES D'EUROPE CONFERENCE OF PERIPHERAL MARITIME REGIONS OF EUROPE

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CPMR WORKING GROUP ON EXTERNAL COOPERATION TERMS OF REFERENCE

As presented to the Political Bureau at the 42nd General Assembly in Umeå, Sweden

I. AREAS OF ACTION

In line with its ongoing working plan, the CPMR agrees that its priorities should also take on board the global dimension. This has been done throughout different policy areas in an *ad hoc* manner. Besides, since its inception, the External Cooperation Working Group, which is of Inter-Commission nature, has been addressing specifically external cooperation activities. Moreover, it is proposed that the global dimension of certain policy areas also be addressed - if and as appropriate - by the External Cooperation Working Group in direct collaboration with other CPMR Working Groups and Geographical Commissions.

On 3rd September 2014, the Working Group adopted its Action Plan, on the basis of the proposals put forward by the Lead Region with the support of the CPMR Secretariat. In accordance to this Action Plan, the **objectives** of this Working Group are:

- 1. Policy and Advocacy To profile, advocate for and secure the added value of decentralised cooperation in the EU and international agendas, by means of a specific voice for regional authorities and a structured message.
- 2. Innovative processes towards empowering regional and local governments To encourage and strengthen new decentralised cooperation processes and partnerships of particular added value, innovation and effectiveness for more effective development outcomes. This shall include facilitating the exchange of concrete actions between local and regional authorities and their partners; as well as the participation in calls for proposals, funding opportunities and initiatives from the EU and other relevant actors.
- **3.** Complementarity and Synergy To promote and complement the impact of the CPMR External Cooperation Working Group and the individual work of its members, as well as the mainstream of a cooperation axis into other CPMR working groups and geographical commissions, if and as appropriate.
- **4. Accountability and effectiveness:** Monitor and assess the effectiveness and impact of decentralised cooperation vis-à-vis the EU and international agendas, as well as of the actions and deliverables of the Working Group.

The main **thematic areas** addressed shall be:

- EU Development policy, including the added value of decentralised cooperation for the European and Global agenda;
- Neighbourhood Policy and its links to Cohesion Policy, and also to the Northern Dimension, the Eastern Partnership, the Union for the Mediterranean, the Atlantic Regions, Outermost Regions, etc.;
- The Global Post 2015 Development Agenda, including its overarching Sustainable Development Goals in relation with the CPMR maritime core-group as far as maritime issues are concerned;
- Expertise and innovation in cooperation process, and
- Effectiveness and accountability of development cooperation.

This Working Group shall also monitor and engage in other relevant partnerships, particularly those around other interregional organisations or networks. Moreover, as appropriate, this Working Group shall engage in and collaborate with CPMR events related to external cooperation; as well as events of other networks, EU institutions and other international organisations (FAO, UNDP, WTO, etc.).

Finally, this Working Group shall unfold, monitor and assess the participation of the CPMR in the activities of the European Platform of Regional/Local Authorities for Development, which has been set up under the European Commission's NSA-LA (Non-State Actors - Local Authorities). This shall include public events, call for proposals at country level, potential actions and projects under the Strategic Partnership currently under negotiation, and any other relevant future cooperation projects.

II. COMPOSITION AND MODALITIES OF WORK OF THE GROUP

The group consists of:

- CPMR member Regions with an interest in the objectives and thematic areas above mentioned and that have indicated their desire to take part in the Working Group;
- CPMR member Regions involved in global organisations of Regions that have indicated their desire to take part in the Working Group;
- The Executive Secretaries of the CPMR's Geographical Commissions (*ex officio*);
- The Presidency and General Secretariat of the CPMR (ex officio).

Leadership of the Group

The general tasks of the lead Region shall be to:

- Steer the elaboration and implementation of an Action Plan for the Group, in close consultation with its members and with direct support from the CPMR Secretariat.
- Provide the necessary resources to prepare policy positions (resolutions, technical papers, reports, etc.)
 for the CPMR's executive bodies (General Assembly, Political Bureau, Presidency) on all issues related
 to the member Regions' external cooperation activities and the corresponding EU and international
 policies.
- Support the liaison of the Working Group with relevant EU and international institutions, networks and actors.

With effect in July 2014 and in liaison with the CPMR General Secretariat, the leadership of the Working Group was transferred to the Basque Country-Euskadi. The CPMR Secretariat shall continue providing secretarial services.

Operational Arrangements

The Working Group's working languages shall be English and French. When needed for official public events of the Group, the cost of simultaneous translation for other languages shall be covered by the Region hosting the event or in need of the specific interpretation services. The Region hosting the event shall cover the cost of the catering. Where possible and appropriate, logistical support shall be sought from the EU Institutions (e.g. Committee of the Regions) and/or partner networks and actors.

The CPMR shall provide secretarial tasks and assist in the preparation of meetings. It shall cover the translation expenses (English/French) for papers submitted to the Political Bureau and General Assembly as well as preparatory documents and minutes.

The CPMR will cover the travel and accommodation expenses of any outside experts, limited to 3 per year.

Should it be felt necessary to commission additional sources of expertise requiring remuneration, the issue will be examined by the Group's member Regions and the CPMR Secretariat

Each member of the Group shall cover his or her own travel and subsistence expenses for the participation in meetings and events of the Group.

Meetings

The Group shall hold formal meetings as necessary, depending on the relevant EU and CPMR agendas in relation to the above-mentioned objectives and thematic areas. In principle, the meetings will be held in Brussels or in a host Region. The activities of the Group will continue with regularly in between meetings.