

External Cooperation Working Group

Chaired by



- MEETING MINUTES - 10 MARCH 2015

BASQUE GOVERNMENT DELEGATION TO THE EUROPEAN UNION, BRUSSELS

Attendees:

ANDALUCIA :

María GODOY, Policy Officer, Junta de Andalucía, Brussels Delegation

AQUITAINE:

Nolwenn LE TALLEC, Officer, Bureau Aquitaine Europe

BRETAGNE / PAYS DE LA LOIRE / POITOU-CHARENTES - Espace Interrégionale Européen:

Stephane PEYHORGUE, Policy Officer, Bretagne-Pays de la Loire-Poitou-Charentes

CANARIAS:

Irene AFONSO GARCÍA, Canarias Government Delegation in Brussels

CATALUNYA:

Mireia SOLÉ LLORT, Policy Officer, Catalan Region in Brussels

EMILIA-ROMAGNA:

Graziana GALATI, Policy Officer, Emilia-Romagna Region EU Office

EUSKADI - BASQUE COUNTRY (WG Lead Region)

Camila DE EPALZA, European Union Policy Officer (Development Cooperation and Multilateral focal point), Basque Government Delegation to the European Union

LANGUEDOC-ROUSILLON

Pauline Dubois, Head of Brussels Office

PROVENCE-ALPES-COTE D'AZUR:

Joséphine DE BARTILLAT, Stagiaire, Région Provence-Alpes-Cote d'Azur Brussels Office

CPMR GENERAL SECRETARIAT

Maruxa CARDAMA, Adviser to the External Cooperation Working Group

Alexis CHATZIMPIROS, Adviser Energy/Islands

Claire STREET, Policy Assistant (by skype)

Apologies:

ARAGON

1. WELCOME AND ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS ON 15 OCTOBER 2015 (BRUSSELS):

The Minutes were approved (available from the [Dropbox](#) of the working group)

2. TOUR DE TABLE from member regions on upcoming events and initiatives:

A tour de table was made, in which the participants explained the recent initiatives or key actions that they have carried out.

Members were encouraged to provide as much information as possible on their activities and objectives, since this would help the CPMR External Cooperation Group to profile its action accordingly.

Stéphane Peyhorgue (Bretagne/Pays la Loire) pointed out that the Association of French Regions (ARF) had organised a visit to DG DEVCO and to DG NEAR, explaining the work of the regions, as well as exploring the possibilities of cooperation with these two DGs. It was emphasised that DG NEAR was surprised at the potential of the Local and Regional Authorities as actors in cooperation.

Maria Godoy, in representation of **Andalucia**, informed that it was organising a *side event* during the Assises of cooperation.

Joséphine De Bartillat (PACA) stated that it had focused on the organisation of a conference prior to the COP21 in Paris, taking place on 4th and 5th of June in Marseille, under the name MED-COP 21. It was also stated that on 1st and 2nd July, Rhone-Alpes will organise a World Summit on Climate and Territory in the framework of the UCLG.

Camila de Epalza, in representation of Euskadi/Basque Country, emphasised that the Basque Government had presented its Director of Cooperation and an informative session had been organised with respect to the initiatives and opportunities of the EU (in cooperation with the Basque Agency for Cooperation and Basque NGO coordinator) in Vitoria-Gasteiz. Additionally that they maintained contact with the European Commission and implication continued in the I-Steps Project promoted by the United Nations and with the participation of different local and regional authorities.

Finally, Ms Epalza, in the role of representative of the lead region of the CPMR External Cooperation Work Group, stated that the participation of the CPMR in the Assises would be outlined in point 6 of the agenda in the Working Group meeting.

3. UPDATE ON POST 2015 PROCESSES BY THE SECRETARIAT:

Camila de Espalza, in representation of the lead region of the External Cooperation Working Group emphasised the importance of the post 2015 agenda, and the close collaboration of the conference organised by the Basque Government, the Association of Basque Towns (EUDEL), the CPMR and ALDA, with the intervention of the European institutions and the United Nations. Details of the conference are in point 4 of the agenda of the Working Group meeting.

The relation between climate change and development was highlighted, as well as the emphasis given by the CPMR in contributing to the COP 21 in Paris in December 2015. A policy position on Climate Change will be approved by the Political Bureau at its meeting in June in Crete. (See point 4 below).

4. UPDATE ON ACTIVITIES:

a) *Conference “International & European Development Agendas: Subsidiarity, Efficiency, Accountability and Citizenship: Time for an active role of regional and local authorities” held on 9th December 2014*

Camila De Epalza presented the information relating to the conference organised and coordinated by the Delegation of the Basque Government, with the participation of distinct European and international partners. About 90 people attended the conference. The conference was organised by the Basque Government, the Association of Basque Towns (EUDEL), the CRPM and ALDA, and it included the intervention of the European institutions and the United Nations.

The [conference report](#) outlines the conclusions and key messages. It was emphasised that it was considered crucial to continue rising the ladder in the European and international agenda and to defend the added value of the role of the local and regional authorities in new processes of cooperation and the new alliances, and to emphasise the potential of the indicators in the post 2015 agenda.

The representative of the Basque Government and lead region of the CPMR External Cooperation Working Group, emphasised that the results outlined in the conference report could be a good base from which to promote a declaration or position of the CPMR in relation to decentralised cooperation.

b) *The Med beyond 2015: How do we achieve Sustainable Development-last 10-12th November 2014, Rome*

In relation to the [conference](#) that took place in Rome, the Delegate for Euskadi for the European Union, Marta Marin intervened in representation of the External Cooperation Working Group of the CRPM. Access to the conclusions of the conference is through the report link.

c) *Contact with DG DEVCO and Guide on the Territorial Approach to Local Development (TALD):*

Camila De Epalza explained that good contact had been made with Mr Jorge Rodriguez from the European Commission DG DEVCO. He had been invited to the meeting, but unfortunately had been unavailable. He is specifically working on the territorial dimension and has helped to put together a guide for the delegations working on the ground. Mr Rodriguez has a long experience in coordinating the territorial dimension and assessing effectiveness and it was therefore interesting to discuss with someone who could understand the regional perspective. The Basque delegation would be meeting with him on Friday 13 March.

Link to the Guide on the Territorial Approach to Local Development:

- [Territorial Approach to Local Development](#)
- [Approche territoriale du développement local](#)

Link to the Capacity for Development Platform <http://capacity4dev.ec.europa.eu/>

d) *Climate Change*

Alexis Chatzimpiros, CPMR Adviser on Energy/Islands, presented CPMR's current activities on climate change with a view to creating synergies with the CPMR External Cooperation Group.

The main focus at present was of course the run-up to the COP21 in Paris in December this year and the Post Kyoto agreement for the period after 2030. At the CPMR Political Bureau meeting in Nantes on 26 February, a session was held on climate - with the participation of Catalonia and Brittany - to present the regional role within the context of national negotiations. The CPMR had developed a technical roadmap to Paris explaining the role of regional governments and indicating a number of milestones ([Link to document](#)). CPMR is liaising with other regions and regional networks such as nrg4SD and ICLEI and trying to be present in key meetings, which include the MEDCOP21 Mediterranean Climate meeting in Marseille on 4-5 June and the World Summit of Territorial Climate Action with Civil Society in Lyon on 1-2 July.

A policy position paper was to be drafted and presented for approval to the Political Bureau at its next meeting on 12 June 2015 in Crete. It would be useful to collect ideas from member regions as building blocks for this document. This policy paper could be presented at the conference in Lyon by President Cordeiro.

Pauline Dubois (Languedoc-Rousillon) mentioned that in France the '*Commission nationale de coopération décentralisée*' (CNCD) had met in January. One of the issues discussed was the specific contribution of regional and local governments to COP21 based on a report by senators Ronan Dantec and Michel Delebarre. Languedoc-Rousillon had participated in the discussions with Councillor Gaysot. One of the issues that arose was the difficulty to identify decentralised cooperation projects in the field of climate change where there seemed to be very few actions undertaken. Here it was important to seek good practices to be highlighted during COP21.

Maruxa Cardama mentioned that the third UN International Conference on Financing for Development would be held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 13 to 16 July 2015. This conference would discuss funding for development actions for the post 2015 period focusing essentially on sustainable development. UN 'Green Funds' had been set up for tackling climate change.

5. COMPILATION OF PRACTICES ON THE MONITORING OF DECENTRALISED COOPERATION EFFICIENCY AND IMPACT - STATE OF PLAY AND DISCUSSION ON THE WAY FORWARD:

Camila de Epalza emphasized the effort being made to draw up a catalogue of the best practices in the sphere of cooperation, which will show what the regions are carrying out in this field. She thanked the work carried out by various regions in respect to good practice and the prioritisation policy. It was reminded that this is key information and that the European institutions, as a PLATFORM were interested in the information and wanted to know more about specific practices, making it the presentation point of the work of the regions that form part of the Working Group, and giving specific reasons to continue defending before the European institutions the added value of a more advanced decentralised cooperation.

On 24 March a conference was being organised at the Committee of the Regions to celebrate the 10th Anniversary of the Observatory for Decentralised cooperation EU-Latin America. Mr Paul Ortega, Director of the Basque Agency for Development Cooperation was participating in the conference and would also represent the CPMR working group on this occasion. In this regard he would highlight the best practices that member Regions made available to the working group.

The Basque Government had renewed its agreement with the UNDP and this week was taking part in a meeting of partners in the ART-UNDP I-STEPS (Innovation in Sustainable Territorial Partnerships) initiative in which a number of CPMR Regions are involved. This consists of action on the ground and strategic work on external relations and decentralised cooperation in Ecuador.

6. IV EUROPEAN ASSISES OF DECENTRALISED COOPERATION 2015 - CPMR COORDINATION OF ROUND TABLE 1 ON THE POST 2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA:

Camila de Epalza announced that the Committee of the Regions had elected the CPMR and the Basque Government to coordinate one of the round tables devoted to the post 2015 agenda. Regarding the Assises, the External Cooperation Working Group proposes to host an event outside the official agenda so to have a more open encounter that would allow networking amongst the different actors involved. It is also noted that, during the Assises, the European Commission will present its viewpoint with respect to the territorial dimension in development cooperation.

7. PLATFORMA'S STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP 2015-2017 WITH THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION:

The Political Agreement of the Strategic Partnership was signed on 28 January 2015 with the European Commission. A signature ceremony was organised by the Commission services, in the presence of the EU Commissioner for development and international cooperation, Neven Mimica, and the political representatives of all five networks party to a Strategic Partnership (AIMF, CLGF, CEMR-PLATFORMA, UCLG and UCLG Africa).

The next step will be for PLATFORMA to finalise and sign the Action Grant Agreement with the Commission. The calendar remains fluid since the Commission tends to request complementary or new information regularly. Once the official signature takes place, the next step will be the signature of a bilateral contract between the CPRM Secretariat and Platforma/CEMR and the agreement on the details for the development of CPMR activities/deliverables.

The next Steering Committee and Political Council of Platforma will be held in Brussels on 9-10 April. The Steering Committee will feature thematic/geographic discussions to create synergies between the different activities/deliverables of each Platforma member. Shortly after that meeting the delivery dates for CPMR's activities/deliverables should be set.

Discussions with the Platforma Secretariat indicate that 2015 will be mainly dedicated to the planning and preparation phases, with the bulk of delivery dates for activities/deliverables in 2016 and 2017. However, this could be compatible with seeing some (initial) delivery towards the end of the year. It is important to underscore that delivery calendars are contingent on the outstanding articulation and synergy between all Platforma members' activities, as well as on the bilateral discussions between CPMR and the Platforma Secretariat. The CPMR Secretariat has received solid reassurance by the Platforma Secretariat that all timings will bear in mind the ultimate objectives of the CPMR: coordination with the work programme of this Working Group and its members; with the work programme of the CPMR Intermediterranean Commission and with the activities/deliverables of the CPMR regions which are also direct members to Platforma and are to deliver activities/deliverables with a similar thematic or geographic scope.

8. EUROPEAN DEVELOPMENT YEAR 2015

The European Development Days (EDD) will take place on 3-4 June 2015.

A preparatory meeting took place on Monday 2 February and a lot of information related to LRGs and CSOs' participation in the organisation of the event has been provided.

Link to [Programme](#)