



# The Galway Statement on Atlantic Ocean Cooperation

## Background Note

### In brief

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Signed by Canada, the United States and the EU on 24 May 2013 at the Irish Marine Institute (Galway), the [Galway Statement on Atlantic Ocean Cooperation](#) is in line with the Integrated Maritime Policy - launched by the European Commission in 2007 – that promotes a sustainable use and management of marine resources, the protection of marine and coastal environments as well as maritime safety. This statement intends to establish a framework for further cooperation between the three actors mentioned above and to define key actions to move forward in ocean research. In this respect, the Blue Growth calls for proposals<sup>1</sup> (H2020-BG-2015-1 and H2020-BG-2015-2) will be partly intended to finance cooperation projects in this field.

Deriving from the [Atlantic Action Plan](#) adopted on 13 May 2013 - aiming to “create sustainable growth in coastal regions and drive forward the “blue economy” while preserving the environmental and ecological stability of the Atlantic Ocean” - this trilateral partnership wishes to better understand the Atlantic Ocean by aligning the observation activities while promoting the sustainable management of its resources and studying the interplay of the Atlantic Ocean with the Arctic Ocean in order to determine the possible impacts on climate change.

The first tangible results of this enhanced cooperation are not expected before 2020. However, the main goals have been clearly identified: the involved actors shall have an enhanced predictive capacity for the risks and changes in the dynamics of the North Atlantic Ocean by improving the understanding of vulnerabilities and risks as well as climate change and human activities impacts.

### Areas of cooperation provided for by the agreement:

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- Ocean observation;
- Sharing of data, such as on temperature, salinity and acidity;
- Interoperability and coordination of observing infrastructures, such as measurement buoys and research vessels;
- Sustainable management of ocean resources;
- Seabed and benthic habitat mapping;
- Promoting researcher mobility;
- Identifying and recommending future research priorities.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.horizon2020.gouv.fr/cid77090/tableau-des-appels-propositions-horizon-2020.html>

## The common objectives are to have by 2020:

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- ✓ An enhanced predictive capacity for the major risks and changes in the dynamics of the North Atlantic Ocean, its ecology, circulation system, interactions between the Atlantic and Arctic;
- ✓ Based on existing and new capability, to have implemented a fit for purpose North Atlantic multi-platform ocean observing and forecasting system driven by science and societal needs and providing real time data and long term time series;
- ✓ Mapped the Atlantic to underpin the accuracy of predictive models and forecasts and identified key tectonic /volcanic sites, as well as ecologically and economically important (and potentially undiscovered) seafloor and water column habitats;
- ✓ Enabled the safest operational and risk management environment for operation at sea as well as for offshore and coastal users;
- ✓ Forged greatly strengthened collaborative operational and scientific undertakings between Europe and the North Americas;
- ✓ Supported the development, through public, academic and private sector partnerships (e.g. clusters of innovation), of a range of new and innovative knowledge based and globally traded products and services;
- ✓ Revolutionised our understanding of the role of the North Atlantic in earth system dynamics, especially with respect to interactions with coastal zones and with the Arctic, Central Atlantic and Mediterranean.

## Means of implementation

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The blue economy is one the sectors that has the highest growth potential in Europe. Each year, around 2 billion euros are dedicated to marine and maritime research in Europe (200 million of which come from European funds, such as the former FRDP or Horizon 2020).

In order to implement the Galway Statement, 57 million euros coming from the Horizon 2020 programme were raised via the “Blue Growth” calls for proposals, in the framework of the Societal Challenges Pillar’s objective “Food Security, Sustainable Agriculture and Forestry, Marine, Maritime and Inland Water Research and the Bioeconomy”.

Even though the Galway Statement was launched by Canada, the European Union and the United States, some projects on the Atlantic knowledge include partners from the South Atlantic (South Africa and Brazil, for instance) and from the Arctic.

## Launch of projects financed by H2020

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The European Commission is organising a conference in **Brussels on 16 and 17 April 2015 on « The Atlantic - Our Shared Resource. Making the Vision Reality. »** In this occasion, the projects financed in the framework of the first “Blue Growth Horizon 2020” call for proposals – dedicated to the implementation of the Galway Statement – will be publicly released.

For more information and for online registration: <https://scic.ec.europa.eu/fmi/ezreg/GALWAY2015/start>