



Atlantic Arc Commission

Conclusions of the Marine Renewable Energy Working Group Meeting

Wednesday 20 April 2016 - Brussels

Participants:

Member Regions: Bretagne, Euskadi, Galicia, Aquitaine-Limousin-Poitou-Charentes, Normandie, Pays de la Loire.

Atlantic Arc Commission: Pauline Caumont, Executive Secretary & Emmanuel Maniscalco, Policy Analyst

I. Welcome address and introduction, Pierre Karleskind, Brittany Region

Pierre Karleskind, Vice-President in charge of the sea and port infrastructures of Brittany Region and Chair of the Atlantic Arc Commission's (AAC) "Marine Renewable Energy" Working Group, welcomed the participants and stressed that the Atlantic Regions share the same vision regarding MRE in many respects. MRE are related to many challenges - such as global warming, creation of jobs and growth, electricity supply in the territories, competitiveness and international outreach - and could be a good mean to address them. He recalled that the Atlantic Arc Commission included messages on MRE in its last [Final Declaration](#), which was adopted in Bilbao in 2015, and should do it again this year in its 2016 Final Declaration.

Pauline Caumont, Executive Secretary of the Atlantic Arc Commission, then briefly presented the [agenda](#) of the meeting. She announced that the "Any Other Business" section would be dedicated to discussing about potential Atlantic Area projects on MRE that could be submitted by the group.

II. Summary of the conclusions of the last "Marine Renewable Energy" Working Group meeting held on 8 March 2016, Emmanuel Maniscalco, Atlantic Arc Commission

Emmanuel Maniscalco, Policy Analyst – Atlantic Arc Commission, presented the main outcomes of the meeting of 8 March 2016. First he highlighted the broad participation of the member Regions in this meeting and the fact that MRE is a topic very high on the EU agenda, as illustrated by the several EU initiatives (revision of the Renewable Energy Directive, Strategic Roadmap on ocean energy, etc.). This meeting was also the occasion to reaffirm the strong commitment of the Atlantic Regions to the development of MRE, which is a promising sector, but also very challenging.

Then he mentioned the key elements of **Stijn Billiet's** (DG MARE) presentation. In particular the fact that the European Commission is putting a lot of effort in the development of MRE and that financing is one of the main obstacles the sector is currently facing. Stijn Billiet pointed out that the European Commission is planning to set up an investment platform dedicated to MRE within the Juncker Plan to pool small projects together in order to unlock finance. He also mentioned the creation of TP Ocean (European Technology and Innovation Platform for Ocean Energy), which aim is to bring the MRE actors together and pool knowledge.

Emmanuel Maniscalco then recapped the main messages that were discussed on 8 March, namely the issue of clarification of the funding rules, giving more visibility to the industrial sector and de-risking the planning process. He finally recalled that the interactive map that was presented during the meeting on 8 March will be

finalised soon and suggested that the group should decide whether to put it on the homepage of the Atlantic Arc Commission's MRE Working Group webpage or not.

More information is available in the [minutes](#) of this meeting.

III. Definition of messages to include in the Atlantic Arc Commission 2016 Final Declaration, Pauline Caumont, Atlantic Arc Commission

Pauline Caumont presented the three messages that were drafted by the executive secretariat based on the discussions on 8 March. This work was done in collaboration with Brittany, chair of this Working Group. She insisted on the fact that these messages should be sent from the point of view of a transnational network of Regions and cannot be identical to messages from the Industry or from the Member States.

Considering this, the Atlantic Arc Commission should refer to the EU and send messages at EU level. She added that the messages were amended as they seemed to be too much focused on Member States.

The three messages that were presented and discussed during the meeting are:

- **Message 1**

“Welcomes the EU efforts to bolster the deployment of Marine Renewable Energies in Europe. These efforts are clearly endorsed by the Atlantic Regions that have made the choice to support the expansion of this alternative and cleaner energy in their territories. Marine Renewable Energies are crucial to help achieving the ambitious carbon emission reduction targets. They are also essential to diversify maritime industries and create blue growth and jobs in the Atlantic Regions.”

The aim of this message is to acknowledge the general EU dynamic in favour of the development of MRE. **Pierre Karleskind** suggested to add information on the support of the Regions to the sector (structural funds, sectoral calls for proposals, etc.). **Stéphane Peyhorgue**, from the Aquitaine – Limousin – Poitou-Charentes Region, suggested to stress the importance of the development of technologies (in particular ocean thermal energy conversion) in the Atlantic, in which the EU can be a world leader, and also the export of these technologies. He also recommended to include a key word in this message: “innovation”.

- **Message 2**

“Calls for a clarification of the funding rules at EU level. In particular, State Aid regulation should not undermine the development of MRE projects covering the whole spectrum of technologies (including floating offshore wind farms). General Investment platforms created at the European level (e.g. “TP Ocean”) should help channel investment in the Regions in coordination with ESI funds managed by Regions.”

As far as message 2 is concerned, it was suggested to add a reference to “test sites” and to refer to the investment platform dedicated to MRE within the Juncker Plan instead of mentioning the TP Ocean platform, which is not related to investment.

- **Message 3**

“Suggests that the de-risking process for MRE installations happen at sea basin level in Europe. All preliminary studies (i.e. environmental impact assessment, studies on offshore capacity potential according to the type of energy source, identification of the right zone taking into account MSP regulation, etc.), should be financed by EMFF at sea basin level via a coordinated baseline data collection project. Having such data publicly available at sea basin level would facilitate and speed up the installation of MRE devices in the Atlantic Regions.”

According to the members, Message 3 should be redrafted so as to suggest that the definition of the areas suitable for the development of MRE (carried out by competent authorities) should be supported by the EMFF

in the framework of an Atlantic sea-basin project. Such call for proposals (launched by DG MARE) would help exchange good practice on the best way of identifying areas suitable for the development of MRE technologies (physical data and acceptance) in the framework of the Directive on Maritime Spatial Planning. This call for proposals should also take into account environmental risks, as requested by the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD). **Zoé Buyle Bodin**, from the Normandie Region, stated that de-risking is a key issue in the draft ocean energy strategic roadmap and that this should be borne in mind when drafting this message.

IV. Any other business

Pauline Caumont took this opportunity to discuss about the projects in which this working group could be involved. She first stated that the launching event of the [Interreg Atlantic Area 2014-2020 programme](#) would take place on 24 May 2016 in Porto. It is possible to submit a proposal within one of the first two priorities of the programme (namely “Stimulating innovation and competitiveness” and “Fostering resource efficiency”). She added that a proposal could also be submitted under the “[Blue Technology](#)” call for proposals launched by DG MARE on 31 March. The “Blue Technology” call is focused on technology transfer.

She also recalled that the creation of the Atlantic Arc Commission’s “MRE” Working Group led to the creation of the Atlantic Power Cluster (APC) project in 2012. The partners are already discussing about the follow-up of the project. It has been proposed that the Oceanic Platform of the Canary Islands (PLOCAN) should be the lead partner of the project. The deliverables of the project have not been clearly defined yet. The role of the CPMR could be to make the link with the analysis of regional S3 that is being carried out by the General Secretariat.

V. Synthesis of the discussions and future activities of the Working Group, Pierre Karleskind, Brittany Region

Pierre Karleskind finally suggested to strengthen the relations between the group and Canada. This could be done by developing a “Blue Technology” project which is open to Canada. **Stéphane Peyhorgue** recommended that the group start identifying MEPs willing to work on this issue. **Zoé Buyle Bodin** stated that the SEARICA intergroup might be willing to organise an event on MRE in the coming months.

Pierre Karleskind concluded the meeting by suggesting that the group should meet again in autumn. He added that the group should also start considering the issue of smart grids, which will be a key factor for success in the development of MRE in the upcoming years. He thanked all participants for their active involvement in this group and closed the meeting.