



Technical Note

December 2019

Practical implications of the new Governance of the Atlantic Action Plan

The Atlantic Arc Commission successfully influenced the revision of the new Atlantic Strategy Action Plan in favour of an increased role for Atlantic Regions in the governance of the Atlantic Strategy and for greater recognition of the importance of territorial cohesion in the Atlantic area ([Atlantic Arc Commission Contribution to the revision of the Atlantic Action Plan](#), adopted 5 June 2019, Brussels). The amendments brought forward by the Atlantic Arc Commission have led to a strengthened role for Regions in the governance of the Atlantic Strategy and an opportunity for Regions to play a pivotal role in the implementation of the Strategy, while at the same time contributing to a progressive widening of the scope of the Strategy to reflect the reality of the interaction between the maritime aspects and the wider territory.

Following the success of our input into the revision of the Atlantic Action Plan, the Atlantic Arc Commission Secretariat has summarised below the practical implications for Regions of the new governance arrangements of the Atlantic Action Plan. The table below compares the position adopted by the Atlantic Arc Commission on the new governance structure with the outcome of negotiations with Member States within the Atlantic Strategy Group, and highlights the main implications of the changes. The final draft Atlantic Action Plan (*Draft Paper on the Governance of the Atlantic Strategy*), although agreed by Atlantic Member States, must now be approved in 2020.

Atlantic Regions already participate in a number of activities that nurture Atlantic cooperation, such as:

- Atlantic Arc Commission working groups and statutory meetings;
- INTERREG Atlantic Area steering committees;
- Technical assistance to project leaders and applicants.

The new opportunities open to Regions within the governance of the Atlantic Strategy would build on this work, providing complementarity and adding value to these existing activities. Taking up the new opportunities open to Regions would entail increased resource commitment. The size of that resource may vary. In all cases, the increased commitment would lead to greater influence of Regions over the Atlantic Strategy and the work of the Member States.

CPMR Atlantic Arc Commission

6, rue Saint-Martin - 35700 Rennes (FR)

Tel. +33 (0)2 99 35 40 60 - Email: katie.cavell@crpm.org - Twitter: [Atlantic_Arc](#)
<http://cpmr-atlantic.org>

Summary of Opportunities:

The revised Atlantic Action Plan provides three different opportunities for Atlantic Regions to participate in the governance of the Atlantic Strategy. The different alternatives require different levels of resource.

1) Opportunity 1: Status quo

A Region continues to participate in the Atlantic Strategy through its work within the Atlantic Arc Commission. It does not participate in the Atlantic Strategy Group meetings of Atlantic Member States every two months and it does not participate directly in the Atlantic Strategy Pillar Groups. Regions instead rely on the Atlantic Arc Commission Secretariat to ensure appropriate representation of Regions in those different groups. However, Regions could be consulted by the Assistance Mechanism, which would support the work of the new Pillar Groups (see below). This reflects the current way Regions interact with the Strategy and will continue regardless of whether any Region takes on extra commitment as described below.

- ✓ The Status quo arrangement would continue to support Atlantic Regions to contribute jointly to the definition of the general orientation of the Atlantic Strategy. However, the new governance structure and the four priority Pillars would help to enhance the contribution of the Atlantic Arc Commission Working Groups to the Atlantic Strategy.

2) Opportunity 2: Participation in ASG Meetings via National Delegations

Member States may decide to include Regions as part of their national delegation to ASG meetings.

The Atlantic Strategy Group meets every two months, usually in Brussels, averaging around 6 meetings per year. If a Region were to participate as part of the national delegation, it would attend all or some of these meetings at the discretion of the national administration. It is at the discretion of the responsible national administration to decide if, who, and how many Regions may participate in the national delegation and who would finance the travel. Inclusion in the national delegation may also require extra time, outside of the travel and meeting itself, such as pre-meetings or coordination and organisation actions.

- ✓ By having a role as part of the national delegation Regions could increase their influence in defining and shaping the orientation of the Atlantic Strategy. Regions would have an enhanced role in providing advice to the Member State.

3) Opportunity 3: Participation as a Pillar Coordinator

To advance and coordinate the implementation of the Atlantic Action Plan, the newly named Atlantic Strategy Committee will nominate one coordinator per Pillar and/or per Goal as defined in the Action Plan. The role of the Coordinator would be to facilitate the implementation of the Pillar and the achievement of the specific goal, including by promoting flagship actions for the approval of the Steering Committee. The Assistance Mechanism would support the Pillar Coordinators in terms of logistics and content, as well as provide financial support for travel.

As a Pillar Coordinator, a region would be expected to gather a group of stakeholders as often as necessary to develop a flagship project. This may require one or two meetings per semester, based on the examples of other Sea-Basin and Macro-Region strategies. The Pillar Coordinator would also be expected to attend relevant working groups of external stakeholders.

- ✓ Regions are well placed to be Pillar Coordinators, able to provide a link between EU level and territories and citizens. As a Pillar Coordinator, a Region would be able to further encourage local actors to join forces to carry out joint projects related to the specifics of the territory. As coastal Regions are part of a diversity of networks and work closely with bordering Regions, they would also be able to better connect the initiatives of the Atlantic Strategy to a wider scope of territories and include territory beyond the maritime space.

Role for Regions	Atlantic Arc Commission position	Draft Wording in the Atlantic Strategy Action Plan on Governance	Practical Implication for Atlantic Arc Commission Regions
<p>Regions represented on the Atlantic Strategy Steering Committee through the Atlantic Arc Commission.</p> <p>➤ This reflects the current arrangements where the Atlantic Arc Commission attends the meetings on behalf of its member regions.</p>	<p><i>“The CPMR’s Atlantic Arc Commission secretariat should remain a full member of the Atlantic Strategy Group (ASG).”</i></p>	<p>The Atlantic Arc Commission keeps its permanent seat on the new Atlantic Strategy Steering Committee as an Associated Member:</p> <p><i>“The Committee will be composed by participating countries (standing members), representatives of concerned coastal regions, cities and economic and social stakeholders (associated members), the European Commission and defined observers.”</i></p> <p><i>“Associated members participate in the meetings of the Atlantic Strategy Committee but, unlike standing members, they do not have voting rights.”</i></p>	<p>No further practical implications for Atlantic Arc Commission regions.</p>
<p>Role of regions in national delegations.</p> <p>➤ A region may be invited by their national government to attend one or more Atlantic Strategy Steering Committee meetings as part of the national delegation.</p>	<p><i>“We, Member Regions of the Atlantic Arc Commission, support the principle of regional representatives participating as part of their national delegations to ASG meetings, as is the case in the governance of the Alpine Strategy, and respecting the institutional framework of each Member State.”</i></p>	<p><i>“Operational coordination is ensured through the Atlantic Strategy Committee that acts, within its functions (see chapter 5.1), as a decision-making (executive) body of the action plan and ensures proper involvement of representatives of the concerned coastal regions”</i></p> <p><i>“National coordinators: each participating country decides according to its constitutional framework, at its sole discretion, to be represented by either one or two representatives including representatives of coastal regions; choosing the competent representatives at the Atlantic Strategy Committee is a countries' prerogative”</i></p>	<p>The ASG meets every two months currently. One or two regions per national delegation may be invited to participate in ASG meetings. This may require prior coordination between the national government and the region ahead of the meeting. In principle, this could mean:</p> <p>Up to 6 meetings of the ASG per year; Possible preparatory meetings with the national government, if required.</p>
<p>Role of regions as Pillar Coordinators.</p> <p>➤ In the case a region has the interest, expertise, and resource available, they may become a Pillar Coordinator.</p>	<p><i>“In order to make best use of the relevant experience of regions in specific sectors, we would propose that the region leading the Atlantic Arc Commission thematic group has the possibility to lead the corresponding AAP thematic group, should capacity and resources permit”</i></p>	<p>Regional authorities can be Pillar Coordinators.</p> <p><i>“To advance and coordinate the implementation, the Atlantic Strategy Committee will nominate one coordinator per pillar and/or per goal. The role of the coordinator is to facilitate the implementation of the pillar and the realisation of the specific goal, incl. by promoting flagship actions for the approval of the Steering Committee (...) The pillar coordinator shall be supported by a co-coordinator(s) appointed by the Atlantic Strategy Committee. Regional organisations or</i></p>	<p>To be a Pillar Coordinator is the most resource intensive option for a region under the new governance structure. It is also the option that would give the region, and all Atlantic Arc Commission regions, the greatest potential to influence the Atlantic Strategy and the Member States.</p> <p>As a Pillar Coordinator, a region would be required to gather stakeholders as often as is required to develop a flagship</p>

	<p><i>“Where Atlantic Arc Commission members have the resources and capacity to act as thematic coordinators, we would support them taking on this role. The Atlantic Arc Commission Secretariat could provide technical support to its members in carrying out their functions in this role”</i></p>	<p><i>representatives of relevant regions can also be appointed as pillar coordinators.”</i></p> <p>4 pillars have been identified by the ASG. For each pillar, coordinators have to identify key stakeholders, identify and monitor the development of a flagship project, foster the development of studies, and increase communication around achievements of the AAP with the help of the Assistance Mechanism.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Pillar on Atlantic Ports 2) Pillar on Blue skills & Ocean literacy 3) Pillar on MRE 4) Pillar on Protected and Resilient Coasts. 	<p>project, and to facilitate the implementation of the Pillar. The thematic groups of the Alpine Strategy met four times in 2018, for example.</p> <p>Pillar Coordinators may be expected to attend established working groups of external organisations, such as the Atlantic Ocean Research Organisation working group on Ocean Literacy, or the SET Plan Working Group on Ocean Energy. To attend these meetings may require travel.</p> <p>The Pillar Coordinator will be required to play a bigger role in the annual Atlantic Stakeholder Platform Conference, taking place in the second half of the year.</p> <p>Pillar Coordinators will report to the ASG and will receive administrative support from the Assistance Mechanism.</p> <p>The Assistance Mechanism will also provide financial support for the travel of the Pillar Coordinators. An upper limit will set for travel of the Pillar Coordinators.</p>
<p>Role of regions as members of the pillar groups, implementers of flagship projects.</p> <p>➤ Regions may be contacted by the Assistance Mechanism to participate and contribute to the work within pillars.</p>		<p><i>“The assistance mechanism will support the pillar coordinators in analysing project proposals, identifying funding sources for selected projects and liaising with the coastal regions, funding authorities and other relevant bodies.”</i></p>	<p>Ad hoc work may be required throughout the year. Contributions could either be managed within the Atlantic Arc Commission working groups or by a region individually.</p>