Key messages to the national governments to boost Offshore Renewable Energies in the Atlantic

The Atlantic Arc Regions, listed below, that are members of the Atlantic Arc Commission:

- CCDR do Alentejo (PT)
- Junta de Andalucía (ES)
- Principado de Asturias (ES)
- Région Bretagne (FR)
- Gobierno de Cantabria (ES)
- Xunta de Galicia (ES)
- CCDR de Lisboa e Vale do Tejo (PT)
- Gobierno de Navarra (ES)
- CCDR do Norte (PT)
- Northern and Western Regional Assembly (IRL)
- Région Nouvelle-Aquitaine (FR)
- Région Pays de la Loire (FR)
- Gobierno Vasco (ES)
- Welsh Government (UK)
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Considering the current geopolitical context in Europe, acknowledging the need for greater energy autonomy for our countries and the EU objective to achieve climate neutrality by 2050, Atlantic Arc Commission regions (AAC) insist National Governments and EU decision-makers take note of the following messages:

1. We call for a recognition of the geopolitical and strategic importance to develop Offshore Renewable Energy in the Atlantic

We, the Atlantic Arc Commission Regions,

- **Strongly condemn** the Russian military attack on Ukraine and **stress** that Russia’s aggression is an offense to the most elementary right of nations to live in peace and exacerbates the unprecedented situation in the energy market, creating instability and volatility, threatening households’ energy supply;

- **Therefore call** on European leaders to strive to develop European energy sovereignty and security;

- **Insist** that European energy security should secure Europe’s leadership on Offshore Renewable Energy against increasing competition in global markets, while achieving carbon neutrality;

- **Recall** that the Atlantic Sea-Basin is a key area for the deployment of Marine Renewable Energies as indicated in the EU Offshore Renewable Energy Strategy, with high natural potential for both bottom-fixed and floating offshore wind energy and good natural potential for wave and tidal energy;

- **Highlight** that those natural advantages are accompanied by strong industrial value chains and the availability of appropriate skills in the Atlantic regions. Taken together, these assets support the development of a strong pipeline of demonstration projects, building upon years of experience in locally installed and grid connected equipment, as well as a world-leading network of test centres.

2. We insist that an efficient multi-level governance in energy is needed for the deployment of industrial value-chains supporting new offshore renewable energy farms

We, the Atlantic Arc Commission Regions,

- **Caution** that achieving an installed capacity of 300-400 GW of offshore renewable energy by 2050 will require identifying areas of deployment, boosting industrial value chains and ensuring connection to the grid;

- **Highlight** that the contribution of regional authorities to the energy governance is of paramount importance to achieving the objectives of the EU Offshore Energy Strategy and developing industrial value chains to benefit regional populations;
- **Recall** that Atlantic regions have put in place funding schemes to support innovation and deployment of the Offshore Energy Sector and that most of them have identified Offshore Renewable Energy as one of their Smart Specialisation areas;

- **Insist** that regions are empowered to maximise local ownership of offshore renewable energy projects, retaining locally, the economic and social benefits, which are key to their social acceptance. Their role is key, especially for regions performing deep energy transition processes which have strong impacts on the security of electricity supplies;

- **Invite** national governments to develop appropriate frameworks for coordination with regions to foster the deployment of Offshore Renewable Energies;

- **Share** in particular that national governments have not involved regions sufficiently in the development of National Energy and Climate Plans (NECPS) and that this situation should be remedied for the next review.

3. **We support the sector’s request to simplifying permitting procedure to reach the international objectives on time**

   We, the Atlantic Arc Commission Regions

   - **Echo** the sector’s opinion that the rules and procedures used by public authorities to permit offshore renewable energy projects are often lengthy and complex;

   - **Ask** for a coordination of efforts at European or Atlantic levels to review the consenting and advisory process put in place in European States to ensure that authorities can compare and foster a timely and proportionate process;

   - **Support** the creation of a Blue Forum for Users of the Sea at EU level and invite the Forum to compare permitting procedures to identify the most efficient methodology.

4. **We request the facilitation of access to funding for Offshore Renewable Energies projects at the early stage of development**

   We, the Atlantic Arc Commission Regions

   - **Recall** the letter sent to Commissioners Simson, Gabriel and Sinkevicius in favour of an appropriate level of support from the Horizon Europe programme for offshore renewable energies;

   - **Highlight** the need for funding at all levels to build additional capacity in enterprises, allowing them to scale-up their work and mentor smaller organisations, and thus helping them to create a larger and more sustainable sector;

   - **Encourage** the funding of flagships projects under the Recovery and Resilience Fund with the involvement of regional authorities to boost the development of Offshore Renewable Energies, and suggest the Commission to perform a territorial impact assessment on how Recovery and Resilience Plans are enhancing marine renewable energies development in the Atlantic regions.
- **Highlight** the importance of coordinating at all levels of governance to bring new investment to ports, especially small and medium size ports in Atlantic regions. Working with them will help identify opportunities for specialisation and collaboration in the development of offshore renewable energy.

- **Support** in this sense the [AspBAN project](#), financed by the European Maritime and fisheries Fund, which includes CPMR’s Atlantic Arc Commission as a partner. **We hope** that this project will demonstrate the need for an investment scheme for the diversification of ports’ activities.

**5. We call for the respect the marine ecosystem and its diversity and request appropriate support for citizens’ assemblies at local level to foster social acceptance of MRE projects**

We, the Atlantic Arc Commission Regions,

- **Call** for the promotion and dynamisation of the offshore renewable energy sector while respecting the marine ecosystem and its diversity;

- **Propose** to boost Atlantic cooperation to share data between testing infrastructures and existing scientific organisations to improve knowledge of the marine environment;

- **Suggest** also to facilitate the installation of experimental parks, not only to validate marine renewable energy technologies but also to monitor sea ecosystems;

- **Highlight** also that the sea has multiple users, which should be respected;

- **Support** the necessary compatibility and coexistence of existing fishing and shellfish farming activities in the areas where new offshore renewable technologies will be located;

- **Stress** that, in order to take advantage of the important energy potential of these areas and the opportunities that arise, it is necessary to carry out appropriate planning based on dialogue with different stakeholders, cooperation between regions and respect for the activities that are carried out in these areas, making them compatible with the new productive proposals;

- **Support** an appropriate level of involvement for local populations in the planning phase of Offshore Renewable Energy developments. This will manage the risks of community objections, facilitate the deployment of windfarms, and encourage the sound development of the sector in accordance with local specificities;

- **Express** the Atlantic Arc Commission’s interest in involvement in pilot projects on Maritime Spatial Planning at sea-basin level planned by the European Commission for 2021-2025, as seen in the [EU Offshore Renewable Energy Strategy](#);

- **Suggest** complementarily to coordinate support to boost schools efforts to develop up-to date curricula in favour of the employability of the workforce in the Offshore Renewable Energy sector; we recall that the AAC is a member of the EU Pact for Skills on Offshore Renewable Energy.
6. We ask for greater ambition in cooperation on Offshore Renewable Energy at Atlantic level and believe that such ambition should be enshrined in a future Atlantic Macro-Region

We, the Atlantic Arc Commission Regions,

- **Believe** that a strong governance structure should be put in place at Atlantic level, gathering Ministries in charge of Energy and including Regional political representatives to develop a framework for further deployment of Offshore Renewable Energy in the Atlantic;

- **Consider** that, although the Atlantic Sea-Basin strategy provides a solid base for such cooperation by gathering experts from the energy field to elaborate a workplan, this workplan needs the political input and oversight of Member States and Regions;

- **Support** the creation of a Atlantic Macro-Region to reinforce such a governance structure and invite the Council to give a mandate to the European Commission to develop it;

- **Recommend** that non-EU countries and regions should be able to join in such initiatives, including UK regions and nations, on the basis that the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement recognises the possible participation of the UK in North Sea Energy Cooperation.