Dear Members,

As we are entering this new year, the Atlantic Arc Commission Secretariat wishes to send their warmest greetings to you and yours and to thank you for the great collaboration during this last year. Despite the circumstances which kept our activities remote for another year, we are grateful for your active support and for your resilience that enabled the Atlantic Arc Commission to remain a key player to shape the future of the Atlantic Area. The year 2022 will be a pivotal one with the French Presidency of the EU Council, the role of Spain as new chair of the Atlantic Strategy Committee, and the elections of the new presidium of the AAC. The coming year is filled with opportunity: together, let’s grasp this new impetus to concretise all the work done and achieve our priorities!

In this Flash Info, you will find highlights of our last hub meetings, and the latest actions of the end of 2021. Happy reading!

With all our best wishes, and looking forward to meeting you again in 2022,

The CPMR Atlantic Arc Secretariat
Elise Wattrelot, AAC Executive Secretary
Delphine Kaczorowski, Project & Policy Officer
Catherine Petiau, Policy Assistant
### Overview of the Hub Meetings of November 2021

For a full summary, the minutes are available in the Members Area!

#### TOURISM

In this discussion on EU Sustainable Tourism initiatives and interregional cooperation opportunities, AAC regions had the chance to discuss the latest updates of the EU Agenda with Ramune Genzbibelyte – Venturi from DG GROW. The CPMR is actively involved in the European Commission process of the transition pathway for tourism as a stakeholder. The CPMR is closely following sustainable tourism initiatives with other organisations and is preparing a second SEArica event for 2022. The AAC Secretariat also presented a note on EU programmes funding opportunities for a AAC project on sustainable tourism. We encourage AAC Regions to share their ideas with the Secretariat for a cooperation project!

#### TRANSPORTS

In light of the revised TEN-T regulation and Fit for 55 package, AAC regions came together to discuss the challenges and opportunities to green Atlantic transports. Ibay Uria from the Bilbao Port authority presented the initiatives of the port, notably on solar and wave energy. Lucas Bosser, CPMR Director for Transports, offered a global overview of the current European legislations on Transports and underlined the CPMR actions on the TEN-T revision to which the AAC regions actively participated. The CPMR is currently gathering data on regional flagship initiatives to green transports via a questionnaire “Regions Move!”. On December 14, the TEN-T revision was published by the European Commission. Read the CPMR Press Release [here](#) and the AAC Press Release [here](#)

#### COOPERATION WITH NON-EU COUNTRIES

In the context of Brexit and negotiations pending around the Protocols of the Trade and Cooperation Agreement, the AAC is rethinking its cooperation with non-EU countries. This discussion enabled to discover the initiatives of the Welsh Government, such as the Welsh programme aiming at replacing Erasmus+. The AAC Secretariat presented a technical paper on non-EU countries’ participation to EU programmes, comparing experiences with other sea basins. This was also a time to learn how Québec collaborates with the EU. The AAC will keep on monitoring opportunities to cooperate with other non-EU members in the Atlantic area!

#### BREXIT

The AAC regions had the opportunity to discuss the governance of the Trade and Cooperation Agreement with two representatives from the European Commission General Secretariat, in order to further discuss how regions could be a part of the discussions. Francesco Molica, CPMR Director for Cohesion Policy, recalled the influential work of the CPMR on the Brexit Adjustment Reserve, underlining the lack of territorial considerations. Michael Murphy, rapporteur for the Committee of the Regions, is preparing an opinion on UK-EU relationships to which the AAC will aim at contributing. and the AAC will also keep on monitoring the implementation of the Brexit Adjustment Reserve in the Atlantic regions!
MARINE RENEWABLE ENERGY

Exploring the role of regions on SETplans, the AAC regions got the occasion to discuss with Gianmaria Sannino, Chair of the Implementation Working Group of Ocean Energy SETplan. He notably called for more funding for ocean energy via Horizon Europe to match the European Commission’s ambitions for the sector. Donagh Cagney, from Ocean Energy Europe, agreed on this statement. Participants also got the change to discover the work of EATIP, developing a methodology to classify Atlantic regions according to their potential to develop ocean energies. The AAC will continue supporting data collection at regional level and will coordinate to develop a letter to give greater attention to ocean energies in Horizon Europe workprogramme!

OCEAN POLLUTION

As a kick-off meeting of this freshly created working group, Norte Region presented a proposal for a workplan and invited a key stakeholder of the region, CIIMAR, to present their projects and research on the topic. This meeting was also the occasion to strengthen the connection of the working group with the CleanAtlantic project, of which the AAC is a partner for capitalisation activities. Marisa Fernandez, lead partner of the project from CETMAR, presented its proposal for a project’s extension and expressed the willingness of the consortium to work on the pledge proposed by Norte and on a Policy Toolkit. The AAC will be working on a first draft of a pledge on regional commitments to fight against marine litter and will keep you informed on the potential extension of CleanAtlantic project!

INNOVATION

With a discussion focusing on Skills, Nouvelle-Aquitaine Region called for the interest of Atlantic stakeholders to work on a joint project on Aquaculture Skills in Vocational Education Training. AAC regions got the chance to learn more about Pact for Skills initiatives, and especially the Offshore Renewable Energy Pact coordinated by CETMAR, of which the AAC is a member. On this occasion, Lucia Fraga, from CETMAR presented the Maritime Technology Skills Strategy created in the framework of the MATES project. If you are interested in joining the Offshore Renewable Energy Pact for Skills (ORE) or willing to work on an aquaculture project on Skills, please contact the AAC Secretariat!

FISHERIES & AQUACULTURE

The AAC regions gathered to discuss the revision of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) review of the European Commission. The CPMR sent a questionnaire to all regions (deadline 31 January 2022) in order to prepare a common position for the CPMR Political Bureau in March 2022. This meeting was the occasion for Giuseppe Sciacca, CPMR Director for Maritime Affairs, to present the new CPMR Maritime Agenda, placing the future of CFP at the heart of the Fisheries working group. The AAC Secretariat will liaise with the regions to prepare the CFP position in 2022!
Highlights of the end of 2021 – beginning 2022

High-level meeting of the CPMR and AAC Presidencies with Portuguese Regions

On November 19, the CPMR and AAC Presidencies met together with Portuguese Regions in Lisbon to discuss regional cooperation. The meeting hosted by President of CCDR Lisboa e Vale do Tejo and AAC Vice-President Teresa Almeida gathered CPMR President Cees Loggen, CPMR General Secretary Eleni Marianou, AAC Executive Secretary Elise Wattrelot, CCDR Alentejo President António Ceia da Silva, Raquel Meira, on behalf of the President of CCDR Norte, Centro Vice-President Eduardo Anselmo Castro, Algarve Vice-President José Pacheco and MEP Manuel Pizarro, and Prof. Miguel Miranda, President of IPMA and leader of the Lisbon RIS3 2030 Blue Economy Working Group. This meeting made fruitful exchanges possible and revealed common concerns and visions for the future, notably on potential synergies on climate change adaptation, depopulation, and cohesion issues, with highlights on the Atlantic Macro-Region. Interesting prospects for cooperation within the CPMR framework were raised.

Cooperating with les CESER de l’Atlantique on an Atlantic Macro-Regional Strategy

On November 19, les CESER de l’Atlantique, the association gathering Economic, Social and Environmental Councils of French Atlantic regions, organised an event to discuss ways of strengthening interregional cooperation on the basis of their study adopted in 2020. Mathieu Bergé, Regional Councilor of Nouvelle-Aquitaine, gave a powerful statement on the benefits of an Atlantic Macro-Region in light of the AAC Political Declaration. He welcomed the role of the Atlantic Arc Commission in boosting interregional cooperation and recalled the potential of a Macro-Regional Strategy to better target cooperation areas and attract new funding. Jacques Bodreau, President of les CESER de l’Atlantique, added that a dedicated working group to reflect on the role of civil society in an Atlantic Macro-Regional Strategy was currently being set up.

Following on from this meeting, on December 15, AAC Executive Secretary Elise Wattrelot was auditioned by the new working group to present the AAC Macro-Regional vision, actions carried out and future steps. She answered a series of questions, notably on the methodology and existing models of Macro-Regional Strategies of inspiration.

Thank you very much for Lisboa e Vale do Tejo Region for hosting this meeting and for your warm hospitality!

The AAC looks forward in pursuing joint reflections on the Atlantic Macro-Regional Strategy with representatives of the Atlantic civil society!
The revision of TEN-T Regulation has been released!

On December 14, the European Commission presented its proposal for the revision of the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) regulation, after a long preparation process in which the CPMR General Secretariat and the AAC actively participated, notably through its declaration and maps proposals. The AAC has long called for the development of a true Blue and Green Atlantic Arc of Transport, enhancing the territorial accessibility of its member regions. **This revised TEN-T draft proposal includes changes proposed by AAC regions,** echoing the AAC demands for the enhancement of cross-border connections and better recognition of the strategic role of ports for the Atlantic regions. **However, the AAC calls for further improvements to contribute to the accessibility and connectivity of all regions of the Union, including remote peripheral and mountainous regions.** The macro-region and maritime sea-basins frameworks could also support these objectives by streamlining the various sources of funding towards Atlantic connectivity. These proposals were presented by the Basque Country, coordinator of the AAC Transport working Group during the CPMR Inter-Commission Working Group on 25 January 2022, in a session introduced by MEP Isabel García Muñoz (S&D, Spain), member of the TRAN Committee.

The AAC will follow closely the negotiations on this new proposal. In the meantime, you can read the full press release with AAC proposals for further improvements here:

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Joint workshop on the future of Ports with the Islands Commission

On 9 December 2021, the CPMR Atlantic Arc and Islands Commissions organised a joint workshop to discuss together the **challenges and future opportunities of the diversification and modernisation of islands ports.** This meeting was organised in the framework of the CPMR Blue Acceleration Platform set up via the AspBAN project, enabling discussions on the replicability of the project in other sea-basins and encouraging an innovative and sustainable transition of ports as hubs of the Blue Economy. A first discussion on diversification of ports services in EU Islands was organised where Felix Lienemann, Head of Unit at DG MARE and various port authorities of EU islands participated. The session was followed by a second one focusing on the modernisation of ports infrastructures. This first joint meeting in the context of AspBAN opened joint reflection for the transition of ports and offered key insights on the challenges and opportunities ahead.

**More joint workshops with other CPMR Geographical Commissions on the topic are to come in 2022, stay tuned!**

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Read the full article here!

Read the AAC press release here!
Michael Murphy’s opinion on EU-UK Relationships at the heart of a debate at CoR

On December 10, Michael Murphy hosted a debate on EU-UK relationship during the COTER commission meeting, in light of his role of rapporteur on the CIVEX opinion on “Strengthening the EU-UK relationship at subnational level and remedying Brexit’s territorial impact”. Michael Murphy underlined the lack of territorial depth of the Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) and affirmed the willingness of the Committee of the Regions to set a positive agenda for territorial cooperation, with a stronger recognition of the role of local and regional authorities and the exploration of new cooperation opportunities. On that occasion, he addressed a series of questions to the participants for a better overview of how the regions had been affected by Brexit, and what type of cooperation framework they wished for with UK in the future. He also recalled the CoR publication “Restoring Lost Connections between the EU and the UK” to which the AAC and CPMR Secretariats contributed. Pascal Boijmans, Head of Unit for Interreg, Cross-Border Cooperation, Internal Borders at DG REGIO, particularly focused his intervention on the opportunities for UK regions in Interreg programmes, despite the decision of the UK government not to opt in with exception of Peace+ programme. Seeking new schemes of cooperation, the AAC activities on non-EU countries cooperation are complementary to the objectives of the upcoming opinion. The AAC will keep you updated!

Update on last Atlantic Strategic Committee of 2021

On November 16, the Atlantic Strategic Committee gathered to discuss the Atlantic Stakeholder Platform Conference 2021, the AAP 2.0 Implementation report’s progress and the main actions foreseen by the new presidency of the committee in 2022, especially on the governance of the Action Plan and a guidelines document to clarify the role of each actor. The workshop co-organised by the AAC and IMDO on “Perspective for Green Ports of the Future” during the ASPC 2021 attracted the most participants. New pillar coordinators will be elected in March 2022, however current ones will keep their position until June 2022. From now on, you can find the minutes of the meetings in the Members Area. The AAC deeply thanks Dymphna Keogh, Chair of the Irish Presidency of 2021, and warmly welcomes the new Spanish presidency that will be co-led by the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, EU and Cooperation and the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food!

The CPMR and the AAC at the One Ocean Summit

From February 9 to 11, 2022, Brest will host the first “One Ocean Summit”, an international summit dedicated to the preservation of the ocean. It will gather heads of states and a variety of stakeholders to make commitments to strengthen the international governance of the oceans. As part of the programme, the CPMR will organise the COASTAL REGIONS’ FORUM which will be held on 11 February 2022 from 15.30 to 17.00 CET, as a follow up session of the High Level Segment from 10.30 to 13.30 CET. The Basque Country, Presidency of the AAC will participate and will be present in Brest. Registrations will be open on 25 January on the One Ocean Summit website here.
**The AAC is invited in the French Presidency event on the Pact for Skills**

On 03 – 04 February 2022, the French Ministry of National Education organises with the support of the European Commission a Conference on developments in vocational training & early lessons from the work completed by French Campus des métiers et des qualifications. The event will be by videoconference and will aim at sharing the results of the European support project financed by DG REFORM and to consider the future of vocational training in Europe. This conference is an opportunity to forge strategic European partnerships. It will aim at fostering interaction between VET providers, companies, industry, or sector representative organisations, national/regional, qualification authorities, research institutions, innovation agencies, regional development authorities. The AAC Secretariat will participate in the session on the Pact For Skills, alongside CETMAR which will present the Offshore Renewable Energy Pact For Skills. Should your region be interested to join the event, you will find the agenda and the registration link here.

**Pilot Project on transatlantic cooperation scheme delivering the Green Deal locally**

After a fruitful collaboration with MEP Younous Omarjee on the design of a pilot project on transatlantic cooperation in favour of the sustainable development of Atlantic regions, we are happy to share with you that the Plenary of the European Parliament in December 2021 voted in favour of the project. We will keep you informed of the next developments!

**Public Procurement of Innovation**

*Ente Vasco de la Energia* (the Basque Energy Agency) is launching a Preliminary Consultation to determine market interest in the Public Procurement of Innovation. The purpose of the TurboWave project is to procure air turbines to be used in the Mutriku wave power plant. This challenge covers the design, development, and demonstration of a cost-efficient, reliable and safe air turbine system to produce electricity. The proposed technologies will be evaluated in terms of efficiency, controllability, reliability, maintainability, and affordability.

Submission of proposals can be done via an online questionnaire, open until February 17, 2022.

An information webinar will be organised on February 3, 2022 from 10:00 to 11:30 CET. If your region is interested by the initiative, please check out the full programme and register here.

**AspBAN Project: the first newsletter is out!**

Kicking-off in April 2021, the AspBAN project has significantly developed actions in its first months of activity, which was rewarded with an Atlantic Project Award in October 2021 at the Atlantic Stakeholder Platform Conference in Dublin.

If you wish to know more, we encourage you to read the first newsletter and to subscribe so as not to miss the following editions!
What’s new with the Glasgow Declaration on Climate Action in Tourism?

After supporting the Future of Tourism Coalition back in 2020, during COP26 the CPMR joined also the Glasgow Declaration on Climate action in Tourism as “launch partner” (under the category of “supporting organizations”). This initiative is now consolidating with hundreds of signatories from many countries all over the EU and the world.

Our partners, the Travel foundation and UNWTO, are guiding the initiative that will provide also opportunities for concrete collaborations, including projects and trainings.

If your region is already a signatory or would be interested in joining the initiative in the near future or to promote it across its own Destination Management Organization and business sector, the promoters are organizing 2 online info session next 27 January (9:00 CET & 17:00 CET). The CPMR Secretariat will also attend and share afterwards any relevant information with interested members.

If you need further information on the Glasgow declaration you can consult this CPMR article, check a recent report on recommended actions that intends to provide a starting point for signatories to design an ambitious and effective climate action plan that is tailored to the unique circumstances of their entity (actions are categorised according to the five pathways of the Glasgow Declaration: Measure, Decarbonise, Regenerate, Collaborate, and Finance) and the operating guidelines for signatories.

Get involved in the “Tourism Spotlight” during EU Industry Days!

As you might recall, the CPMR and the Atlantic Arc Commission contributed to the co-creation process on the EU Tourism Pathway launched by the European Commission in 2021, notably via the participation of Cantabria Region, lead of the AAC Tourism working group and well as contributions to the specific consultation launched by DG Grow in 2021.

The EC has now invited us to attend to the seminar where they will present formally the new “Transition Pathway for Tourism” and will kick start the new co-implementation phase (where we will also be actively involved).

The seminar “Tourism Spotlight” will be held online during the EU Industry Days 2022 on 8 February 2022. If any of you is interested to attend, feel free to register and inform us. We will also follow it at Secretariat level.
In the eye of the Regions
Lisboa e Vale do Tejo edition
Cooperation & Blue Economy for a sustainable future of the Atlantic:
An Interview with Miguel Miranda, President of the Portuguese Institute of the Sea and Atmosphere (IPMA)

Prof. Miguel Miranda is President of IPMA and Full Professor of Geophysics at the University of Lisbon. His research activity is focused on Geomagnetism, Marine Geophysics and Natural Hazards, in particular tsunamis. Among the international positions he has held, the coordination of the European Network of Excellence ESONET and the European infrastructure project EMSO stands out, being national representative in EMSO-ERIC. He was a member of the European Research Council’s Earth System Sciences assessment panel from 2009-2013. As part of the elaboration of our RIS3 2030, Prof. Miguel Miranda has been actively collaborating with Lisbon region as leader of the Blue Economy working group. The Lisbon and Tagus Valley is a unique area, profoundly Atlantic, since its territory include the capital of Portugal, the only Atlantic capital in the entire European Union. The region has recently developed and approved:

- The “Strategy 2030” emphasizing the importance of the sea and the coastal areas and the large potential of the riverside geographies.
- a smart specialization strategy (RIS3) for the period 2021-2027, which includes a thematic area of expertise exclusively dedicated to the so-called Blue Economy.

These instruments are reinforced by a network of stakeholders committed to its implementation and update. Among these stakeholders, IPMA assumes prominence in this context, in the person of its president Miguel Miranda.

Dear Miguel Miranda, considering the relevant role that you have been playing as leader of the blue economy working group of Lisbon Region RIS3, we are here today to hear you about two very specific topics: decarbonisation and collaboration. How do they interact?

The need to drastically reduce CO₂ emissions is probably the most important challenge of our generation. The maritime supply chain, at the core of the global economy, including harbors, and all areas of blue economy at large, are key “hotspots” of greenhouse gas emissions and changes are needed. The period that we have for their transformation into carbon-neutral activities is very short, and time is running fast.

What can be done in the short term?

In what concerns harbor operations, we need to develop electrical power systems, able to supply ship’s power from the shore and sharply reduce emissions particularly from supersized cruise ships. This is feasible from the technical point of view, but significant investments will be needed very soon. There are already electric or hybrid solutions for ferries and tourist boats based on solar energy that will contribute to reduce emissions. These approaches can surely be extended to small fisheries and aquaculture. However, no similar approaches can be designed for large vessels. Here, hydrogen, or hydrogen-based fuels, are increasingly viewed as possible solutions. This means the redesign of the global maritime supply chain, and further developments by scientists and technologists to ensure safe, affordable, and carbon-free solutions.
For Portugal, and particularly the Greater Lisbon area, must this transition be considered a priority?

The Greater Lisbon area is built around one of the largest estuarine areas of Europe and the nearby Atlantic coast. Shipping activities are very relevant both if Lisbon and Setúbal harbors, and very large cruise ships are continuously arriving and leaving, being in recent years an important factor of touristic and cultural activity. When the effects of the pandemic will dim the flux of cruise ships will increase again. If no administrative restrictions are made to maritime traffic, the well-known curiosity of mankind and the development of the new Asian touristic markets will multiply visitors and, with them, more emissions.

Can Blue Economy contribute to the solution?

Aquaculture technologies related with algae or shellfish cultivation can have a positive role on carbon sequestration. Marine renewals will also have a role of their own, particularly in a country mostly developed along the Atlantic coast, providing carbon-free power to on-shore (and off-shore) activities. The recuperation of degraded marine habitats, and the drastic reduction of harmful fishing techniques, will surely contribute for the solution.

Now, all decisions concerning the development of blue economy must consider the net contribution for decarbonisation. Only those that are designed as carbon-neutral must be developed.

When we discuss blue economy, collaboration is more often referred than competition. Why?

When we move our attention from the littoral to the open ocean, the context changes enormously. Leisure and tourism, or even near-shore aquaculture or renewal energy, are mature areas where players must compete to develop better and more sustainable products or services. However, when considering the deep environment, there are no proved approaches, impacts are largely unknown and there is still a long way to go. Even the oil & gas industry, able to develop highly complex logistic and industrial operations was not able to always show sustainable and non-harmful uses of ocean resources.

Our scientific institutions are small for the challenges ahead. There is the perception that the ocean is a part of our future. We are all committed to develop a transparent, environment-friendly and sustainable blue economy. But only a few already understand that the challenge is only comparable with the space adventure. Similar means must be deployed.

Thank you Miguel Miranda for your enlightening contribution!
EU Calls Corner

**Interregional Innovation Investment (I3)**

In 2022, €36.7 million will be given to Strand 1 calls with a focus on developed regions, while €32.9 million will be allocated to Strand 2a calls for less developed regions on the €570 million total budget 2021-2027. Strand 1 will be dedicated to financial advisory support for Investments in Interregional Innovation projects. Strand 2a will address financial and advisory support for the development of value chains in less developed regions. The projects should cover thematic such as digital transition, green transition, and smart manufacturing. **Applications for projects can be submitted either on February 1 or October 18, 2022.** The AAC will assess the possibility to develop a project for the second call. More info here.

**Innovation Fund**

In order to contribute to the transition to a climate-neutral economy by 2050 and to the target to reduce emissions by at least 55% by 2030 as defined in the European Climate Law within the overall framework of the European Green Deal, the Large Scale Projects Call aims to **support the demonstration of innovative low carbon technologies.** It will notably fund activities related to innovation in low carbon processes including environmentally safe carbon capture and utilisation, safe capture and geological storage of CO2, and innovative renewable energy and energy storage technologies projects. Applications can be submitted until 3 March 2022.

**Single Market Programme**

Two calls may be of your regional SMEs’ interest! The first one, **COVID-19 Recovery Through Sustainable Tourism Growth and SME Support,** will aim at guiding and supporting the recovery of the tourism ecosystem, notably through green, digital transition (deadline for application: 16 February 2022). The second call, Sustainability Partnerships for SMEs adopting more sustainable practices, is expected to help enhance interaction and improve collaboration between small- and medium-sized enterprises and NGOs/CSOs active in the same regions in their transition to sustainable practices (deadline for application: 15 March 2022). Click here to see all SMP calls.

**EMFAF**

To facilitate the implementation of the Maritime Spatial Planning in the EU, the Maritime Spatial Planning Projects call was launched to **encourage the development of innovative responses that can apply within a sea basin and/or across sea basins,** as many of the challenges are common to coastal Member States. To meet these challenges, the call underlines the necessity to reflect and align Member States’ maritime spatial plans to the ambition of the European Green Deal, cater for cumulative impacts of ocean stressors for an ecosystem-based approach, reinforce the sea basin dimension of MSP and make MSP digital and pan-European with harmonised data. Applications can be submitted until February 9, 2022.

**Erasmus+**

Erasmus+ 2022 Programme is out! Erasmus Mundus, cooperation partnerships, Jean Monnet actions, capacity building calls and more are already open, and others are to be opened soon. The AAC is currently working on an application for a Centers of Vocational Excellence partnership project. More information here!

**European Parliament**

If your region is interested in hosting local European Youth Events, don’t miss out this call! These events aim to strengthen European citizenship among young people and raise awareness about how the EU works, to become active citizens. The actions should target young people aged 16-30, and special attention should be paid to reaching out to minority communities from peripheral regions of Europe and citizens that normally do not have so much contact with the EU. Application can be submitted until March 2, 2022.

**Horizon Europe and CEF: Reminder!**

As presented in the last edition of our Flash Info, we encourage you to have a look to Horizon Europe and CEF calls as many of them are still open!
### EXTERNAL EVENTS

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<td>9-11 FEBRUARY 2022</td>
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<td>JUNE 2022 (27 -&gt; JULY 1)</td>
<td>UN Ocean Conference / Ocean Science&amp;Business2Sea</td>
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<td>28-29 OCTOBER 2022</td>
<td>International Conference on Ocean Renewable Energy Technologies</td>
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