Dear Members,

The past few months have been a time of multiple meetings at the Atlantic Arc Commission, which facilitated fruitful discussions in a decisive political context for the Atlantic. Together, we advanced on crucial topics for the Atlantic regions, initiated new actions, and further explored synergies and opportunities for the future of the cooperation in the Atlantic.

In this newsletter, you will find key updates of the latest developments since March 2021 on the Atlantic Cooperation, Marine Renewable Energies, Blue Skills, Transports, Tourism and Culture, and exciting development on European projects. And for a complete review of this last year, we are pleased to invite you to have a look at the AAC activity report 2021!

We wish you a nice reading, and a lovely summer!

With all our best wishes,

The CPMR Atlantic Arc Secretariat,
Elise Wattrelot, AAC Executive Secretary
Delphine Kaczorowski, Project and Policy Officer
Catherine Petiau, Policy Assistant

and the CPMR project team (AAC projects),
Barbara Favaro, Project Officer
Justine Brossard, Project Officer
Special focus: Key meetings

The Atlantic Arc Commission advancing together on key priorities

AAC General Assembly 2021: High-level conference on the macro-region

On June 09, the AAC Members met for its General Assembly which was featured as a side-event of the Ministerial Conference of the Portuguese Presidency of the EU Council “A Blue agenda in the EU Green Deal” (June 08). The AAC seized this opportunity to organise a high-level meeting on the Atlantic macro-region as a follow up of the Political Declaration voted in December 2020. Member Regions had the occasion to discuss their ambitions to create an Atlantic Macro-Region together with the Secretaries of States from Spain Juan González Barba and Isabel Ferreira from Portugal, MEP Younous Omarjee and Normunds Popens, Deputy Director General at DG REGIO. Both Secretaries of States especially expressed explicit support to this political ambition. As a follow up of this high-level meeting, Secretary of State Juan Gonzalez Barba proposed the creation of the Atlantic Macro-Region at the General Affairs Council on 22 June.

This year’s General Assembly was also the occasion to vote the Political Declaration and to confirm the creation of a new working group on Ocean Pollution, proposed by Norte Region. Congratulations for these achievements! Read the full press release here.

First meeting of the AAC Political Steering Group: focus on the Brexit Adjustment Reserve

On March 23, the AAC met for its first political steering group meeting to tackle the AAC orientations and priorities. The meeting especially enabled a discussion on the Brexit Adjustment Reserve (BAR) with MEP Irène Tolleret, Shadow-Rapporteur on the Brexit Adjustment Reserve for REGI Committee, who particularly highlighted the need to involve regions to direct the funding to the most impacted sectors. She also shared that the allocation criteria were the main sticky point of the negotiation in the Council and the European Parliament. On June 9, European Parliament agreed on the Report on the BAR. It has adopted a text requiring a close involvement of regional authorities in the design and implementation of measures, echoing CPMR/AAC intense advocacy activity towards relevant MEPs. On 17 June, the first trialogue concluded with a preliminary agreement. The allocation method will be based on the value of fish caught in the UK EEZ, the importance of trade with the UK and the population of maritime border regions with the UK. The fishing sector will receive EUR 600 million, €4.150 billion for trade, and €250 million will fall under the factor linked to maritime border regions.
AAC Hub meetings in April 2021

On April 14-15, the AAC regions gathered for the hub meetings, dedicating two days to discuss the various themes of cooperation and meet with key experts on the EU agenda. These meetings notably enabled to:

- Identify funding opportunities for Regions in the field of Marine Renewable Energies such as with the Clean Energy Transition Partnership;
- Explore ways to foster an Atlantic Cooperation on common RIS3 and further discover the Interregional Innovation Investment tool with an expert from DG REGIO;
- Finalise the AAC contribution to the TEN-T consultation and discuss further steps;
- Pave the way to cooperation on the sustainable recovery of Tourism sector, notably through a benchmark study of the Atlantic priorities.

This last year, we succeeded in inviting 14 external stakeholders and 11 EU representatives on the occasion of the hub meetings. Many thanks to all of you for your participation! The next hub meetings should be organised in Autumn 2021.

Minutes of the Hub meetings are available in the Members Area.

Participation in the CPMR Political Bureaus in March and June 2021

On March 26, the CPMR Political Bureau reunited to address the recovery of Europe and cooperation with non-EU neighbouring countries. On that occasion, Paula Fernández Viaña, Regional Minister of Presidency, Justice, Home Affairs and External Action from Cantabria, stressed the essential role of local and regional authorities for the recovery and the importance of multilevel governance in the national recovery plans. Maria Ángeles Elorza, General Secretary for Foreign Affairs from the Basque Government, agreed with her position and recalled the macro-regional objectives of the AAC. Members voted CPMR 10 messages to the EU institutions to strengthen the involvement of regions in the EU Recovery Plan.

With a special focus on Climate and the Future of Europe, the latest Political Bureau on June 24 enabled Maria Ángeles Elorza to highlight the potential positive impacts of an Atlantic Macro-Regional Strategy to cooperate for a social and ecological transition and to especially address these ambitions to Anthony Agotha, Senior Diplomatic Expert, from the Cabinet of Mr Frans Timmermans. Members voted the CPMR Policy Position “A Regional Aid fit for the post-Covid world” and the Political Declaration “Regions, strategic partners for a Union of Equality”.

We also invite you to have a look at the CPMR Impact Brochure for 2021-2027 period!
Atlantic Strategy, Macro-Region, Brexit, and Cooperation with third-EU countries: the AAC at the forefront of cooperation activities for the Atlantic

Marian Elorza shares with SEARICA MEPs the AAC work on the Atlantic Macro-Region

On May 26, Marian Elorza, Secretary General in charge of External Affairs, participated in a SEArca event on the Atlantic Action Plan 2.0 organised by the AAC with the support of the Atlantic Strategy Committee and hosted by MEP Manuel Pizarro, in order to share the latest work of the Atlantic Arc Commission on the Atlantic Macro-Region. The meeting gathered a great number of MEPs for the Atlantic and high-level EU and national representatives. MEPs actively promoted their vision of the Atlantic Strategy and highlighted the need to breathe new life into the Strategy. Among other messages, MEPs promoted a strategic vision for the fisheries and aquaculture sector, a greater involvement of regions and outermost regions, as well as a stronger recognition of the Brexit challenges in the Strategy. Marian Elorza reacted to the comments by promoting the work of the Atlantic Arc Commission in favour of an Atlantic Macro-Region to give greater impetus to the strategy. Minister Ricardo Serrao Santos announced he would suggest the Ministerial Meeting organised in Lisbon on June 08 to prepare the ground for a meeting of the Atlantic Ministers (video available here).

AAC participation in the Atlantic Strategy Committee

As associated partner to the Atlantic Strategic Committee, the AAC participated in the meetings on March 23 and June 15. The AAC Secretariat updated ASC members on the Political Declaration on the Atlantic Macro-Region, the outcomes of the high-level conference held during the General Assembly, and the creation of the Working Group on Ocean Pollution. These meetings were also the occasion to learn the advancement of the pillar coordination and highlight that important maritime sectors were not well represented in the four pillars identified by the AAP 2.0, such as tourism and the fisheries and aquaculture.

Check out the members of Pillars Task Forces here.

Pre-registration for the Atlantic Stakeholder Platform Conference (ASPC) on 21st October and calls for workshops and the Atlantic Project Awards have been launched and can be accessed here.

Pillar I (Atlantic Ports) will host an online webinar on 8th July entitled “Using Ports to Catalyse a Green Recovery” which will seek to address specific issues relating to marine renewable energy and alternative fuels and their usage in Atlantic ports, and the future of business within the port ecosystem. Further details here.
In March 2021, the AAC Secretariat compiled the answers from the AAC regions to respond to the consultation on the Atlantic Area programme for 2021-2027. The results globally reflected the AAC position, as Policy Objective 1, 2 and 4 appeared as the top priorities, mentions of connection of coastal and inland issues on themes such as Agrifood, Energy, Biodiversity, Eco-innovation, Transport, Education have been spotlighted, Tourism, Blue Energy and Ports have been highlighted in the thematic remarks, and the AAC suggestions on the coordination with the Atlantic Maritime Strategy and the ISO1 with non-EU regions have been mentioned.

Thank you for your contribution!

As reflected in our 2021 Political Declaration, the AAC considers that it should have had a more prominent role in the discussion on the future programme, and ask the representatives of the Task Force elaborating the future programme to take this contribution fully into account in the writing of the operational programme in order to meet the main challenges of the Atlantic coast and its basin strategy.

During the Political Steering Group of March 2021, the AAC presented a concept of a pilot project to create a unique framework of cooperation for projects between EU Atlantic regions and non-EU regions in the Atlantic to address crucial challenges such as climate change (coastal erosion) and the greening of marine leisure infrastructures. This initiative was proposed to MEP Younous Omarjee, who welcomed the project and submitted the proposal end of March 2021. If successful, the project would last two years, with a budget of 800.00 euros.

The project is currently in the pre-assessment phase which should end in June/July. A re-assessment phase will open during summer to provide the opportunity for MEPs to change proposals in line with the Commission’s feedback. To support the initiative in the evaluation phase the AAC conveyed a letter of support jointly signed off with Forum Oceano (Norte) and CEIMAR (Andalucia) as well as the 2021 Political Declaration which refers to the pilot project.
Paula Viaña Fernández’s opinion report to the Committee of the Regions on the Atlantic Action Plan 2.0 (CDR 4163/2020) has been adopted in NAT Committee on March 19. The AAC notably contributed to her report via the answers to a questionnaire by the AAC member regions, expressing their views and expectations for the Atlantic Strategy.

MEP Younous Omarjee presented to the REGI Committee his report on a new approach to the Atlantic Maritime Strategy (2020/2276(INI)) on 25 May to the REGI Committee, on which the AAC collaborated. The shadow rapporteurs took the floor to highlight their agreement with the main points of the report such as the proposal to include more the regions in the governance of the strategy.

MEP Pierre Karleskind, chair of the PECH Committee reiterated his request to the European Commission to review the AAP 2.0 and addressed a “yellow card” as the strategic role of fisheries and aquaculture sector, the impact of Brexit and the references to outermost regions were lacking. He asked a reinforced role of regions.

Following on the presentation of the report in REGI, the AAC actively engaged with the shadow-rapporteurs to convince them to support the proposal to create an Atlantic Macro-Region, which was at threat in the negotiations. The report should be voted in July in REGI and in September in Plenary. We thank you very much for your support to contact your MEPs!

The AAC will continue its collaboration with MEPs involved in the process.
European Week of the Regions and Cities 2021: AAC Workshop on Blue Economy and RIS3

With the impulse of Lisbon region, the AAC Secretariat contributed to a successful application for a workshop at the European Week of the Regions and Cities 2021. The workshop is entitled “Blue Economy and RIS3, fostering Innovation in the Atlantic Area”, and will gather AAC speakers to discuss on the identification of Smart Specialisation cooperation opportunities in the Blue Growth area with the outlook into the Atlantic Action Plan 2.0. The workshop will encourage to share knowledge to cluster together and scale-up innovative products and services in the field of action of the Atlantic Strategy (ports activity, marine renewable energies, skills and healthy ocean and resilient coasts). The EWRC should be organised between 11-14 October 2021. We invite you to pencil this event in your agenda and forward this information to your network!

On that same topic, Nuno Bento, Coordinator of Lisbon Region’s Regional Dynamics Observatory will also participate on behalf of the Atlantic Arc Commission in a workshop on S3 for a Sustainable Blue Economy co-organised by DG MARE, DG REGIO and JRC to tackle interregional cooperation on 6 July. Stay tuned!

A new AAC working group on Ocean Pollution

On the occasion of the AAC General Assembly on 9 June, the AAC voted unanimously for the creation of a new working group on Ocean Pollution, on the proposal of the President of CCDR-Norte. As proposed by President Cunha, the group will have two operational objectives:

- the preparation of documents and joint projects to influence European policy in this field;

- empowering the Regions involved in this work to become relevant interlocutors at European level on this issue and submit proposals that may obtain financing in the new European programmes.

The group will harness the experience of the CleanAtlantic project and will connect with Pillar IV of the Atlantic Strategy.
High-level meeting with Commissioner Sinkevičius, Breton and Schmit in the framework of Offshore Renewable Energy Pact for Skills

On May 11, the AAC Secretariat participated with an observer status in a meeting with Commissioners Virginijus Sinkevičius, Thierry Breton and Nicolas Schmit on skills for the Renewable Energies Ecosystem, following the launch of the Pact for Skills initiative in November 2020. This roundtable enabled discussions on the challenges of upskilling and reskilling of the workforce, the identification of the support needed from the European Commission for skill developments in the Offshore Renewable Energy sector. The AAC Secretariat has started to work with a consortium of umbrella organisations to set a series of actions to foster the adaptation of skills in the Offshore Renewable Energy sector. The Pact for Skills has been included in the roadmap of the AAC Marine Renewable Energy working group during the AAC General Assembly.

For more information on the Offshore Energy Pact for Skills, check out the documentation on AAC Member Area.

Healthy Ocean and Resilient coasts: AAC Secretariat presented Atlantic Regions’ actions to adapt to climate change

On June 10, on the occasion of the first Atlantic Strategy workshop dedicated to Pillar IV “Healthy Ocean and Resilient Coasts”, the AAC Secretariat presented examples of practices developed by Atlantic Regions on adaptation to climate change, in particular with regards to coastal management. Thanks to your contribution to the CPMR questionnaire RegionsAct!, the AAC Secretariat was able to promote key initiatives developed in your regions on which Pillar IV actions should be based.

Development of a VET Excellence project on Aquaculture in the Atlantic

In collaboration with Nouvelle-Aquitaine region, the AAC Secretariat continued to engage contacts and organised joint meetings with potential partners to consolidate a consortium on a Blue Skills project in the Atlantic aquaculture sector. The project should target the Erasmus+ Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVE). The deadline for submission is set for early September 2021. We strongly encourage you to submit your ideas to reinforce the foreseen partnership.
The publication of the EU strategy on Sustainable Blue Economy

In May, the European Commission proposed a new approach for a sustainable blue economy in the EU to achieve the objectives of the European Green Deal and ensure a green and inclusive recovery from the pandemic. The Strategy positively supports carbon neutrality by promoting the development of offshore renewable energy, decarbonization of maritime transport and ports. It highlights the role of ports for regional and national economies and embed a focus on circular economy to fight against pollution in the Seas.

The CPMR had contributed to the public consultation and the SEArica event on the matter showcasing the role of regions in achieving a shift from a pure blue growth strategy to a sustainable blue economy strategy. The publication of the Strategy showcased that these messages were heard. (See CRPM answer to the public consultation and CPMR reaction to the publication). The Strategy also positively aligns with AAC current work on the Atlantic Strategy, on the Atlantic Smart Port – Blue Acceleration Network (AspBAN project), CleanAtlantic project against marine pollution or our work on sustainable tourism strategies.

Interestingly, it opens a path for more interregional cooperation between coastal regions and islands in the same sea basin on adaptation strategies and joint approaches to coastal zone management.

Find out more on our position on the Communication of the European Commission in our 2021 Political Declaration.

Meetings of the Pillar III of the Atlantic Strategy on Marine Renewable Energy

In March, May and June, the AAC Secretariat participated in meetings organised by the coordinators of the Pillar III of the Atlantic Strategy in order to advance on the priorities of the roadmap on Marine Renewable Energies. Participants agreed on meeting regularly to advance on specific priorities in smaller groups. The latest meeting enabled participants to discuss potential themes for projects to be proposed to the European Commission, and to pool together different marine renewable energy initiatives covering the EU Atlantic area. Thanks to this involvement the AAC will be able to take an active role in adapting future funding opportunities on MRE for the benefit of its regions. Stay tuned!
The European Commission’s renewed attention to Aquaculture and Algae

The VET Excellence project on Aquaculture is being developed in a favourable context. In May, the European Commission published its new strategic guidelines for aquaculture. They aim at providing a strategic vision for a more sustainable and competitive EU aquaculture, in a way that contributes to the European Green Deal and economic recovery following the Covid-19 pandemic. The guidelines have the following objectives:

- building resilience and competitiveness of the EU aquaculture sector
- ensuring the participation of the EU aquaculture sector in the green transition
- fostering social acceptance and improved consumer information on EU aquaculture activities and products
- increasing knowledge and innovation in the EU aquaculture sector

The latter objective is particularly in line with the needs identified by the AAC regions when developing the VET Excellence Project on Aquaculture.

The European Commission is also preparing a cross-sectoral EU algae initiative. The aim of the initiative is to increase the sustainable production, consumption and use of algae and algae-based products. It launched a consultation on the roadmap for an EU Algae initiative which closed on 18 January and received 82 feedbacks. A round on consultation will follow during the first quarter 2021.

Among the respondents, the Pays de la Loire Region, chair of the CPMR and AAC Fisheries and Aquaculture Working Group contributed, highlighting:
- The need to tackle regulatory burden (tests and certification of a new product in EU market, difficulties to obtain the organic label).
- The need to support EU production compared to imported products
- The importance to foster acceptability of new food products derived from algae.
- The added value of financing research and development as well as innovation projects because the seaweed sector has not yet reached maturity.
The Accessibility/Attractivity hub

Update on Transport, Tourism and Culture activities

AAC contribution to the CPMR response to the TEN-T consultation

In collaboration with CPMR Geographical Commissions, the CPMR developed and submitted its contribution to the TEN-T consultation early May 2021. In that context, the AAC actively participated in the preparatory work, developing an Atlantic Political Position on TEN-T. The AAC promoted a strengthened Atlantic dimension in the global TEN-T policy and defended the development of a strong Blue and Green Atlantic Transport Arc. These messages were complemented by maps detailing specific regional and inter-regional connectivity demands. The AAC Political messages were validated in April 2021 and sent out to key Atlantic MEPs and Atlantic Corridor Coordinator. The European Commission’s adoption is expected for second quarter 2021. Thank you for your valuable contribution!

Collaboration with ATN-RTA on TEN-T revision

As part of the memorandum signed in 2014, the Atlantic Arc Commission and the Atlantic Transnational Network (ATN-RTA) have recently collaborated and shared their respective messages on TEN-T revision. The ATN-RTA gathers regional Economic, Social and Environmental Councils (CES and CESER) representing civil society’s organisations from some regions of the Atlantic-Channel area, located in France, Spain and Portugal. Since 2018, it has launched a working group with a view to contributing to the revision process of the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T), by stressing its socioeconomic and environmental issues for the area it represents, regarding the Atlantic Corridor, and by developing concrete proposals.

The ATN-RTA has developed its contribution “Towards a revision of the TEN-T for the Atlantic Area” which highlights the ATN-RTA’s 8 overall priorities regarding the revision of the TEN-T, notably in terms of accessibility for Atlantic regions, its financing, governance and adapting the European transport network to developments in the field of energy and digital technology.

In line with AAC positions, the ATN-RTA urges European institutions, and relevant national and regional stakeholders, to take the specific characteristics of the EU’s Atlantic regions into account in the future negotiations, scheduled to start in 2021.

For more information, read here the ATN-RTA’s policy paper.
On the occasion of the hub meetings, the AAC Secretariat produced a **benchmark** identifying **paths for cooperation on sustainable tourism in the Atlantic**. The CPMR General Secretariat also provided an overview of the consideration of Tourism in the National Recovery Plans, highlighting the good representation of the sector and connections with green transition and digitalisation. The analysis enabled to identify important similarities between the AAC regions’ ambitions to develop sustainable tourism, with highlights on the help of innovation.

In May 2021, the European Commission released the **Guide on EU funding for tourism** to find appropriate EU funding for the tourism sector. This benchmark will therefore set a basis to discuss potential cooperation on projects.

On May 21, the CPMR organised a workshop on a **smart and resilient recovery of the tourism sector** with a focus on sustainable coastal and culture tourism, with the aim to identify the territorial needs and opportunities for the 2021-2027 period. Stephen Hynes, Professor in Socio-Economic Marine Research Unit at National University of Ireland Galway spoke on behalf of Failte Ireland, the National Tourism Development Authority of Ireland, and recalled the importance of collaboration between communities and the involvement of stakeholders at multiple levels. He highlighted the Interreg Atlantic Area **Moses project**, aiming at examining the Blue Growth path for sustainable development of the major sectors operating in the Atlantic space, in the context of the Atlantic Action Plan objectives.

**Workshop sessions on Ports with DG MOVE**

On April 22-23, with the support of the AAC, **key stakeholders from Atlantic member regions participated in workshop sessions organised by the European Commission (DG MOVE) on “Smart, Sustainable and Effective Maritime Transport in the Atlantic Region”, with a focus on Ireland connectivity in the context of Brexit and Ports of the Atlantic and North Sea Mediterranean Corridors. This was the occasion for Atlantic ports to showcase their good practices in terms of digitalization, link with the hinterland, contribution to the Green Deal objectives.**
In March 2021, the AAC released the SAFER catalogue of services, mapping more than 80 innovative best practices in the seafood sector across the Atlantic area and showcasing the results of the pilots’ implementation. The SAFER project final conference will be organised by the AAC in September 2021, in Brussels or online, depending on the sanitary situation.

In March 2021, MEP Catherine Chabaud’s report “Impact on fisheries of marine litter” was adopted at the European Parliament. Following the SEARICA event of October 2020, and on the demand of MEP Francisco José Millán Mon, she mentioned CleanAtlantic in her report and urged the project to continue their work and publish its results. The project was also presented during the hub meetings and to the coordinators of the Pillar IV of the Atlantic Strategy, who welcomed its contribution to the pillar. The AAC also facilitated discussion with the United Nations Environment programme on the database of the project, which enabled the AAC to participate in UNEP pre-meetings for the upcoming Ministeral Conference of September 2021. The AAC also coordinated a presentation of the project’s work on river modelling at the CPMR North Sea Commission conference Waste Free Rivers, organised on June 24.

The final conference of the project was held online on June 15, but more insightful deliverables are to be discovered on the project website!

The AspBAN project officially kicked-off on May 11, 2021. The project will aim at launching the building blocks that will foster a dynamic acceleration services platform for EU Atlantic ports to function as an open innovation ecosystem for blue economy. It will involve a deep connection with the EEA, transatlantic and other relevant EU and non-EU maritime basins.

AspBAN was presented to the CPMR Transport Working Group in March 2021, the AAC Hub Meetings in April 2021 as well as to the SEArica Intergroup meeting dedicated to the Atlantic Strategy in May 2021. A first workshop will be organised by the AAC around October 2021.

On June 30, the AAC participated in the first workshops organised by IMDO, project partners and also coordinators of Pillar I of the Atlantic Strategy. On the basis of a survey sent to ports and conducted by IMDO, this workshop enabled to frame and discuss the current needs, challenges and resources of the ports in terms of sustainable innovation.
Interview with Iñigo Ansola Kareaga, General Manager of EVE

Iñigo Ansola Kareaga is an Industrial Engineer. Since December 2016 he is Board Member and General Manager of EVE-Ente Vasco de la Energía, a company belonging to the Department of Economic Development, Sustainability and Environment of the Regional Basque Government. Prior to December 2016, he was President of the Association of Municipalities of Lea-Artibai, Head of Water and of Environmental Infrastructure at the Provincial Government of Bizkaia and subsequently Director General of URA – Basque Water Agency of the Regional Basque Government.

Dear Iñigo Ansola, many thanks for taking the time to answer our questions. Could you please explain the role of the Ente Vasco de la Energía (EVE), the Basque Energy Agency?

EVE - Ente Vasco de la Energía is the Basque Government’s energy agency. Its mission is to propose energy strategies for the Basque Country, based on criteria of supply security, cost competitiveness, sustainability, and technological development and to participate in developing these strategies and contribute to meeting the targets established therein.

In order to achieve this mission, the agency provides a service to the Basque Government’s Department of Economic Development, Sustainability and Environment in matters related to energy, geological and mining resources and hydrocarbons. It also participates in projects, involving private companies and government institutions. It works to disseminate the values and messages underpinning its strategies amongst society at large.

What are the current priorities of the Basque Country on Energy?

The Energy Strategy for the Basque Country 2030 (3E230) sets out the government’s objectives on energy policies. Its aim is to foster a more competitive and sustainable Basque Country, galvanising economic activity in the region. With high energy consumption levels and very few natural resources of its own, the Basque Country is looking to progressively develop its socio-economic model, particularly with regard to industry, buildings and transport, aiming at a lower energy consumption based on the progressive deployment of renewable energy. The targets are:

- Zero consumption of oil for energy uses by 2050, requiring a structural change in the transport system;
- Contribution to the targets of the Basque Strategy on Climate Change 2050:
  - Reduce GHG emissions by at least 40% by 2030 and at least 80% by 2050, compared to 2005
  - Achieve 40% contribution of renewable energy to meeting final consumption by 2050;
- Complete untying from fossil fuels and zero net GHG emissions by the end of the century, with renewable energy as the only energy supply.
How does the EVE collaborate on the European and international level? What would make the Basque Energy Agency a key partner in transnational project?

EVE’s trajectory in transnational projects is as long and extent as its existence (38 years).

In early years, EVE participated in cooperation projects mainly in central and south America and later on, in European projects mainly funded by the European Commission. In total, EVE coordinated and participated in more than 200 international projects dealing with topics as diverse as energy planning, energy infrastructures, renewable energies, energy efficiency in different sectors such as building sector, transport and industry.

EVE is the region’s benchmark organisation in the energy field for its contribution to energy efficiency, development of renewable energy, supply security and its leadership in positioning the Basque Country as a knowledge pole and industrial reference point in the energy industry. It does this by:

- Promoting singular projects with stakeholders that are best positioned to make a contribution;
- Creating market opportunities that can be capitalised on by Basque business, based on the energy investment made;
- Contributing criteria to society on energy-related values;
- Contributing to compliance with the Department of Economic Development, Sustainability and Environment’s plans and objectives;
- Through public-private partnership.

Could you tell us more about one of your flagship projects?

Mutriku Wave Power Plant, outside and inside view

MUTRIKU WAVE POWER PLANT. July 2011 saw the official opening of the world’s first commercial wave power plant at Mutriku. The project, which involved the EVE and the Basque Government Department of Ports and Airports, took seven years from go-ahead to commissioning.

The new breakwater at Mutriku was built to facilitate vessel access to the harbour. To take advantage of the breakwater construction work, the Basque Government signed a collaboration agreement with EVE to install a wave-based power generating arrangement. The selected technology was OWC (Oscillating Water Column) and a plant consisting of 16 such columns, each one connected to a turbine with a nominal power output of 18.5 kW (thus providing a total installed capacity of 296 kW), was built.

In 2021, Mutriku is celebrating 10 years in continuous operation and is still the power plant that has produced the most energy from waves in the world.

MUTRIKU – TEST SITE. Though the facilities at Mutriku have been set up as a commercial plant to generate electricity, EVE intends to take maximum advantage of
its investment and welcomes proposals for R&D projects that may be conducted and developed in the Mutriku plant. In particular, the plant is able to host new concepts of air turbines, electrical generators or control systems.

**AWARENESS RAISING.** Mutriku town council and EVE set up a service providing guided tours of the plant. These tours are specifically designed to raise public awareness in particular of a plant which is the first of its kind worldwide and in general, of the Marine Renewable Energies.

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MutrikuWave Power Plant, guided tour
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According to you, what are the main assets and challenges of the Atlantic regarding Marine Renewable Energies?

Marine Renewable Energies will play an important role in reaching the EU’s increasing climate targets for 2030 and the commitment to become climate-neutral by 2050. The current pace of offshore renewable energies deployment though is far too slow to meet the massive scale required to ensure the achievement of the targets.

In this context, the Commission published in November 2020 the Offshore Renewable Energy Strategy proposing ways forward to support the step up and long-term sustainable development of this sector.

**The Atlantic Ocean has great resource in terms of wind and ocean energy (mainly wave and tidal) and high capacity to contribute to the targets abovementioned.** This is well known by the Member States in the area who have promoted a world-leading network of test centres and a strong pipeline of demonstration projects. In addition, Member States and Regions are involved in the EU’s Atlantic Strategy and the Atlantic Action Plan and have identified the offshore renewable energies as a strategic area for cooperation. This is because this industrial sector will create jobs across various supply chains revitalising coastal communities that historically served shipbuilding, fishing, and the oil & gas sector. Recently, MS across Europe have developed Maritime Spatial Planning, one of the key tools for the successful large-scale deployment of offshore MRE and the sustainable use of our sea space and resources.

A lot has been done in the past years, but intense work is still needed in the near future. **The large-scale deployment of MRE will require strong political commitment and cross-border cooperation to set ambitious goals and deployments in the Atlantic area, define the best sites for farms implementation, implement incentives, keep sustained investments in research and innovation, bridge public and private financing, maintain predictable legal framework, etc.**

Thank you very much Mr Ansola, we are looking forward to further discussing with you soon!

**More information about EVE:**

- [www.eve.eus](http://www.eve.eus)
- [Energy Policy 2030](http://energy-policy-2030)
- [Publications](http://publications)
# AAC/CPMR events

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<td>SEPTEMBER 2021</td>
<td>SAFER final conference</td>
<td>Brussels/Online (tbc)</td>
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<td>13-15 OCTOBER 2021</td>
<td>CPMR General Assembly</td>
<td>Crete, Greece</td>
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<td>AAC Plenary meeting / AspBan workshop</td>
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<td>11-14 OCTOBER 2021</td>
<td>AAC Workshop – European Week of Regions and Cities</td>
<td>Brussels, Belgium / Online</td>
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<td>NOVEMBER 2021</td>
<td>AAC Hub meetings</td>
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# External events

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<td>MARTECH Workshop</td>
<td>Vigo, Spain</td>
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<td>6 JULY 2021</td>
<td>Smart Specialisation for Blue Economy Workshop (European Commission, S3 Platform)</td>
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<td>8 JULY 2021</td>
<td>Pillar I workshop “Using Ports to Catalyse a Green Recovery</td>
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<td>1-2 SEPTEMBER 2021</td>
<td>UNEP GPML - Ministerial Conference on Marine Litter and Plastic Pollution</td>
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<td>21-24 SEPTEMBER 2021</td>
<td>Seanergy 2021</td>
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<td>21 OCTOBER 2021</td>
<td>8th Atlantic Stakeholders Platform Conference</td>
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<tr>
<td>11-14 OCTOBER 2021</td>
<td>European Week of the Regions and Cities 2021</td>
<td>Brussels, Belgium / Online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-7 DECEMBER 2021</td>
<td>Ocean Energy Europe 2021</td>
<td>The Egg, Brussels / Online</td>
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