

Marine leisure in the heart of the Atlantic development 300 attending the European Conference "Nautisme Espace Atlantique"

The first European Nautisme Espace Atlantique Conference « Challenges and opportunities for sustainable development in the marine leisure sector in the Atlantic regions », organised by the Région Bretagne, the Conseil général du Finistère and the partners of the NEA2 Project, with the support of the European Union, Brest Métropole Océane and the « Arc Atlantic » Commission of the CPRM (Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions), gathered 300 participants in Brest on October 26th and 27th.

Dynamically organised through a series of round tables on different themes, it has allowed more than 50 experts and political, economic or associative representatives to exchange about the NEA2 realisations, the realities, stakes and opportunities of development of the marine leisure activities and the sector, the strong potential linked to the strong demand within the Atlantic Area but also in the developing countries.



Among the numerous speakers, the participants could hear Yves Auffret, Representative of the European Commissioner Maria Damanaki, Fausta Corda Responsible for the interregional cooperation programs for the Atlantic and the Mediterranean at the European Commission (DG Regio), Jean-Yves Le Drian, president of the Conseil régional de Bretagne and the CPRM, Marie Vadillo Vice-President, Pierre Maille, President of the Conseil général du Finistère, Mickael Quernez, Vice-President, Stéphane Travert, elected representative of the Conseil Régional de Basse-Normandie which presides the Atlantic Arc, Ciara Delaney, Representative of Ireland in Brussels, Inma Valencia, representative of the region Cantabria in Brussels and numerous experts and recognised personalities from Great Britain, Ireland, Spain, Portugal and France.

The Conclusions of the Conference by Maria Vadillo and Mickael Quernez revealed

- The strength of the Atlantic maritime identity marked by a decisive contribution of the marine leisure
- The economic and social of the Atlantic marine leisure sector and its contribution to the development of the territories, and to the politics linked to the sea and the coast
- The contribution of marine leisure to the touristic development, the technological innovation, to the maritime education of the population, to improvement of health, to the protection of the environment, to the social cohesion in the Atlantic Area, an essential contribution which has today a great potential of progression.

- The necessity for this Atlantic sector to strengthen and organise on local, regional, national and transnational scales to take up the great challenges starting today, notably taking its place in the Atlantic Strategy which outlines will be presented in Lisbon on November, 28th and 29th and which action plan will be elaborated in 2012 with the perspective of an implementation in 2014.

- The exceptional success of this first European Conference on marine leisure, rich on debates, where the Atlantic regions have expressed unanimously their strong will to develop their cooperation to make from the Atlantic marine leisure an international reference in all the aspects linked to the economic performance, the employment, the environment protection, the quality of life and the social cohesion.

Yves Auffret, from the European Commission, concluded expressing his satisfaction before the will of the marine leisure sector to contribute to the success of the Atlantic Maritime Strategy and has encouraged the participants to take care of their future and participate actively to the Atlantic Forum which will aim, in 2012, to elaborate the action plan of this vast project of maritime development.



1st “Atlantic Area Marine Leisure” (NEA) European Conference

Maritime Identity



Yves Auffret (EU), Member of Maria Damanaki’s (EU Commissioner for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries) cabinet, responsible for the European Union’s integrated maritime policy. Extract of the discussion.

Our Atlantic identity is the fruit of a very complex, old and vibrant fusion of land and sea, history, culture, and cultural, commercial and sporting exchanges. It’s also the product of a special relationship with the sea. Everyone can call to mind our sailors, explorers and discoverers: Jacques Cartier, Christopher Columbus, Vasco de Gama, Magellan, Cook, and La Pérouse. And each of us can also call to mind our great sportsmen and women, our new conquerors of the ocean, Eric Tabarly, Ellen MacArthur, Catherine Chabaud and others. The Atlantic identity is first and foremost a human fact of life, in its diversity and in its richness. This is the identity of all those to whom the Atlantic is a workplace as well as a place for living and leisure.

The Commission is not attempting to create an Atlantic maritime identity, since this already exists and is very much alive. The Commission hopes to go further and propose a maritime strategy for the Atlantic Ocean within the framework of the European maritime policy. Our aim is to recognise, protect, and to foster the importance and potential of the sea to make it work towards the sustainable development of the coastal regions, and for Europeans living along the coast, who live on the sea and from the sea, as well as the whole European economy.

From the outset of its maritime venture, the Commission has believed that economic development must be reconciled with environmental protection and the quality of life in the coastal regions and islands. It remains true to this objective. The Commission is aware of the demands for better representation of the marine-leisure sector. It recognises the importance of the attractiveness of yachting if we are to encourage ever-growing numbers of Europeans to take part in a water sport.

Our Atlantic maritime strategy will enable Europe to better recognise its maritime dimension, shifting its focus towards the West. The Atlantic must no longer be the final frontier, the Finisterrae – or Lands End – of the Romans. It must become once again the gateway or Penn ar Bed as they say in Breton, leading the world, the gateway to Europe.

**2 questions for Pablo Carrera (ES),
Director of the Museo do Mar, and European Expert on maritime heritage.**

How were the first links forged between the Atlantic regions ?

Fishing was one of the linchpins in the building of this common Atlantic identity. But there was first and foremost a commercial activity dating back to prehistory. The Megalithic culture found in Carnac is also to be found in Cornwall, Portugal and Galicia. Identity is a building process that starts the moment the first contact is made and is strengthened over time. I’ve always been drawn by this idea of Finisterre, of gateways, of highways enabling those people to communicate with each other. Whenever I come to Brittany and take part in a cultural event here, I immediately think of my birthplace in Galicia. This is the result of twenty-five centuries of ongoing relations between our peoples.

80 commercially exploited heritage boats have been registered along the Atlantic Arc from Ireland to Portugal. Could they act as ambassadors for the European maritime culture?

Absolutely. However, we need more support. Boats are the link between land and sea, but we need to understand why these boats are there. I believe that the key to the future lies in researching how to transpose what we have inherited from the past to the present, and to respect continuity. Our great challenge today is to extract the best identifying factors binding us together and to impart these to future generations to enable them to understand what lies behind marine leisure, their own history in fact.



Atlantic Area Marine Leisure 1st European Conference

The Atlantic maritime economy

The impact of marine leisure in the Atlantic Area

Carried out within the framework of the NEA2 project, the Atlantic marine leisure's activity as a research centre (action Observatoire) has enabled us to establish that the marine-leisure industry represents 85,000 jobs and 10 million participants along the Atlantic façade. The industry is made up of three complementary and interdependent sectors: Organised activities, marinas, and the industry, commerce and services sector. These figures reveal the importance of the economic and social impact of this industry on the Atlantic Arc. Nevertheless, apart from this reality and apart from the magnificent attractions offered by the Atlantic coastline, certain structural weaknesses have become apparent. The marine-leisure industry has very few cross-disciplinary organisations at any of the regional, national and trans-national levels. The Cornwall Marine Network in England is a rare and fine example where the stakeholders in the marine-leisure industry as a whole – businesses, marinas, watersports centres... – work together within a single facility. Marine leisure is an opportunity for the development of the Atlantic Area. Governance and representation must be strengthened if we are to influence the big decisions of the future, notably at the level of the Atlantic maritime strategy.

The marine-leisure industry: a few figures...

- 6,300 facilities for organised marine-leisure activities
- 6,300,000 participants in facilities for organised marine leisure
- 1,600 marinas
- 230,000 pontoon berths
- 8,500 businesses (industries, commerce and services)
- 85,000 FTE employees
- Turnover of 8,900 billion Euros

(Source: Action Observatory of the Atlantic Marine leisure - NEA2)

Brittany Ferries, embodying of the Atlantic Area

Linking southern England with the North-West of France, Spain and Ireland, we are one of the embodiments of the Atlantic Area", Christophe Mathieu, Group Commercial and Strategy Director of Brittany Ferries believes, with justification. Portugal is not far behind, with no fewer than 15% of passengers travelling on to Portugal from Santander or Bilbao. "We are one of the Atlantic Area's building blocks. And we hope to continue to strengthen these links." Alexis Gourvenec, founding president of Brittany Ferries, liked to maintain that London was closer than Paris to Roscoff. These past three years, Brittany Ferries has significantly developed its lines. Nowadays, the company transports 30,000 lorries and 300,000 passengers between England and Spain. "We are the very embodiment of exchanges and their proliferation in the Atlantic Area. We're here to help keep the Atlantic Area alive by enabling people to meet each other. We're just one link in the chain, an important link that can help give substance to the whole, but it's important that other initiatives press on", Christophe Matthieu stressed, by way of conclusion. Brittany Ferries supports marine leisure by being a partner, each year, in the Atlantic Games. .



Atlantic Area Marine Leisure 1st European Conference

Prospects and development in the Atlantic marine-leisure industry



3 questions for Miguel Marques (PT)

Finance Director of maritime affairs for PricewaterhouseCoopers Portugal

How would you define the global marine-leisure market today?

I'd say that there are still opportunities in the Atlantic Area. We also have opportunities in developing countries. One naturally thinks of the BRIC countries: Brazil, Russia, India and China. But I'd go further than that. I'd mention the CIVETS: Colombia, Indonesia, Vietnam, Egypt, Turkey and South Africa. These will soon be the new BRIC countries. I think that Atlantic Europe must also approach these countries. But for that to happen, we need to be well acquainted with the culture of each of these countries.

You wish to bring up the specific case of Brazil.

Brazil boasts over 200m inhabitants and has a growth rate of 4 to 5%. This country needs to create facilities. One of the points in the Brazilian strategy is to attract participants in European marine leisure to Brazil. At the same time, this action plan should encourage the middle and upper classes who frequently travel to Europe, Paris, and Lisbon to discover the Atlantic coast. Rather than talking of a lack of market, we should talk of a new strategy. The CIVETS countries already boast growth rates of 8%.

What, in your opinion, should this new strategy look like ?

It's a new, more complex, more sophisticated strategy. For the time being, Europe's marine-leisure profile is fragmented. It is very important for Europe to get organised if it is to create mechanisms and tools that will enable it to speak with one voice. .

Joan Basacoma's point of view (ES)

President of International Sailing Schools Association (ISSA)



It was the Atlantic coastal countries that invented sailing as it is practised today. Globally, ISSA makes sailing accessible to large numbers of people, to young and old, and to disabled and marginalised people. ISSA is conveying this expertise to the emergent countries. Regional working parties have thus been set up in the South-East Asiatic region, the North Sea and the West Indies. In all of these geographical zones, there are high-quality professional colleges and federations that have been working on various projects for many years. ISSA now accounts for 3,000 sailing schools. We work a good deal with China, Russia and Latin America. We have started in Africa. We feel obliged to pass on our experience, which we have inherited from our parents, to the countries that don't enjoy the same facilities as we do.



The view of Mod Le Froy (UK), Director of Global Boarders

Mod Le Froy, of Global Boarders, runs a surfing school based on sustainable development and inclusion for marginalised young people with no training and who assume that the beach is not for them. These young people live near the sea but are unable to take part in marine-leisure activities. Sustainable development is therefore integrated into the values conveyed to these youngsters to enable them to get back in touch with nature and with society.

The activity of Global Boarders was initially confined to tourism rather than to young people and those with low self esteem, but, gradually, another focus of activity took over, based on the idea that surfing is a democratic sport where everyone can be included. Her business also caters for a good many people aged 50 and over, who enjoy spending time with people of their own age. For Mod Le Froy, what works for youngsters works for everyone. So the image of surfing needs to change, and the marketing should focus not on the champions or the elite, but on everyone who can take part. Without forgetting also to focus on nature and the lifestyle

Atlantic Area Marine Leisure 1st European Conference Innovation in the Atlantic marine-leisure sector



3 questions for Anne-Laure Engelhard Associate Director of the Cristal strategic audit consultancy

You have carried out a prospective study on the possible widening of the clientele enjoying marine-leisure activities. What is the current situation?

We've taken a fresh look at what innovation is. We realised that so-called new products were in fact new uses applied to old products. On the other hand, we have passed from an age where we had the maximum of people on the minimum of sites to a situation with the minimum of people on the maximum of sites. Which has to be managed differently. How can one be present on the growing number of different spots? To this proliferation of sites, the response must be a scaling-up of facilities.

How can one communicate in a world where it's hard to identify the participants, to pinpoint their geographical location? Social networks can enable us to "geolocate" participants and guide them in their new activities depending on where they are and on the tide timetable. .

How do you explain the remarkable success of aquatic walking?

We've all seen it: you swim less and less, but walk more and more. In fact, aquatic walking has really taken off this year. There's nothing new about walking in water. The virtues of this activity are well known. But until now it was a somewhat shameful activity, often linked with being unable to swim. Nowadays, people have no hang-ups about walking in the water, either in organised groups or independently. It's very interesting. You realise that innovation is based on a reversal. What was seen as an underrated activity has become a worthwhile pursuit..

Wouldn't the accessibility of these new activities boost their attractiveness?

The question of accessibility is in fact crucial. We also see it in stand-up paddle surfing, an old product brought up to date. The stand-up paddle board makes me think of the bicycle, which has made a comeback in cities after being renamed the vélib – or self-service bike. The stand-up paddle board is a bit like the bike of the water. It provides another connection with the landscape, another connection with the water. It's very gentle. It's accessible to all. In contrast to any activity that demands a great deal of logistics and technique. The means then becomes a pretext. It's no longer an end in itself. Maybe this is what we should be considering today if we wish to open up marine-leisure activities to a wider audience.

Technological innovation

The competitors have become important customers. No sponsors, no races and, consequently, no competitors and no finance", points out Yann Dollo, Director of Lorient Technopôle Innovations-Eurolarge Innovations. This cluster was launched five years ago in Lorient. Based on the principle that Brittany produces 90% of what is best in the field of offshore racing. A new boat requires a massive research and development project. Once acquired, these technologies can then be used for fishing, defence, and in the emergent field of renewable marine energy. "Our role", explains Yann Dollo "is to give these highly specialised companies, in a niche market that remains fragile, visibility on other markets within their scope." The coming years will be marked by the development of onboard electronics, and new ways with digital tablets in particular.



Atlantic Area Marine Leisure 1st European Conference

Watersports and health



2 questions for William Bird (UK) Consultant in health strategy, Natural England

You are a doctor in England. Does it seem to you that marine leisure can guarantee better health, greater wellbeing? Do you advocate a return to nature, to the coast, for all?

I work with the Ministry of Health in the United Kingdom. My mission is to demonstrate the link between the environment and health. Europe is facing great challenges in public health. One of our main causes for concern is stress. Anxious people eat badly, become obese, and develop diabetes. Furthermore, 130,000 people in the United Kingdom are affected by mental health problems. To treat stress, people must be allowed to return to nature, to walk in the water, along the beach. The Atlantic network and our environment are a source of health. I think this is the way we can sell the Atlantic Arc, as a health solution. In studies carried out in Cornwall, we have proved that the marine environment is a very good means of lowering stress levels. We need to recreate this relationship with the coast.

Do you envisage a medical prescription for “health products” that could be organised along our coasts?

Absolutely. That’s what we do in the UK. They do things similarly in Canada. Thousands of health walks are organised each year. The coast is an exceptional environment. The more this connection is made and doctors understand that they can’t treat everything, the sooner they’ll realise that this is the right way forward. It’s a revolution. We know that medicine can’t cure everything. What we have to ensure is accessibility for all. I think that the Atlantic is an absolutely unique terrain, whether in Brittany, Scotland, Devon, Ireland, Spain or Portugal.

The achievements of the NEA2 Project presented to the Conference

Francisco Quiroga, President of the Atlantic Games International Committee and Jean Kerhoas, Vice-President and coordinator of the first Games in 1995, showcased the Atlantic Games and their new concept, focussing on the young watersports hopefuls.

For Cornwall Council, Alex Lake put into perspective the actions under the “Economy” heading, alongside Solène Morvan (Nautisme en Bretagne) who presented the “Balades Nautiques Atlantiques” initiative. The Coordinator of the “Environment” topic, Joao Zamith (Interceltica) submitted an initial review of NEA2 activities linked to promoting the maritime and aquatic environment, whilst Jacqui Piper, of Coast, provided concrete examples of the work related to this issue carried out in Cornwall. Vincent Mazure (Nautisme En Finistère) has developed “Marine leisure and social cohesion” initiatives whilst Paul Wickes, of the Cornwall marine Network, described the rich experience of the Cornwall Marine Academy, which aims to introduce young people experiencing difficulties in finding work to marine leisure and jobs linked to the sea. For his part, – on the basis of the outcomes of the “Action Observatoire” – Technical Coordinator François Arbellot presented the financial and social impact of the Atlantic marine-leisure industry and the challenges it faces regarding its structuring and representation. A brochure entitled “Réalisations et perspectives” (Achievements and prospects) outlining the Project’s principal initiatives was distributed to the attendees. This can be downloaded from the www.nea2.eu website.



Atlantic Maritime Strategy Conference in Lisbon



Attended by 1,400 participants, the Atlantic Maritime Strategy Conference was held in Lisbon on 28 and 29 November 2011. This strategic event met its objective.

The public authorities and stakeholders of the five countries demonstrated their determination in Lisbon to implement a wide-ranging strategic project aimed at strengthening the maritime consolidation of the Atlantic Area and establishing it as a major international player in the sphere of maritime activities.

José Manuel Barroso, President of the Commission, Maria Damanaki, EU Commissioner for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, Aníbal Cavaco Silva, President of the Republic of Portugal, and Prime Minister Pedro Passos Coelho presented this strategy as a great opportunity for the European Atlantic basin. It will combine economic development and protection of the environment and resources with boosting cohesion, and will attract significant funding from 2014 onwards.

These four leading figures quoted marine leisure as one of the sectors impacting on the future of the Atlantic Area. Maria Damanaki notably mentioned the 8m marine-leisure participants in the Atlantic Area and the need to meet the growing demand.

The year 2012 will be devoted to drawing up a Strategic action plan within the framework of an Atlantic Forum. As Alain Cadec, MEP, Maria Teresa Mourao, representing the CPMR (Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions), Alain Tourret, representing the presidency of the Atlantic Arc, and Luis Pariza, representing the economic and social Committees all pointed out, this needs to accord a large place to the Regions, Cities, civil society, stakeholders and businesses.

Gerry Finn, Director of Border Midland Western – the Irish region presiding over the Interreg IVB programme – stressed the need to be able to rely on the current partners, forms of cooperation and clusters to create this plan of action.

Atlantic marine leisure was presented in a series of sessions focussing on various aspects of the Atlantic maritime economy: energy, the sea bed, transport, fishing, aquaculture, marine research. Based on the outcomes of the Atlantic Area Marine Leisure Conference on 26 and 27 October, François Arbellot, the NEA2 project's Technical Coordinator, set out the realities, challenges and opportunities for developing marine-leisure activities and the sector as a whole, and the strong potential linked to demand within the Atlantic Area as well as in emerging countries, along with several productive ideas capable of sustaining the creation of a marine-leisure action plan within the framework of the Strategy.

During the session devoted to maritime Clusters, led by Miguel Marques from PricewaterhouseCoopers, the President of the Portuguese maritime business Forum, Bruno Bobone, stressed the need to develop marine leisure, an “expanding and profitable” sector of the economy.

The public institutions and stakeholders in the marine-leisure industry who met in Brest on 26 and 27 October had firmly expressed their determination that marine leisure should be included in the Atlantic Maritime Strategy's action plan. In order to fulfil this resolve, it will be necessary from now on to take an active part in the Atlantic Forum.

Focus on the 2012 Atlantic Games

"Marine leisure is a force for economic development. It's a force for vast numbers of people to learn about the sea. It's a force for exchange and cooperation between Europeans. It's a force for the maritime identity of Europe. The Atlantic Games are a very good concrete example of this."
Yves Auffret (EU) .

Overview of the 2011 Atlantic Games

The 2011 Atlantic Games were organised in North Devon by the NEA2 Partner and public development agency North Devon Plus, and local clubs and British sporting federations, with backing from the Atlantic Games International Committee, the NEA2 Project and the CPMR's Atlantic Arc Commission. These Games were a great success: perfect organisation, warm welcome and high standard of hospitality, numerous high-level teams, strong involvement of local associations, effective promotion of this beautiful region of North Devon, affirmation of the concept of the Games becoming an event aimed at the young hopefuls of Atlantic marine leisure, and the successful introduction of two new sports – surf lifesaving and kite surfing. The organiser of the event, Isabelle Bromham, should be delighted with the outcome.



Focus on 2012 – Quiberon (Bretagne)



An iconic initiative of the NEA2 Project, the next Atlantic Games will be organised by the Ecole Nationale de Voile et des Sports Nautiques on Brittany's Quiberon peninsula, from 16 to 20 July 2012. Sports on the programme include: sailing, surfing, Olympic and sea rowing, Ocean kayak racing, and new sports such as kite surfing, surf lifesaving, sand yachting and stand-up paddle. The 2013 Games will be held in Viana do Castelo in Norte Portugal. The International Atlantic Games Committee will present the concept of the new Games and the 2012 and 1013 editions at 5pm on 6 December on the Brittany stand at the Paris Boat Show.

Contacts

Lead Partner : Conseil Régional de Bretagne

Anne-Marie Hodemon :
anne-marie.hodemon@region-bretagne.fr
Céline Duhamel :
celine.duhamel@region-bretagne.fr
www.region-bretagne.fr

Technical Coordination : Nautisme en Bretagne

François Arbellot : francois.arbellot@nea2.eu
www.nea2.eu

Environment Coordination: Interceltica

João Zamith : joao.zamith@interceltica.org
Rui Dias : rui.dias@interceltica.org
www.interceltica.org

Social Coordination : Conseil général du Finistère et Nautisme en Finistère

Delphine Glais : delphine.glais@cg29.fr
Vincent Mazure : vincent@voile-bretagne.com
www.cg29.fr ; www.nautisme-finistere.com

Economic Coordination : Cornwall Council

Alex Lake : www.cornwall.gov.uk
alex.lake@cornwalldevelopmentcompany.co.uk

Project NEA2 : www.nea2.eu

Programme Interreg Espace Atlantique

Redaction Committee of the Newsletter

Chloé Batissou, François Arbellot

Layout

Johanna Rialet, Deborah Correia