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A scenic photograph of a coastal area at sunset or sunrise. The foreground shows a sandy beach with some rocks and shadows. The middle ground features a calm sea with several small boats and buoys. In the background, a large, rounded mountain rises against a clear sky. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and scenic.

**PROMOTING SMART,
SUSTAINABLE
AND INCLUSIVE
GROWTH FOR THE
ATLANTIC AREA**

*Support Team for the
ATLANTIC ACTION PLAN*



WHAT IS THE ATLANTIC ACTION PLAN?

The Atlantic Action Plan aims to revitalise the marine and maritime economy in the Atlantic area.

It demonstrates how the EU's Atlantic Member States and their coastal regions can help create sustainable growth in coastal regions and drive forward the "blue economy" while preserving the environmental and ecological stability of the Atlantic Ocean.

The Action Plan encourages the five Atlantic EU Member States, France, Portugal, Spain, the United Kingdom and Ireland, to work together in areas where they were previously working individually towards sustainable and inclusive growth in their coastal areas.



The 'blue' economy represents roughly 5.4 million jobs and generates a gross added value of almost 500 billion a year.

The Atlantic Action Plan highlights the benefits of sharing information, costs, results and best practices as well as, promoting the generation of ideas for further areas of cooperation of maritime activity. This includes both traditional activities, such as fisheries, aquaculture, tourism and shipping, as well as emerging ones such as offshore renewables and marine biotech.

The Action Plan considers responses to the challenges of delivering growth, reducing the carbon footprint, using the sea's natural resources sustainably, responding effectively to threats and emergencies and implementing an "ecosystem" management approach in Atlantic waters.

It sets out priorities for research and investment to drive the 'blue economy' forward in the Atlantic area. The Action Plan has four priorities:

- **To promote entrepreneurship and innovation;**
- **To protect, secure and enhance the marine and coastal environment;**
- **To improve accessibility and connectivity;**
- **To create a socially inclusive and sustainable model of regional development.**

The Action Plan is an invitation to the private sector, the research community, regional and national public bodies and other actors to design and implement projects reflecting the four priority areas.

The economic value of the Atlantic Ocean is enormous for the countries located on its shores. Over time, the Action Plan could create a solid foundation for cooperation with other Atlantic nations. Building on the Atlantic Action Plan on 24 May 2013 at the Irish Marine Institute in Galway, the European Union, the United States and Canada signed, the 'Galway Statement on Atlantic Ocean Cooperation' thus agreeing to join forces on Atlantic Ocean research to ensure it remains healthy, sustainable and productive.



WHAT IS THE SUPPORT TEAM FOR THE ATLANTIC ACTION PLAN?

The European Commission set up the Support Team for the Atlantic Action Plan, in August 2014, to provide guidance and proactive support for public and private organisations, research institutions and investors, to find funding sources and project partners across the Atlantic to implement the Action Plan.

The Support Team through five “Focal Points” based in the EU Atlantic Member States, assists interested stakeholders in finding funding opportunities and suitable partners for developing projects, provides information on current topics in the maritime and fisheries sectors and participates in and organises key events. The “focal points” are coordinated by a Brussels-based central management team, which also runs a dynamic and interactive website for stakeholders to facilitate knowledge sharing, dialogue and cooperation ([www. atlanticstrategy.eu](http://www.atlanticstrategy.eu)).

The “focal points” can be reached at the following address:
<http://www.atlanticstrategy.eu/en/contact/the-support-team>



SERVICES PROVIDED

The Support Team for the Atlantic Action Plan focuses their work in three key areas:

Guidance:

To disseminate information on the Atlantic Strategy, its research and investment priorities and possible funding tools through a set of online media and social platforms. The “Focal Point services” provide guidance for public and private organisations and their members, research institutions and universities, institutional and private investors, and promoters wishing to put forward and/or develop projects to implement the Action Plan.

Pro-active project development:

The support Team brings potential project partners together through matchmaking activities undertaken by the focal point service and also through the specific service on its web site. Support is also given by providing advice on the use of EU financial instruments for projects implementing the Action Plan, including European Investment Bank financial assistance, Horizon 2020, as well as any other relevant public or private funding. Relevant calls for proposals and calls for tenders are publicised through the established online presence or more focused advice can be received from the focal point service.

Outreach:

The Support Team is continuously identifying new stakeholders and growing an existing network of contacts from the private sector, regional authorities, clusters and Member State organisations. These contacts are collected and properly disseminated through a dedicated online partners’ database which is open to all stakeholders. Based on these contacts the Support Team disseminates updated information and invites stakeholders to an annually organised Atlantic Stakeholder Conference, bringing together all interested actors and facilitating networking and matchmaking activities.

PROJECT ENVIRONMENT OF SUPPORT TEAM FOR THE ATLANTIC ACTION PLAN

- Helpdesk
- Networking Platform
- Information on Policy Development
- interactive website & Social Media Tools
- Information on Events and Cooperation Opportunities
- Participation in Local Events for Investment in the Maritime Economy
- Information on Regional, National and European Financing Programmes
- Organisation of Local Events to raise Awareness & Find Partners
- Informations on Maritime Strategies Relevant for the Atlantic
- Country Experts Providing Face-To-Face Supports



SUPPORT TEAM



STAKEHOLDERS

- Universities
- Research Centres
- European Networks
- Local Authorities
- Regional Authorities
- National Authorities
- NGO
- Business




**Project
PROMOTER**



**Project
IDEA**



WHAT CAN WE DO FOR YOU?

- 1,872**  Stakeholders contacted
- 739**  Stakeholders participated in project events
- 124**  Stakeholder queries registered so far
- 1000**  Monthly average website visitors (58% from Project Area)
- 4,543**  Tweets (1,112 followers)
- 166**  Posts (167 members)

We are here to help you identify project partners and develop projects that can help to implement the Atlantic Action Plan. Whatever it is, our website has it covered: highlights on latest policy developments, detailed country factsheets, hints on networking opportunities, access to project ideas and potential project partners, news on hot events, a helpdesk infoline and much more!

The website - www.atlanticstrategy.eu - is already up and running and with the help of the Focal Points in the respective Member States is already assisting hundreds of stakeholders to achieve their goals.

TESTIMONIALS ON PROVIDED SUPPORT



To make your life easier, on our website we provide you with platforms dedicated to project or investment ideas you plan to promote:

(<http://www.atlanticstrategy.eu/en/funding/post-your-project-investment-ideas>)

"We consider it of utmost importance to find synergies with partners in other Atlantic regions for common actions. We really appreciate the role of the Support Team and the personal involvement of the Focal Points to help us identify partners for potential projects on behalf of the Atlantic Action Plan. The Support Team helps us to disseminate and promote our project ideas increasing our chances to find the most suitable partners and transform these ideas into real projects related to new technologies for marine sediment pollution in sea water."

M. Brahi Benaissa, Scientific and Technical Advisor, Geocorail SAS

And we also provide you with free access to up-to-date information about funding:

(<http://www.atlanticstrategy.eu/en/funding/find-funding-opportunities>)

"As National Coordinator for the Advanced Marine Technology Programme

the website is useful in my role of identifying and brokering opportunities for Irish researchers and companies in the SmartOcean Cluster"

Dr. Edel O'Connor, National Coordinator of the Advanced Marine Technology Programme, Marine Institute

Cooperation is often essential to design a good project, but finding the right partner is not always an easy task. On our website you can find people that already have experience in your business area to exchange ideas and develop projects together. Now you have the chance to become a member of this Atlantic Network:

(<http://www.atlanticstrategy.eu/en/content/become-partner>)

"As a County Councillor with an interest in coastal regeneration, I believe the EU Atlantic Action Plan network opens up opportunities otherwise often bafflingly closed. Over the past seven years I've had the benefit of being the regional lead for two INTERREG projects, led by Cardiff University and involving academic units from Ireland, Brittany, Portugal and Spain. But now these projects are over, the Action Plan network signposts the new journey coastal regions must share to bring in



investment based on renewables, holistic coastal adaptation, and a new range of activity and heritage based tourism. The network has great value in matching up regions that share common interests, and the commitment of the five 'focal points' to this goal is exemplary."

Stuart Anderson, Councillor, Conwy County Council

Plenty of information about news, projects and the policy framework will be available on the website. In case we forget to cover topics you are interested in, please contact the focal point in your country (see previous information) or our helpdesk at helpdesk@atlanticstrategy.eu. All relevant questions will enhance the section dedicated to "Frequently Asked Questions" on the website: (<http://www.atlanticstrategy.eu/en/about/faq>).

"The Algarve Centre for Marine Sciences is a hub of science, innovation and training for the blue economy. Our presence in the stakeholder database of the Atlantic Action Plan allows us to extend our network of potential partners and collaborations across the Atlantic, which is crucial for our activities. The stakeholder database is a

useful resource to bring the Atlantic actors closer together and establish long-lasting links."

Tiago Magalhães, Executive Director of the Algarve Centre for Marine Sciences

The Support Team will be present at local and national events to inform various audiences about the Atlantic Strategy and funding opportunities. Key documentation, presentations, and other audio-visual material produced for or collected during events will be made available online:

(<http://www.atlanticstrategy.eu/en/library>).

"The peripheral issue we are facing in the Canary Islands makes it difficult to access stakeholders located in the different continental Atlantic regions. The role the Support team is playing in organising events at national and EU level in which all the marine and maritime stakeholders are represented, but also the efficiency and personal predisposition of the Focal Points helps to make us more visible in the European scene and meet potential partners aiming to collaborate with us."

Jose Luis Guersi Sauret, President of Technology Centre of Marine Science CETECIMA



OUR FOCAL POINT MEMBERS: “ON THE GROUND EXPERIENCE”



GILDAS BOREL
France Focal Point

FP France: Stakeholder database

The stakeholder database is a very useful tool to help stakeholders find partners for project ideas. The database's architecture facilitates research of potential partners, favours exchanges, meetings, and assists in the identification of common projects ideas. In addition, it helps public authorities (national, regional, local) to identify actors emerging from maritime sectors and relevant funding sources.

Email: focalpointfrance@atlanticstrategy.eu

Twitter: [@EUAtlantic](https://twitter.com/EUAtlantic)



ELIZABETH O'REILLY
Ireland Focal Point

FP Ireland: Guidance services

One of the most rewarding aspects of my role as Focal Point Ireland is being able to provide guidance on funding opportunities. Due to the nature of the marine sector and the fact that it has relevance across multiple sectors, it can be hard to identify funding that meets a project's specific requirement. My aim has been, to not only provide stakeholders of the Atlantic Area with the tools and knowledge to apply for funding, but also facilitate these stakeholders in being creative and see the potential of the funding that is available.

Email: focalpointireland@atlanticstrategy.eu

Twitter: [@EUAtlantic](https://twitter.com/EUAtlantic)



BEN DRAKEFORD
UK Focal Point

FP UK: Project Ideas development

It is clear that there are many stakeholders with interesting and viable project ideas concerning blue growth in the Atlantic Area. The project ideas section of the website is a particularly useful tool for stakeholders to share and develop their ideas. In particular, they can identify other registered stakeholders that would be suitable partners in sharing/developing their project ideas for various funding opportunities.

Email: focalpointuk@atlanticstrategy.eu
Twitter: @EUAtlantic



JORGE GRAÇA
Portugal Focal Point

FP PT: Match-making services

Our role as Focal Points is to build bridges across the countries of the Atlantic area, and to establish common working grounds between stakeholders willing to implement projects that contribute to the growth of the Blue Economy. We will be glad to put our resources and network of contacts into action to assist you in navigating the diversity and richness of the Atlantic to finding the suitable partner for your project.

Email: focalpointportugal@atlanticstrategy.eu
Twitter: @EUAtlantic



FEDERICO CARDONA-PONS
Spain Focal Point

FP ES: Project Ideas development

The Support Team main objective is to facilitate and promote project ideas in line with the priorities of the Atlantic Action Plan. We welcome project ideas at any stage of development, from vague project ideas to those ready to be submitted to different funding instruments, and implement a tailored approach depending on the maturity of the project idea. Our work aims to upgrade project ideas from mere concepts to successfully funded projects.

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