



Marine leisure and Maritime Atlantic Project Contribution of the NEA2 network (Plenary meeting of Falmouth on October, 14th and 15th 2010)

At the request of the European Council, the European Commission must produce by June 2011 a « communication » on the « Integrated Maritime Policy for the Atlantic Ocean sea basin ».

Within this framework, a public consultation was launched on this topic.

A questionnaire, targeting structures and individuals, is online until October 15th:
http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/partners/consultations/atlantic_ocean/index_en.htm.

The Technical Secretary of the Interreg IVB Program has encouraged Project Leaders within the programme to take part in this consultation.

Concerned that the Atlantic Region's point of view should have an influence on this reflection, the Atlantic Arc Commission of the C.R.P.M. developed « guideline proposals for an integrated strategy for the Atlantic Arc ». The A.A.C. wants to highlight the need to develop a real macro-regional strategy anchored on maritime questions (environment, transports, fishing, marine energies, research, marine leisure...) and this is directly linked to the development of a strong connection with the development of future European policies.

The Nautisme Espace Atlantique 2 (NEA 2 – www.nea2.eu) network decided to take part in this consultation, in particular to plead for a real awareness of marine leisure in a future strategic Atlantic project.

Through the Interreg NEA 2 project, 23 partners, from 2009 to 2011, have implemented 22 common actions with the objective of the sustainable development of the marine leisure sector in the Atlantic Area.

In addition to the 20 actions linked to the « economic », « environmental », and « social » themes, the Project develops two major transversal actions:

- The Atlantic Watersports Games: A great annual sports meeting of the Atlantic Regions, aimed at young athletes in sailing, surfing, rowing, canoeing and diving. The third edition, organised by the Regional Government of Cantabria in August 2010, was a great success. The 2011 Games will be organised in Cardiff (Wales)
- The Conference « Nautisme Atlantique Durable » that will be organised by the Conseil Régional de Bretagne (Lead Partner), the Conseil général du Finistère and the partners of the Project in Brest on October 26th and 27th 2011. This great European Conference will gather representatives of the local authorities, institutions and businesses from all the Regions of the Atlantic Arc on the theme of a common strategic project for the sustainable development of the marine leisure sector in our regions.

The partners of the NEA 2 Project consider that the marine leisure sector has a rightful place in the future Atlantic Strategic Project, as this integration will favour a major development of the sector and also contribute to the enrichment of the common project.

- **What will integration in this strategic Atlantic maritime project bring to marine leisure?**

- This integration will elaborate and create a long term structure for an Atlantic nautical project that will contribute to economic development, job creation, environmental protection and social cohesion in our European area.
- The experiences that have been achieved within the Interreg Projects NEA and NEA2, with the aim of sustainably developing the regional and transnational structurings, nautical cooperation on all levels, the great event, could be followed up.
- It will permit the Atlantic marine leisure to adopt transnational, efficient and perennial tools to favour the research, international development, training, promotion and evaluation.
- It will permit us to develop the links and collaborations between the marine leisure sector and other marine activity sector.

- **What can marine leisure bring to the strategic Atlantic maritime project?**

- The marine leisure sector has an important economic weight. The sport, educational and leisure activities linked to the environment keep attracting the public.
 - o Resident populations who regularly practise nautical activities and a decisive support to the touristic economy (close to 100 million tourists).
 - o Close to 4 million practice an activity in the 3 800 marine leisure activity structures plus the 3 million people practising independently.
 - o In the order of 8 500 businesses in the industry, commerce, services
 - o In the order of 200 000 berths in the marinas
 - o Close to 100 000 equivalent full time posts across the 3 sectors
 - o A sector turned to innovation (practise devices, products, management,...)
- The contribution to the tourist development. The marine leisure sector contributes to the development of the space of tourist maritime and coastal circulation (" The Ocean unites us"), with the reinforcement of the competitiveness of the Atlantic Area as multinational tourist destination and with a rebalancing of the European tourist space.
- Marine leisure can contribute to the development and the transformation (when necessary) of other maritime sectors, such as fishing, port development (diversity fishing marinas), shipbuilding (shipyards turned toward fishing), promotion of the sea works and the complementarities of jobs (seasonal work...) as for innovation.
- The environmental action. The Marine leisure sector contributes to the environmental education of young people, through numerous activities in training, sport and leisure, turned to the discovery of the maritime and aquatic environments. Furthermore, it contributes to the watch of our coasts. It is the initiative of numerous actions of awareness rising in the field of marine environment protection (beach cleaning...).
- The contribution to safety. The Marine leisure sector contributes to the safety of the persons and the activities on the coast, by the presence of competent instructors on a great part of the coast all year long, or by the development of the clubs which activities are essentially dedicated to rescue. By training the future adepts and consumers to technique and safety, the service providers largely contribute to the reduction of accidents.

- The contribution to local development, to social inclusion and to the well being of inhabitants
 The marine leisure sector contributes to local coastal and inland water developments because it generates employment and activities for inhabitants. As highlighted by the development of marine leisure activities aimed at disadvantaged public, both on a social, physical abilities and health levels, the marine leisure sector, because it links the sea with disadvantaged audiences, contributes to social inclusion.
 Marine leisure activities carry in themselves values of solidarity and care for others. Finally, marine leisure strongly contributes to public health policies through the promotion of outdoors activities which are conducive to good health, and strongly rooted in regions.

- A major link between the Ocean and its populations. The marine leisure, by the large public it touches all year long constitutes a major link between the Ocean and the populations, whether they are resident or touristic. The marine leisure activities have indeed strongly turned towards discovery, protection and promotion of the heritages and landscapes, costal or aquatic, as well as the discovery and promotion of traditional or future marine leisure activities, and marine professions. The marine leisure centres and marinas present a strong potential to become a showcase on the ocean, open to all, that, through educational, sports, leisure activities, great events, promotion of exemplary products... increases the awareness and mobilize the general public around marine stakes problematic. The marine leisure sector and its actors will be an efficient in the mobilisation of the populations around a great strategic project linked to the sea. .

- Marine leisure contributes to the construction of a strong Atlantic identity within its population, founded on the development of a maritime common culture, linked to the maritime and aquatic environments.

- The marine leisure sector is bearer of a strong exterior image for the Atlantic Arc and its maritime Project :
 - o Through its sport and adventure dimension (pool of champions and location of great events in offshore racing, transoceanic records, fun board, Olympic.....),
 - o Because these activities can be practiced by multiple publics, whatever the age, the gender, the social or physical conditions are, associating link with natural environment, pleasure and conviviality.
 - o Because of the exceptional link that has developed between the publics, on the one hand, the environment, the heritage, modern technologies, on the other hand.

- The Atlantic marine leisure sector has itself strong ambitions for our regions. As shows the commitment of numerous key players and partners of the sector... in transnational project such as NEA 2, this sector is capable of generating and developing an ambitious development project, original on an international scale, bearer of a real surplus value for the Atlantic Arc, giving predominant place to:
 - o innovation and economic performance,
 - o protection and highlighting of the environment,
 - o contribution to social and territorial cohesion
 - o quality of the governance on all level
 - o Integrated Coastal Zone Management.