

# **Maritime Safety and Risks Prevention in the European Atlantic Coast: Challenges for a Transnational Cooperation Framework**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The Atlantic Coast is a European Macro-region established to increase cooperation across Member-states on matters of strategic importance. Exception to Azores, Madeira and Canary Islands, this territory bring together the Atlantic Regions of Spain, France, Ireland, Portugal and United-Kingdom in a Transnational Cooperation Programme seeking to improve economic and social integration and cohesion. With its 58 millions inhabitants and in 594 Km<sup>2</sup> surface, the Atlantic Area seems less saturated than other coastlines, like the Mediterranean coast. Effectively, in the mostly natural zones of the EU Atlantic coastline, the urban pressure remains relatively moderate. However, many other regions are largely increasing the urban and human activities occupation on the seashore.

The Atlantic Area is at the heart of the major intercontinental shipping routes. Fishing, a main element of the Atlantic culture, nevertheless being falling down, stills a crucial activity in entire communities, especially in the less privileged regions. Quite the opposite, the importance of the Tourism in the economy is growing up everywhere. The intensity of demand of seaside leisure activities generates a remarkable economic growth of this sector, including the development of new recreational products. The Atlantic coastline, being a territory increasingly attracted by people and activities, is inevitably confronted with major concerns like the management of risks on its maritime environment and the prevention of drowning, near-drowning and related injuries.

The prime goal of the Atlantic Area Programme is a more ambitious and stronger transnational cooperation, opening networks to perpetuation and privileging tangible results. Transnational cooperation could be categorised in a four-step scale, following an ascending order of cooperation intensity, from exchange of experience and transfer of know-how to pooling of a critical mass of means and tackling transnational issues. A total amount of 58 millions euros are allocated to 2007-2013 cooperation issues on the priority of “protect, secure and enhance the marine and coastal environment sustainably”, which includes the objective of improving maritime safety.

A transnational cooperation framework in the field of maritime safety and drowning prevention is feasible and desirable. The promotion of a common vision and strategy and the achievement of coordination and collaboration among territories and stakeholders are significant means of cooperation to improve management capacity on maritime safety. The development of water safety education and awareness, the development of policies, legislation, standards and tools for common use in prevention, surveillance and rescue, the promotion of a common programme of research in water safety and the promotion of networks and integrated systems of risks management are examples of challenges for cooperation in the Atlantic Area framework.

## **1. TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION IN THE EU DEVELOPMENT POLICIES**

Pursuing the main goal of strengthening economic and social cohesion of the enlarged European Union (EU) the Community established Structural and Cohesion Funds to finance and support its harmonious, balanced and sustainable development. Structural Funds include both the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF). Actions to be undertaken by such strategic Funds shall incorporate, at national and regional level, the Community's priorities in favour of sustainable development, strengthening dynamics for growth,

for competitiveness, for employment and social inclusion and for the protection and quality improvement of environment.

Endorsed by EC (2006a), Structural and Cohesion Funds shall contribute to redress the main regional Community imbalances, helping to reduce the gap between the levels of development of the various regions and the extent to which the least favoured are lagging behind. To that end, each Fund shall contribute in an appropriate way towards the achievement of:

(a) *Convergence objective* (the priority of the Funds), which aiming to speeding up the convergence of the least-developed Member-states and regions, shall be endorsed by actions strengthening for growth and employment by raising the quality of investment in physical and human capital, developing innovation and the knowledge society, improving the adaptability to economic and social changes, reinforcing the environment protection and increasing the administrative efficiency;

(b) *Regional competitiveness and employment objective*, which, outside the least-developed regions, aims to strengthening regions' competitiveness and attractiveness and employment by actions contributing to increase and improve the quality of investment in human capital, to innovation, to the promotion of the knowledge society, to entrepreneurship, to the protection and improvement of the environment, to the improvement of accessibilities, to the adaptability of workers and businesses, as while as to the development of inclusive job markets;

(c) *European territorial cooperation objective*, which aims to strengthening cross-border cooperation through joint local and regional initiatives, to strengthening transnational cooperation by means of actions conducive to integrated territorial development linked to the Community priorities, and to strengthening interregional cooperation and exchange of experience at the appropriate territorial level.

Under the European territorial cooperation objective, ERDF shall focus its assistance, other than strengthening cross-border and interregional cooperation, on the priority of establishing and developing transnational cooperation. Transnational cooperation, through the financing of networks and of actions conducive to integrated territorial development, shall be concentrated primarily on the following priority areas [EC, 2006b]:

(a) *Innovation*, which includes the creation and development of scientific and technological networks, the enhancement of regional R&TD and the building of innovation capacities.

(b) *Environment*, which concerns to water management, energy efficiency, risk prevention and environmental protection activities.

(c) *Accessibility*, which relates to actions addressed to the improvement of accessibility and the quality of transport and telecommunications services.

(d) *Sustainable urban development*, which refers to actions for strengthening polycentric development at transnational, national and regional level.

Transnational cooperation, involving national, regional and local authorities, aims to promote better integration within the Union through the formation of large groups of European regions. Transnational cooperation programmes follow the recommendations of the European Spatial Development Perspective to encourage a sustainable and balanced development of the European territory. These programmes have, as global aim, the promotion of better integration between the Member-states and candidate countries and other neighbouring countries. [ESDP, 1999]

Transnational areas are macro-regions where there is a need of strengthening economic and social integration and cohesion. Transnational cooperation programmes seek to increase cooperation across Member-states on matters of strategic importance with a clear transnational impact. Such strategic priorities shall be in line with a global vision addressed to the improvement of physical

and intangible interconnections. Table 1 resumes the eligible areas for transnational cooperation in 2007-2013 programming period.

Atlantic Area is a transnational cooperation territory that includes the Atlantic regions of Spain, France, Ireland, Portugal and United Kingdom, except Azores, Madeira and Canary Islands. With 58 million people living in 594 thousand Km<sup>2</sup>, this EU region has an historical tradition on territorial cooperation. Pioneer frameworks on transnational cooperation remount to the European structural funds of the 1989-1993 programming period, with the ATLANTIS pilot project. Within INTERREG II (1994-1999) and INTERREG III (2000-2006) Community Initiative Programmes, EC launched Atlantic Area as a large transnational cooperation area.

In the 2007-2013 programming period, the overall strategy is to achieve significant and tangible progress in transnational cooperation geared towards cohesive, sustainable and balanced territorial development of the Atlantic Area and its maritime heritage. An Operational Programme (OP) named Transnational Cooperation Atlantic Area 2007-2013, was developed and submitted to EC on 16 March 2007.

**Table 1: 2007-2013 Transnational Cooperation Areas**

Alpine Space	Mediterranean
Atlantic Coast	North Sea
Baltic Sea	North West Europe
Caribbean Area	Northern Periphery
East-Central Europe	South East Europe
Indian Ocean Area	South West Europe
Macaronesia	



**Table 2: The Atlantic Area Cooperation Territory**

Country	Regions	Millions inhabitants (2005)	Surface (10 <sup>3</sup> Km <sup>2</sup> )
Spain	Galicia, Asturias, Cantabria, País Vasco, Navarra y provincias de Cádiz, Huelva y Sevilla	10.4	94.7
France	Haute et Basse Normandie, Pays de la Loire, Bretagne, Poitou-Charentes et Aquitaine	14.3	156.3
Ireland	The entire national territory (i.e. Border, Midland, Western, Southern and Eastern)	4.1	69.8
Portugal	The continental part of national territory ( i.e. Norte, Centro, Lisboa, Alentejo e Algarve)	10.0	89.0
UK	North West, South West, Wales, SW Scotland, Highlands and Islands and Northern Ireland	19.0	184.6
Total		57.8	594.4

## 2. THE MARITIME NATURE AND HERITAGE OF ATLANTIC AREA

The Atlantic Area cooperation region has its common identity in the presence of the maritime element, in the diversity and quality of the Atlantic coast environment and in cultural, economic and social heritage induced by a common spirit of opening to the world trough the Atlantic Ocean. The maritime nature of its environment is so more relevant as, as AA (2007) stands upon, the Atlantic Coast have many natural resources seeming less damaged and less saturated than other European coastlines, like the Mediterranean coast, which is interpreted as an opportunity in terms of social and economic development.

The ESPON (2003) report project dedicated to "Territorial Trends of the Management of the Natural Heritage" remarks that the great amplitude of the Atlantic Ocean tides has led to the formation of vast wetlands unique in their ecosystems and exceptional biodiversity. However, the density of protected sites may greatly vary from one member state to another, and seems to be sizeably lower in France, which is explained by historical reasons. AA (2007) places the reinforcement of protection of these natural areas as a major issue of particular relevance for transnational cooperation.

As is pointed by AA (2007), in the areas where natural zones dominate (Scotland, most of the Irish coast, northern England, Wales, Aquitaine and a large part of the Spanish coastline) global urban pressure remains moderate. However, many other regions are submitted to an intense coastal shift of urbanisation and to the construction of large real-estate complexes on the seashore, as Andalusia, South-West England, the southwestern France or the Cantabrian coast.

The ocean and seaports are at the leading edge of the Atlantic Area maritime heritage. If Atlantic Area remains at the heart of intercontinental shipping routes, seaports and shipping lines are not the only features concerned. AA (2007) points out to a whole set of shared activities and centres of interest related to the proximity of the sea, as fishing. Nevertheless, being a decreasing activity, entire communities still depend on fishing. If independent deep-sea fishing sector remains pre-eminent, it's increasing the relative importance of a few industrial centres based on long-range fishing. Fishing is facing down with resources rarefy. EC (2001), in the "Green Paper on the Future of Fishing", emphasised this vulnerability as being the failure of a policy for the sustainable exploitation of marine resources.

Another activity, pointed by AA (2007), as based in maritime heritage, is tourism. Tourism industry is in the opposite trend of fishing, growing spectacularly everywhere. Figures are eloquent: Actually, in Portugal, tourism industries represent 8% of total employment, 5% of GDP and 12 million tourists per year. In Ireland, tourism-related revenue increased by 86% between 1993 and 1999. Everywhere we assist to the exponential growth of holiday homes. Atlantic tourism is essentially family-oriented and it is highly seasonal. In last years we assist to a growing spatial concentration of tourism accommodation capacity and to a polarisation of tourist resorts, particularly in Spain, France and Portugal.

Recreational activities and leisure in seashore became very dynamic and innovative industries. AA (2007) refers to the almost 300 yachting and water sports facilities, to the development of new products like surf, thalassotherapy, balneotherapy and golf, and to the enthusiasm for such cultural highlights as Mont Saint Michel or Santiago de Compostela. Such new recreational and leisure activities contribute to the urban pressure of the Atlantic coastline, a very wide coastline. The Atlantic countries coastlines extend to 44 thousand Km long, which represents 13.4% of the all coastline of European continent (326 thousand Km).

**Table 3: Coastlines length**

Territory	Km
Spain	7268.1
France	7329.8
Ireland	6437.1
Portugal	2830.1
UK	19716.6
Total AA countries	43581.7
Europe	325892.3

Source: WRI - EarthTrends

The Atlantic coastline, being a territory increasingly attracted by people and activities, faces down with major concerns related to the management of risks and safety in its maritime environment. If there is some experience on cooperation concerning shipping accidents and response to pollution injuries, cooperation in the fields of prevention of drowning, near-drowning and related injuries are practically inexistent.

**Table 4: Deaths by accidental drowning**

Country	Year	M	F	Total
Spain	2001	470	105	575

Identically, as related by WHO (2002), there are also a deficit of information on drowning and physical injuries. Information on recreational accidents is not systematically collected in all countries throughout Europe. However, deaths from drowning are available from the WHO mortality database, even if accidents related to bathing water are not separately recorded in most cases.

France	2000	792	333	1125
Ireland	2001	55	8	63
Portugal	2002	125	47	172
UK	2002	157	67	224

Source: World Health Organization

According to WHO, each year, more than 400 thousand people die from drowning. Such figure makes drowning the second leading cause of unintentional injury death globally after road traffic injuries. In the European continent, annual deaths from drowning near to 40 thousand people. In the Atlantic Area countries, deaths from drowning still remain dramatically high. Over than 2 thousand people living in the Atlantic countries die from drowning. Overall Atlantic countries, drowning deaths of males represent almost three time those of females. This rate is particularly high in Ireland (6.9 males to 1 female) and Spain (4.5 males to 1 female).

The use of water for recreation and leisure is an important issue. As WHO points: “Water has been used for positive health for millennia, and recreational use is not just a luxury. It provides opportunities for physical exercise, rest and pleasure, all fundamental components of the well being essential to health. Health aspects of the recreational use of the water environment have attracted increasing attention by members of the public, concerned professionals and regulatory agencies”. Special attention shall be devoted to hazards of recreational water use, which WHO groups in four types of categories: physical hazards (causing drowning or accidents such as spinal injury); microbial hazards; exposure to chemicals; excessive exposure to the sun (leading to sunburn and sun stroke) and to ultraviolet radiation (leading to skin cancers) in outdoor facilities or natural sources.

### 3. A COOPERATION STRATEGY FOR THE ATLANTIC AREA

Cooperation in Atlantic Area has a long tradition. A tradition that remounts to the ATLANTIS project, a tradition that has been continuously reinforced by INTERREG IIC and INTERREG IIIB programmes, which is confirmed by the evidence of positive evolution registered on transnational cooperation. CRPM (2005) remarks the dynamic and diversified cooperation themes and its long term effects, the large-scale mobilisation of economic and political players on maritime issues, the growing credibility of cooperation partners and the European ambition puts on most of cooperation projects as positive acquisitions of cooperation in the Atlantic Area.

Within the emergency of “European territorial cooperation”, endorsed by EC (2006b) as a new EU objective, a new level of exigencies and progress is expected for cooperation in Atlantic Area. AA (2007) adopts, as challenges for more ambitious cooperation intensity, the perpetuation of cooperation networks and structures, the enlargement of cooperation partnerships, the diversification of cooperation scopes, the prioritisation of projects led by tangibles results and improvement of coordination with other EU Programmes and amongst projects. To strengthen cooperation effectiveness is needed a consistent and long-term monitoring system ensuring of evaluation and legibility of the progress achieved.

AA (2007) highlight for the importance of territorial cooperation attending that globalisation and European integration are making the regions, even those that are not neighbours, increasingly interdependent. Furthermore, AA (2007) refers that regions are not on an equal footing when it comes to globalisation of the economy and to the opening up of European markets. The competitive advantages to attract investors are not the same. Transnational cooperation can contribute to improve competitiveness in a context of advantages differentiation. Measures to strengthen cooperation have been identified as main priorities in the 2007-2013 Operational

Programme (OP). The global aim is *to achieve significant and tangible progress in transnational cooperation geared towards cohesive, sustainable and balanced territorial development of the Atlantic Area and its maritime heritage.*

Territorial cooperation will be achieved by project partnerships frameworks. AA (2007) defines a four-step scale categorisation of project achievements following an ascending order of cooperation intensity:

*1° Exchange of experiences:* Concerns projects involving sharing data, information and good practices, promoting mutual understanding between partners and raising awareness among them and of the diversity of their approaches and cultures. Actions are not supposed to alter the state of things, at least, during the project lifespan.

*2° Transfer of know-how:* Refers to projects where partners take concrete steps to reform their respective practices by sharing and importing knowledge. Specific actions shall be explicitly included in the project action plan to secure a tangible transfer of know-how between partners, being results supposed to produce changes in each sphere of life.

*3° Pooling of a critical mass of means:* Relates to projects partnerships that put human, technical, financial and other resources in common to increase their efficiency and to achieve joint tangible results that would have remained out of reach on an individual basis. Actions shall result on benefit for all partners and exceed what it will be expectable if partners worked in isolation.

*4° Tackling transnational issues:* Involves projects where partners cooperate to identify and implement joint responses to transnational issues. Actions, which are supposed to be, by their very nature, transnational, cannot be addressed correctly without transnational cooperation, and results are expected to overlap a transnational territory.

The content of the OP results from a broad dialogue and intense consultations involving national, regional and local authorities, as well as non-governmental bodies. Starting by a strategic diagnostic of the current situation and predicted trends on the Atlantic Area and an analysis of transnational cooperation issues, the OP systematise the major challenges and identify a strategy for cooperation priorities. Based on those priorities, the OP defines the programme objectives and results, as well as the financing means and the implementation and management principles. The strategic priorities of the OP are:

*1. To promote transnational entrepreneurial and innovation networks,* aiming to develop knowledge transfers between companies and research centres, to enhance competitiveness and innovation capacities in maritime economy niches of excellence and to stimulate economic conversion and diversification by promoting regional endogenous potentials.

*2. To protect, secure and enhance the marine and coastal environment sustainability,* aiming to improve maritime safety, the sustainable management and protection of the resources of marine spaces, to exploit the renewable energy potential of the marine and coastal environment and to protect and promote natural spaces, water resources and coastal zones.

*3. To improve accessibility and internal links,* aiming to promote interoperability and continuity of existing transport networks, and sea/road/rail/air intermodality and to promote short sea shipping and cooperation between ports.

*4. To promote transnational synergies in sustainable urban and regional development,* aiming to pool resources and skills in the field of sustainable urban and rural development, to make cities and regions more influential and attractive through networking and to conserve and promote Atlantic cultural heritage of transnational interest.

**Table 5: Allocation of Funds by Priority**

Priority theme	M€
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With 150.5 million euros of global funding, the Atlantic Area Programme attaches 58 million euros to cooperation partnerships in the field of marine and coastal management environment.

1	Entrepreneurial and innovation networks	42.1
2	Marine and coastal environment	58.0
3	Accessibility and internal links	28.4
4	Sustainable urban and regional development	22.0

Many issues, which are transnational by nature, like maritime safety or protection of the ocean floor, can be addressed under this priority. However, certain aspects of the marine and coastal environment, even when they concern transnational areas such as seashores, can be tackled through local action. Projects endorsed for this specific priority shall be in line with, at least, one of the following four operational objectives:

2.1 *Improve maritime safety;*

2.2 *Sustainable management and protection of the resources of marine spaces;*

2.3 *Exploit the renewable energy potential of the marine and coastal environment;*

2.4: *Protect and promote natural spaces, water resources and coastal zones.*

The improvement of maritime safety has become an issue of highest public relevance. As noted by AA (2007) the considerable public reaction triggered by the Erika and Prestige catastrophes contributed to raising awareness of the need for, and great legitimacy of, proactive intervention at the EU and transnational levels in the area of maritime safety. In its report "Fact-finding mission on maritime safety", CRPM (2004), analysing the existing situation, identify priority projects for future transnational cooperation. A major conclusion points to the need for more operational-type projects and to the improvement of responsiveness.

A selection of priority projects on maritime safety was proposed by CRPM (2004). Such proposal includes fields like those of management of safe havens for ships in distress and tug boats, implementation of networks of coastal partners and common lifeboat institutions, training systems for local authorities, fishermen and merchant navy staff, resource pooling between, operational oceanographic services and monitoring pollution at sea. Despite of drowning prevention policies had not kept attention enough from project applicants, the promotion of a common vision for the management of hazards concerning the recreation use of water environments is a clear opportunity in the new programming period.

#### **4. COOPERATION ON MARITIME SAFETY AND RISKS PREVENTION**

Some cooperation structures and networks on maritime safety have been launched by the Atlantic Area in former programming periods. Such projects brought relevant contributions on the issue of cooperation on maritime safety. Nevertheless the needs for new developments, those projects should be reinforced by the creation of conditions favourable for opening perpetuation and helping consolidation of networks. As main examples, could be referred projects like "Green Atlantic for Sustainable Development" (GASD), "Emergency Response to Coastal Oil, Chemical and Inert Pollution from Shipping" (EROCIPS) and "Improving Coastal and Recreational Waters" (ICREW).

##### **4.1 Green Atlantic for Sustainable Development**



GASD ([www.greenatlantic.eu](http://www.greenatlantic.eu)) is a territorial cooperation project to be achieved from February 2007 to July 2008 in the scope of capacity building of expertise and means of action for maritime safety management in the European Atlantic Coast. Starting from previous works on maritime safety, GASD wants develop, within an interregional cooperation framework, a concrete vision on new innovative approaches in the Atlantic Area. Such vision shall endorse practical demonstration actions aiming to contribute for European policies and regulations in the fields of maritime safety and of related scientific and technological innovation processes.

Four specific approaches will be led by GASD. First of all, GASD wants to contribute to the establishment of maritime safety policies issued on the optimization of structures, the systematization of findings of works conducted at all territorial levels (regional, national and EU), the matching process amongst needs and available means and on networking. Secondly, it endorses maritime safety as an opportunity for economic development, by the creation of new activities and employment, the emergence of a new cluster of excellence and the attraction of international investors and researchers. Thirdly, it puts a general focus on knowledge and know-how, identifying educational and training needs, mapping out details on training organizations, reviewing harmonization and exchange on methods and resources and laying foundations for the development of harmonized education and training policies. Finally, it points to the achievement of scientific and technological progress in maritime safety, by the promotion of networking and new technological and scientific offer, the development of a platform for experimentation and the analysis of impacts and results of scientific and technological resources.

#### **4.2 Emergency Response to Coastal Oil, Chemical and Inert Pollution from Shipping**



EROCIPS ([www.erocips.org](http://www.erocips.org)) began to be developed in November 2004 and is expected to be ended in October 2007. The main goal is to provide a timely response to coastal oil, chemical and inert pollution, enabling to face over shipping accidents like those of Amoco Cadiz, Betelgeuse, Aegean Sea, Sea Empress, Erika and Prestige. In this light, shall be developed appropriate methodology, tools and techniques for the management of operations following a shipping accident, namely for dealing with shoreline counter pollution operations. Such methodology, shall assure a convenient knowledge transfer addressed to decision-makers and staff involved in rescue and minimization of environment harms related to shipping accidents.

A set of emergency response tools is expected. Such set includes a series of information packages that will ensure a better understanding of the many socio-economic, environmental factors and baseline situations along coastlines. Furthermore, it will be produced tools and techniques able to be effectively applied in different situations and environments and promote an effective integration into other spatial planning tools and a better coordination amongst response actions. EROCIPS will contribute to the response to shipping accidents and coastal pollution by the development of common tools and techniques enabling to: identify the baseline position and categorising issues of risks on coastlines; identify all information needed for planning interventions; assure concrete guidance, standards and protocols for interventions; create a framework for coordination of interventions responses.

#### **4.3 Improving Coastal and Recreational Waters**



ICREW ([www.icrew.info](http://www.icrew.info)) is a project developed between April 2003 and March 2006 in the context of leisure use of coastal and inland waters as a factor for the sustainable economic prosperity and to the improvement of the quality of life in the Atlantic Area. To do it will be given priority to the reduction of water pollution and to water quality improvement. The innovative aspect of the project is linked both to the techniques and methodologies and to the establishment of a relation between water quality and spatial development. ICREW aims to deliver common tools for the sustainable management of coast and inland bathing waters and recreational sites, as well as the promotion of induced opportunities for tourism and inward economic investment.

The overall aims of ICREW are delivered through seven pilot actions. The first one concerns a description of different methodologies for sampling and analyzing data, results and approaches adopted to improve recreational waters. The second activity refers to a pilot action for resolving diffuse pollution by the identification of pollution sources and cleaning up local pollution

reduction strategies. The third pilot action is the development of a pollution source tracking methodology to be shared and used across different territories levels. The fourth project relates to a methodology for forecasting and communicating information about the quality of bathing and recreational water. The fifth pilot action, starting by an inventory and analysis of potential recreational waters, proceeds to its classification and re-identification, carrying out a cost-benefit analysis of them and recommending which shall be include as a recreational water site. Pilot action six is the enhancement of sustainable sewage treatment solutions by the integration of opportunities for the development of recreational activities. The seventh pilot action aims to develop a greater understanding and capacity to manage algae as factor affecting the quality of recreational waters and to provide guidance and tools on dealing with these organisms.

#### **4.4 Challenges for the New Programming Period**

In its report "Fact-finding mission on maritime safety", CRPM (2004) comments that in previous programming period, the possibilities for cooperation in maritime safety are not sufficiently well-known or mastered by decision-makers and it was not be used the full potential for progress in this approach. As a consequence, CRPM (2004) remarks for the fact that cooperation possibilities are under-use and for certain confusion between actions based on maritime safety policies and actions based on related policies such as marine environmental protection, civil protection and spatial planning policies for coastal areas.

Maritime safety is clearly addressed as a main operational objective for the new programming period. Available funds open huge opportunities for the development of cooperation on maritime safety issues. Maritime safety projects could be generated by stakeholders in a traditional bottom-up approach. However, projects could be proactively generated, as strategic framework, by a top-down methodology led by the Management Authority. In the last situation, it will be desirable to exploit also potential complementarities with other EU programmes or initiatives, in view of taking advantages of such complementarities. In any case, is crucial to coordinate project actions with that of other maritime safety frameworks like the European Maritime Safety Agency. Also it will be of full relevance to contribute for coordination works on maritime safety like those conducted by the Maritime Safety Umbrella Operation.

CRPM (2004) stands upon that cooperation should focus mainly on the three fundamental areas of chronic pollution, accidental pollution and rescue and salvage operations. CRPM (2004) recorded the following challenges for cooperation development in the field of maritime safety:

- Authority improvement on technical requirements and routes to passing vessels in areas at risk
- Identification, assessment and planning of refuge areas for polluting ships in distress
- Needs for tug escort and supply of emergency towing capacity
- Improve response ways, tools, plans and awareness at different levels
- Training of local staff and fishermen in pollution response
- Oceanography services to monitor, predict drifting at sea and assess pollution
- Improve knowledge on pollution response, communication and compensation
- Sharing experience and best practice guide for waste management in ports
- Methodologies and best practice for impact assessment and changes monitoring
- Beach cleaning and management of marine debris
- Tools to assess the economic and ports activities influence on the sea environment

In the specific field of civil risks on economic and recreational use of sea environment, it can be identified the following set of challenges for cooperation in the Atlantic Area:

- Promotion of a common vision and strategy for maritime safety and drowning prevention
- Improve coordination and networking on water risks prevention and rescue
- Development of policies and tools for common use in prevention, surveillance and rescue

- Promotion common and integrated systems of water risks management
- Promotion of a common programme of research in water safety
- Development of common tools for water safety education and awareness
- Development of real-time monitoring systems of recreational seawaters quality
- Development of a comparable system of information on maritime safety events and actions.

## **TAKE HOME MESSAGES**

Transnational cooperation is an EU territorial cooperation involving local, regional and national authorities with regard to financing of networks and of actions conducive to integrated territorial development. Actions shall be concentrated primarily on innovation, environment, accessibility and sustainable urban development. Atlantic Area is an EU region set by Spain, Ireland, France, Portugal and United Kingdom for transnational cooperation purposes.

In the 2007-2013 programming period, a transnational cooperation strategy that has been established to the Atlantic Area will be financed by a global amount of 150.5 million euros. Strategic priorities are entrepreneurial and innovation networks, marine and coastal environment, accessibility and internal links and sustainable urban and regional development. Marine and coastal environment, which will be financed by funds of 58 million euros, includes a maritime safety objective.

Transnational cooperation in the maritime safety objective was modestly developed in previous programming periods. The new programming period is a huge opportunity to intensify transnational cooperation in the development of response capacities to maritime safety issues and particularly to maritime risks management and drowning and near drowning prevention. Any project must involve a transnational partnership whose members shall appoint a "Lead Partner". National, regional and local authorities, transnational partnerships, universities, research and development agencies and voluntary-sector organisations may join a project partnership. Profit-distributing enterprises having an industrial or commercial may participate as associate partners.

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