

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



 SUPPORT TEAM for the
ATLANTIC **ACTION PLAN**



Funded by the





WHAT IS THE SUPPORT TEAM FOR THE ATLANTIC ACTION PLAN?

IN BRIEF

The European Commission set up the Support Team for the Atlantic Action Plan 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 objectives of the Atlantic Action Plan* are in line with the EU's "Blue Growth" initiative. This aims to achieve the goals of the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. The Support Team is operating through five "focal points" based in all the countries covered by the Atlantic Strategy (France, Ireland,

Portugal, Spain and the UK), helping interested stakeholders to find funding opportunities and suitable partners for developing projects, as well as information about hot topics on fisheries and the maritime sector and 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 (<http://www.atlanticstrategy.eu>).

The "focal points" can be reached at the following addresses: (<http://www.atlanticstrategy.eu/en/contact/the-support-team>)

* <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1395674057421&uri=CELEX:52013DC0279>



A SHORT HISTORY

The Strategy for the Atlantic Ocean area was launched by the Commission on 21 November 2011 to identify key challenges and opportunities to create sustainable jobs and growth. The Atlantic Strategy was followed by a bottom-up approach to identify investment and research priorities – helped by the establishment of an “Atlantic Forum”, consisting of authorities and private sector representatives of the five countries – as well as by a public consultation. The priorities were established in the Atlantic Action Plan, adopted by the

Commission in May 2013, which provides with a common ground for the coastal areas of Ireland, Spain, France, Portugal and the United Kingdom to work together for revitalising their maritime economies. The Action Plan does not have a dedicated budget. Actions will have to be financed making use of existing funding instruments at regional, national or at EU level. At EU level this includes the European Structural and Investment funds, as well as Horizon 2020, LIFE+ and other funding sources such as loans from the European Investment Bank.

WHAT IS THE ACTION PLAN ABOUT?

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

billion a year. However, further growth is possible in a number of areas which are highlighted within the strategy.

A FOCUSED APPROACH

Consistent with the overall strategy, the Atlantic Action Plan identifies four priority areas to tackle common challenges.

Promote entrepreneurship and innovation in ways such as:

-  sharing knowledge between higher education organisations, companies and research centres;
-  enhancing competitiveness and innovation capacities in the maritime economy of the Atlantic area;
-  fostering adaptation and diversification of economic activities by promoting the potential of the Atlantic area.

Protect, secure and develop the potential of the Atlantic marine and coastal environment by paying attention to:

-  improving maritime safety and security;
-  exploring and protecting marine waters and coastal zones;
-  sustainable management of marine resources;
-  exploitation of the renewable energy potential of the Atlantic area's marine and coastal environment.



Improve accessibility and connectivity through:

- 🐟 promoting cooperation between ports by facilitating the development of ports as hubs of the blue economy.

Create a socially inclusive and sustainable model of regional development by:

- 🐟 fostering better knowledge of social challenges in the Atlantic area;
- 🐟 preserving and promoting the Atlantic's cultural heritage.

The Action Plan offers an opportunity to the private sector, researchers, regional and national public bodies and other actors to work together to implement projects that respond to these priorities in ways that generate tangible and sustainable results. The implementation of the priorities identified requires the involvement and engagement of a wide numbers of stakeholders, including the private sector.



WHO ARE WE?

The Support Team, your partners in sustainable blue growth

The Support Team's mission includes:

-  Dissemination of information on the Action Plan, its research and investment priorities and possible funding tools.
-  Provision of a “match-making platform” to bring potential project partners together, and advise them on the use of EU financial instruments for projects implementing the Action Plan, including by the European Investment Bank (EIB), or any other public or private funding channels at European, national and regional/local level.
-  Acting as the “one-stop-shop” for stakeholders interested in operating in the fields covered by the Action Plan, and with an outreach function, creating and drawing on networks of organisations and individuals.
-  Organisation of an Atlantic Stakeholder Conference, bringing together all the stakeholders involved in the implementation of the Action Plan.



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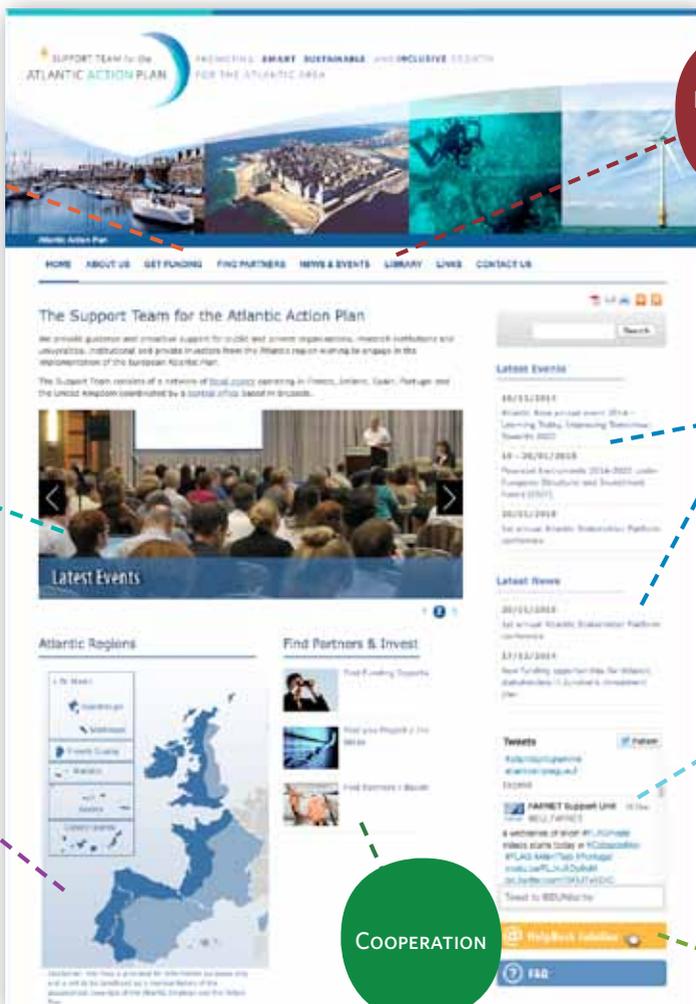
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WHAT CAN WE DO FOR YOU?

We are there to help you find 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 info-line and much more! The website - www.atlanticstrategy.eu - is already up and running!



A SHORTCUT TO FIND THE RIGHT FUNDING FOR YOUR PROJECT IDEAS

No specific EU financial instrument has been created to fund the activities of the Atlantic Action Plan. Important funding opportunities at regional, national and European level exist, but the information is scattered in a multitude of websites and not always easily accessible. To make your life easier, on our website we provide you with free access to up-to-date information about funding (<http://www.atlanticstrategy.eu/en/funding/find-funding-opportunities>). And we can also spread the word about the project or investment ideas you plan to promote (<http://www.atlanticstrategy.eu/en/funding/post-project-ideas-investment>) in areas such as:

Blue energy - renewable energy from the oceans, including offshore wind energy

Our seas and oceans offer a vast renewable energy resource, particularly, but not only, along the Atlantic seaboard. Ocean energy technologies are currently being developed to exploit the potential of tides and waves as well as differences in temperature and salinity.





Aquaculture

Farming finfish, shellfish and aquatic plants is one of the world's fastest growing food sectors; it already provides the planet with about half of all the fish we eat.

Maritime, coastal and cruise tourism

The extraordinary beauty, cultural wealth and great diversity of EU's coastal areas have made them the preferred destination for many holidaymakers in Europe and abroad, making coastal and maritime tourism an important tourism sector.

Extraction of mineral resources from the seabed

The quantity of minerals occupying the ocean floor is potentially large. Seabed mining is concerned with the retrieval of these minerals to ensure security of supply and fill a gap in the market where either recycling is not possible or adequate, or the burden on terrestrial mines is too great.

Blue biotechnology - including medical products from the sea

Marine life has adapted to thrive in the extreme ambient conditions found in the sea. Blue biotechnology is concerned with the exploration and exploitation of the resulting diverse marine organisms in order to develop new products.

A MATCH-MAKING PLACE TO MEET THE RIGHT PARTNERS

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. And if you wish, we will be glad to include you in our stakeholder database (<http://www.atlanticstrategy.eu/en/partners/find-partners>).

ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS

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 the relevant questions will enhance the section dedicated to "Frequently Asked Questions" on the website (<http://www.atlanticstrategy.eu/en/about/faq>).

A FACE-TO-FACE SERVICE IN YOUR COUNTRY

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>).

FOLLOW US ON THE WEB!

The website will be the main channel for dissemination but outreach will be enhanced through the use of Twitter and LinkedIn. Be the first to follow us [#EUAtlantic](https://twitter.com/EUAtlantic) or to contribute to focused group discussions on LinkedIn (<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/Support-Team-Atlantic-Action-Plan-8178308?home=&gid=8178308>).

