



CPMR ATLANTIC ARC
COMMISSION

PLEDGE

Approved by Atlantic Arc Commission
Member Regions on 25 May 2022



 @Atlantic_Arc

PLEDGE IN FAVOUR OF A CLEAN ATLANTIC OCEAN

The Atlantic Arc Regions, listed below, that are members
of the Atlantic Arc Commission:

CCDR do **Alentejo** (PT)

Junta de **Andalucía** (ES)

Principado de **Asturias** (ES)

Région **Bretagne** (FR)

Gobierno de **Cantabria** (ES)

Xunta de **Galicia** (ES)

CCDR de **Lisboa e Vale do Tejo** (PT)

Gobierno de **Navarra** (ES)

CCDR do **Norte** (PT)

Northern and Western Regional Assembly (IRL)

Région **Nouvelle-Aquitaine** (FR)

Région **Pays de la Loire** (FR)

Gobierno Vasco (ES)

Welsh Government (UK)

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**This pledge aims at placing Atlantic Arc Regions
at the forefront of prevention and reduction of ocean pollution.**

- Considering negative impacts of human activities on the Atlantic marine environment are further increasing and loss of biodiversity continues to grow, as well as pressures on the marine environment caused by climate change and ocean acidification.
- Considering the significant improvements achieved in legislation and governance models in recent years to prevent and reduce marine pollution, notably due to the Strategy of the OSPAR Commission for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic 2010–2020.
- Considering the increasing role of regions in the Atlantic Area in terms of pollution prevention, waste management, legislation on conservation measures and investment in key economic sectors, including the management of EU Cohesion funds.
- Taking stock of the results of the INTERREG Atlantic Area project CleanAtlantic, in which the Atlantic Arc Commission has been involved, alongside key Atlantic partners to fight against marine litter.
- Considering that although important steps have been and are being taken to prevent ocean pollution and protect the Atlantic marine ecosystems, the need for additional efforts and actions still remain as showed in the [2020 MSFD implementation report](#).
- Having regard to the several official European communications and directives to reinforce the prevention and reduction of ocean pollution, namely:
 - the Directive 2008/56/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 2008 establishing a framework for community action on marine environmental policy (Marine Strategy Framework Directive);
 - the Commission communications entitled 'A European Strategy for Plastics in a Circular Economy' of 16 January 2018 (COM/2018/28) and 'A new Circular Economy Action Plan for a cleaner and more competitive Europe' of 11 March 2020 (COM/2020/98);
 - the Directive 2019/904 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 June 2019 on the reduction of the impact of certain plastic products on the environment;
 - The Directive (EU) 2019/883 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 April 2019 on port reception facilities for the delivery of waste from ships, preventing marine litter and improving waste management at ports;
 - the Commission communication of 11 December 2019 entitled 'The European Green Deal' (COM/2019/640);
 - the Commission communication of 20 May 2020 entitled 'EU Biodiversity-Strategy for 2030: Bringing nature back into our lives' (COM/2020/380);
 - the Commission communication of 23 July 2020 entitled 'A new approach to the Atlantic maritime strategy – Atlantic action plan 2.0' (COM/2020/329);
 - the Commission communication of 12 May 2021 entitled 'Pathway to a Healthy Planet for All – EU Action Plan: Towards Zero Pollution for Air, Water and Soil' (COM/2021/400);

- and the Commission communication of 17 May 2021 on a new approach for a sustainable blue economy in the EU - Transforming the EU's Blue Economy for a Sustainable Future (COM/2021/240).

The Atlantic Arc Commission Regions, via the Pledge in favour of a Clean Atlantic Ocean, are ready to be at the forefront of marine litter prevention and reduction and marine environment health improvement with the following ambitions:

1. Support the development of actions and collaborative initiatives addressed to improve prevention, detection, monitoring, follow up and removal of marine litter at an Atlantic level, as exemplified by the CleanAtlantic project.
2. Make the best use of existing data, knowledge, networks and funding schemes to promote new actions, the capitalization of results from collaborative projects and the building of new initiatives to prevent and reduce ocean pollution.
3. Contribute to develop a sustainable maritime economy and to reduce the pressure on marine environment, notably through actions addressed to prevent and mitigate pollution and eutrophication, litter coming from land and ocean-based activities as well as through adaptation measures to face global climate change.
4. Bolster efforts to decrease significantly all sources of marine pollution (plastics, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, textile fibres, etc.).
5. Actively encourage key agents to reduce waste generation in the Atlantic Area, ensuring that the produced waste is reused or recycled whenever technically feasible, fostering circular economy initiatives.
6. Coordinate with the Atlantic Strategy Committee and the Atlantic Strategy Pillar IV 'Healthy Ocean' to establish a strong and integrated framework to protect the marine environment at an Atlantic level.
7. Contribute to reduce marine plastic litter and to improve the implementation and compliance of stakeholders with the Single-use Plastic and Fishing Gear Directive or equivalent non-EU policy obligations.
8. Support the safeguarding of marine biodiversity by stimulating dialogue about the extension and reinforcement of Marine Protected Areas, provided it is backed by the best scientific information.
9. Target the challenge of pollution in ports and also from ships in our coastal Regions, understood from a global proposal that marine pollution does not come only from activities linked to the sea.
10. Foster ambitious actions to eliminate abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded fishing gear at sea, as well as innovation in the design of more ecological fishing gear, generating the necessary economic and administrative support towards professionals.
11. Foster the implementation of sustainable Fishing for Litter Programmes with the engagement of all the stakeholders (fishermen, ports, waste managers and local authorities), as well as exchange best practices for management of waste incidentally fished, developing initiatives in which these activities are considered positively and not as an obstacle to the normal performance of fishing or shell fishing activities.
12. Recognise the role of sea users in the prevention and reduction of marine litter and encourage the different maritime economic sectors to adopt litter free programmes.
13. Develop regular joint raising awareness campaigns on ocean pollution, supporting ocean literacy and public engagement to promote a healthy ocean.

14. Dedicate a significant percentage of EU Cohesion policy funds and regional funds for the development of circular economy strategies, nature conservation and restoration initiatives for the protection of the Atlantic Ocean.
15. Identify key sectors using primary materials of high relevance for circular economy and share knowledge on regional circular economy tendencies.
16. Start and/or continue a process of dialogue with all the regional stakeholders to lead a vision and common principles which express a locally established balance between protection and conservation, on one side, and development and growth, on the other.
17. Contribute to improve the environmental status of marine waters by taking ambitious measures at a regional level and support the revision and the implementation of the Maritime Strategy Framework Directive or equivalent non-EU legislation.
18. Stimulate regional economies to adopt long-term sustainability goals in the COVID-19 crisis recovery measures.
19. Strengthen transnational and cross-border cooperation to prevent and reduce marine pollution and collaborate with inland regions in the development of regional actions against marine litter.
20. Mobilize the Atlantic Arc Commission "Ocean Pollution" Working Group to contribute to OSPAR with CPMR observer status, identifying specific actions within OSPAR's new regional action plan on marine litter which Atlantic Arc Commission members could support.

We strongly believe that this Pledge can contribute
to **inspire action and guide policy change through multi-stakeholder**
engagement across all economic sectors and groups of society, regarding the
PREVENTION AND REDUCTION OF OCEAN POLLUTION