



What is the INTERREG IVB ATLANTIC Area Programme ?



The **Interreg Atlantic Area Programme** is a Transnational Cooperation European Programme, funded by the European Regional Development Fund with a total of 158 million euros. It covers 5 countries :- the Atlantic regions of the UK, France, Spain, continental Portugal and the whole of Ireland.

What is it's aim? By strengthening cooperation between regions -

- **transnational** issues, that do not respect national boundaries can be tackled
- experience, expertise and good practice in these areas can be used as a basis **to develop the area as a whole**.
- organisations in the Atlantic Area can use territorial co-operation as a means of gaining **additional value to investment**
- **sustainable benefits** for the area as a whole can be gained through co-operation
- the **maritime heritage and resources** of the Atlantic will be protected

What are the Priorities of the Programme ?

- Priority 1 Promote transnational entrepreneurial and innovation networks
- Priority 2 Protect, secure and enhance the marine and coastal environment sustainably
- Priority 3 Improve accessibility and internal links
- Priority 4 Promote transnational synergies in sustainable urban and regional development

What's been Achieved so Far ?

- **48 transnational projects**, each representative of one or more of the priorities covered by the Programme, have been approved so far.
- **12 M€** of European Funding has been awarded to UK bodies
- **69 UK organisations** are currently working as full partners in the projects
- **14 other UK** institutions are involved in the projects as associate partners. Although they are not benefiting from European Funding they are benefiting in other aspects



What are the approved projects working on ?

The following gives a very brief overview of what six of the projects are doing.

Denbighshire County Council is the Lead Partner for the project **CANTATA 2**, approved under Priority 1.3 of the Programme. It will develop the tourism project methodology devised by the earlier INTERREG IIIB CANTATA project, in order to develop innovative products across the 5 regions. Through product development, training and marketing it aims to strengthen links between the public bodies responsible for tourism and private sector SMEs including the use of IT. Its first success was in creating a ceramic plaque reflecting the best practice adopted by Welsh ceramicists.

West Country Rivers Trust is the Lead Partner for the **Atlantic Aquatic Resource Conservation** project (**AARC**), approved under Priority 2.4 and is developing a strategy for Integrated Water Resource Management across the Atlantic Area, in targeted river basins. Three new staff are in post and work is underway with a fish pass installed and restoration work taking place in 3 rivers. Sampling kits have been distributed and trial are ongoing with a full partner meeting to be held in July 2010 and a UK launch event in September.

Bangor University is the Lead Partner of the project **Sustainable and Environmentally friendly Aquaculture for the Atlantic Region of Europe (SEAFARE)**, approved under priority 2.2 Aquaculture is a transnational issue as farmed species don't respect national borders and the EU aims at reducing the level of imports of seafood but aquaculture growth is stagnating. An initial meeting in Portugal has been held with the official launch planned in October 2010. This will coincide with a meeting being held by the European Aquaculture Society attended by many industry leaders all of whom will be invited to the project conference.

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds is the Lead Partner of **The Future of the Atlantic Marine Environment** project (**FAME**), approved under Priority 2.2 - The Atlantic area supports internationally important populations of seabirds but there is evidence of alterations in the Atlantic marine environment. This project is focuses on seabirds as an indicator species for wider Atlantic marine biodiversity.

Cardiff University is the Lead Partner for the **project Marine Renewable Energy – Energy Extraction and Hydro-environmental Aspects (MAREN)** approved under priority 2.3. The initial meeting in February was successful being held in tandem with a stakeholder conference on Marine Renewable Energy which was widely attended by local, national and transnational representatives from all sectors. Project progression is well advanced and the Spanish partner has developed their website which will soon be operational..

Merseyside Travel is the Lead Partner for the project **Seamless travel across the Atlantic Area Regions using Sustainable transport (START)** approved under Priority 3.1. It aims to improve the ease of travel to, from and around the Atlantic Area using a combination of local public transport and inter-regional services. The website is up and running, second newsletter is being worked on and a project brochure has been produced. The INTEGRA portal is well advanced and at a local level many small but important improvements in signage, website design and local surveys re "smart cards" are underway or have already been achieved in many partner countries.

Ideas being Developed

The following are some of the project ideas who are looking for partners

Priority 2.1 Improve Maritime Safety

The development of a Civil Society at Sea involving the yachting fraternity as well as fisherman in an exchange of information leading to the identification and dissemination of good practice aimed at creating a greater level of crime prevention and drug misuse at sea. A coastal initiative –

Contact Brian Doyle comhariascaire@eircom.net

Priority 2.3 Exploit the renewable energy potential of the marine and coastal environment

This project is looking at the potential for tidal energy sources to be integrated into the design of the breakwater structures. Turbines could be used to create energy and power local lighting, etc.

Contact Sally Nelson

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Priority 1.2 Enhance competitiveness and innovation capacities in maritime economy niches of excellence

FISH-NET aims to support the partners' territories to maximise their natural potential to become "angling hot spots". The project's activities will include: promotion of a transnational "Fisherman Welcome" touristic label, development of a 'Fishing Passport'

Contact Gaëlle Croisier Gaelle.Croisier@conwy.gov.uk

What's Happening Now ?

The Programme has 26M€ still to be allocated

If your organisation is working on topics that could be eligible under this Programme or if you want to know more about the projects already approved please contact **Heather Silcox** on hsilcox@gmail.com for details.

Heather is the UK Contact Point for the Atlantic Area and is able to advise you on all aspects of the Programme.



Workshops

In the past year three workshops have been held covering Writing Project Applications, Financial Procedures for Approved Projects and Lead Partner Interaction and Procedures.

Forthcoming Event

June 29th – Liverpool Workshop on "Developing of Interreg Projects"

Contact hsilcox@gmail.com for details and registration

Visit the Programme website www.coop-atlantico.co

and/or the Welsh European Funding Office website www.wefo.wales.gov.uk/programmes/territorial/atlanticarea



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