



**Brussels, 31 March 2020
(OR. en)**

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COVER NOTE

From: Secretary-General of the European Commission,
signed by Mr Jordi AYET PUIGARNAU, Director

date of receipt: 23 March 2020

To: Mr Jeppe TRANHOLM-MIKKELSEN, Secretary-General of the Council of
the European Union

No. Cion doc.: COM(2020) 104 final - ANNEX

Subject: ANNEX to the REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN
PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND
SOCIAL COMMITTEE, THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS AND THE
EUROPEAN INVESTMENT BANK on the implementation of the
Commission Communication on a stronger and renewed strategic
partnership with the EU's outermost regions

Delegations will find attached document COM(2020) 104 final - ANNEX.

Encl.: COM(2020) 104 final - ANNEX



Brussels, 23.3.2020
COM(2020) 104 final

ANNEX

ANNEX

to the

**REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE
COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE, THE
COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS AND THE EUROPEAN INVESTMENT BANK**

**on the implementation of the Commission Communication on a stronger and renewed
strategic partnership with the EU's outermost regions**

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1. France

Due to its institutional organisation, France sets strategic frameworks for public policies in many sectors covered by the Communication on the outermost regions at national and local level.

- Adopted a “Blue book” for France’s outermost regions and overseas countries and territories in June 2018, following consultations in 2017.
- Launched the Overseas 5.0 trajectory in April 2019 aimed at zero carbon, zero waste, zero agricultural pollutant, zero exclusion, zero vulnerability.
- Is improving the collection of data in the outermost regions, in particular in Mayotte, and cooperating with Saint-Martin authorities to meet the territory's specific needs.

Blue economy

- Is cooperating with regions and local stakeholders to finalise by 2020 a strategic document for each sea basin as part of implementing the 2017 national strategy for the sea and coastline to support “blue growth” and protect the marine environment.

Biodiversity

- Adopted in July 2018 an action plan to strengthen biodiversity conservation.
- Is organising the World conservation Congress in Marseille (June 2020) contributing to develop cooperation with African, Caribbean and Pacific regions to promote common objectives within international agreements on issues such as coral reefs conservation.
- Is planning to deploy representatives of the French Biodiversity Office in France’s outermost regions to co-operate with the local biodiversity agencies.
- Has set up a national service in charge of economic projects promoting biodiversity in French Guiana in April 2019.

Agriculture and rural development

- Is implementing the mutual fund on risk management in agriculture for the next programming period 2021-2027 as planned in the law on real equality in the overseas¹.
- Is discussing risk management tools with insurers to cover specifically banana crops by the end of the current programming period.

Climate change

- Adopted the second National Climate Change Adaptation Plan (December 2018) identifying the challenges in overseas territories, particularly on data collection, biodiversity and natural resources preservation, tourism and financial levers.
- Appointed an interdepartmental delegate for major risks in overseas territories in April 2019.

Employment, education and training

- Led and published a study on the mobility of young overseas residents mapping main actors and mobility schemes in June 2019.

¹ Law 2017-256, 28 February 2017.

- Introduced the possibility of work contracts allowing the acquisition of professional qualifications with States in the neighbourhood of the outermost regions, as established in the law on the freedom to choose one's professional future².

Energy

- Is working with the local authorities of Guadeloupe, Martinique, French Guiana, Mayotte and Reunion Island on the revision of their multiannual energy plans.
- Signed an ecological transition contract to support ecological transformation at local level in Reunion Island (April 2019) and French Guiana (July 2019).
- Programmed in 2019 an amount of €530 million over the next five years for all French non-interconnected areas to the continental electricity grid to control energy demand: 35% of the aid is for consumers in precarious situations, including in the outermost regions.

Circular economy

- Concluded a study on the optimisation of European funds for waste management projects in favour of circular economy in the outermost regions in February 2020.

Competitiveness, entrepreneurship and single market

- Lowered the thresholds for innovation projects in the outermost regions to access national financing support; extended a loan scheme for outermost regions to companies less than three years old, and improved its financing conditions (June 2019).
- Is planning to launch a €15 million call for interest dedicated to innovation in the French outermost regions and overseas countries and territories in the first quarter of 2020.

Digital accessibility

- Financed 15 education centres in its outermost regions to enhance digital skills.

Cooperation with the neighbourhood and beyond

- Enacted a law strengthening State services' means of action as regards immigration control and asylum (September 2018); launched a pilot on the processing of asylum applications in French Guiana in April 2018.
- Set up operational headquarters in Mayotte and an interdepartmental investigation group specialising in financial aspects of illegal immigration.

² Law 2018-771, 5 September 2018.

2. Guadeloupe

Guadeloupe is advancing in implementing the Communication on the outermost regions with a focus on renewable energy and energy efficiency.

Blue economy

- Inaugurated a naval construction site in Marie-Galante Island in May 2019, to provide training in local know-how with a view to supporting sustainable fisheries.
- Lead the ORFISH pilot project (2017-2019) which supported exchange of knowledge on low-impact fishing techniques among fishermen from all outermost regions and sought to alleviate pressure on coastal fish resources (90% EU co-financing).

Agriculture

- Launched a project to promote and sell spirits and agro-food products in the United States in 2019 in partnership with companies of the sector, Business France and the French Ministry for Overseas.

Biodiversity

- Is establishing a regional biodiversity agency.

Circular economy

- Launched in October 2018 a regional “2035 zero waste plan” to reduce waste per inhabitant and energy dependency, and to create eight waste collection points.
- Supported local companies with the European Regional Development Fund in treating metallic waste and damaged vehicles caused by the hurricanes Irma and Maria.

Energy

- Inaugurated car charging stations based on solar energy in June 2018 to promote the use of solar energy surplus.
- Launched a photovoltaic installation project in the Sainte Rose municipality’s waste management centre (March 2019) to reduce emissions and improve energy efficiency.
- Created a new municipal public lighting power plant in February 2019 expected to reduce energy consumption by 75%; improved public lighting in two municipalities with European Regional Development Fund support.

Research and innovation

- Installed wave recorders to improve prevention of major natural risks associated with the sea (March 2019).
- Installed new cancer diagnostic equipment and launched the first cancer diagnostic management centre in the Caribbean in June 2018.

Transport

- Opened a new airline connection between Pointe-à-Pitre and New York in February 2020 to improve connectivity.

Cooperation with the neighbourhood and beyond

- Joined the Organisation of States of Eastern Caribbean in 2019.
- Launched a project (“Ready Together”) for a more efficient coordination of aid in the event of natural disasters in the Caribbean.

3. French Guiana

French Guiana is progressing at a steady pace on the priorities of the Communication with a focus on education and training and the sustainable use of resources. Many initiatives are currently in the planning phase.

Blue economy

- Developed a regional blue economy strategy in December 2019.
- Created a financial instrument in the form of a loan scheme of €4.7 million for small operators, including in the fisheries sector.
- Converted an advisory service project led by the regional development agency and the local authority for local fishermen into a permanent service.

Agriculture

- Finalised a study and started preparing an experimental farming pilot project, aimed at putting in place testing stations to develop methods to use organic resources better.

Biodiversity

- Is establishing a regional biodiversity agency.

Circular economy

- Is drawing up a regional waste prevention and management plan with the support of the French Environment and Energy Management Agency (ADEME).

Energy

- Is building new electricity installations based on biomass to cover an energy demand of 40 Megawatt by 2023 and keep up with rising demand and demographic growth.

Research and innovation

- Organised a research and innovation forum in April 2018 bringing together stakeholders from local authorities, research and business sectors, to feed into the ongoing review of its smart specialisation strategy.
- Signed an agreement with a French perfumes and cosmetics business cluster to boost local research on Guiana's natural substances and develop products based on local plant resources, including a partnership between university centres (November 2018).

Employment, education and training

- Established an agreement with the region's educational institutions, AFMAé (an association for aviation training), and aerospace company Ariane Group, to develop a bachelor degree course in the field of aerospace industry for 2020.
- Launched a project with French employer federation MEDEF and the national employment agency Pôle emploi to place 300 young people in local businesses (2019); set up a contact point to advise local businesses on vocational integration.

Digital accessibility

- Is preparing the roll out of a submarine cable linking French Guiana with the EllaLink submarine fibre optic cable that will connect Europe and Latin America in 2020 and become operational in 2021, with European Regional Development Fund and European Investment Bank support.

- Is preparing measures to establish the region as an economic activity zone for data storage on servers (“Datacentre”).
- Is rolling out broadband in 17 isolated areas; acquired satellite bandwidth in April 2019 to facilitate digital connectivity of schools in remote areas.
- Created 44 access points to the network in Saint Laurent du Maroni (sites of economic interest and remote areas), with European Regional Development Fund support.

Transport

- Is developing a wide-scale project creating lanes reserved for public transport in the capital city of Cayenne.
- Is setting up a new ferry connection between Saint Laurent du Maroni and Albina in Suriname with the support of Interreg.

Cooperation with the neighbourhood and beyond

- Launched a study to assess local businesses’ needs and measures to improve exchanges with the neighbourhood.

4. Martinique

Martinique is implementing the Communication achieving results in fields such as circular economy, energy, competitiveness as well as employment, education and training.

Blue economy

- Programmed a feasibility study in early 2020 on establishing an Aquaculture Institute.
- Confirmed the launch of new training programmes focusing on fisheries and domains linked to blue economy via a dedicated vocational training centre (POLE MER).

Biodiversity

- Signed a framework agreement between the local authority, the Nature Reserve Park and the French authorities in June 2019 to establish a regional preservation programme and improve knowledge and awareness of the nature reserve.

Circular economy

- Launched a public consultation and adopted (end of 2019) a plan for the prevention and management of waste, to pave the way for a local circular economy strategy.
- Initiated information campaigns against food waste in local schools in view of raising pupils' awareness on sustainability.
- Launched an awareness campaign in 2018 "Kaz Zéro gaspi" in the framework of the eco-consumption week.
- Is undertaking 14 projects including studies on the reuse of medical utilities and furniture, the set-up of a mobile facility offering repair services ("Repair Truck") and the extension of a repair service facility offering workshops ("Repair Café").

Energy

- Launched a project to support the installation of photovoltaic panels to improve energy self-sufficiency in 2017 and two calls for proposals for the construction of energy-efficient buildings in 2019.
- Is rolling out an energy-efficient public lighting network to save at least 30% of electricity by 2020.
- Launched a five-year' energy savings support programme of €100 million and focusing on approximately 60 actions to save electricity consumption (2019-2023).
- Set up an information platform³ on energy transition including information on mobility, renewable energies, domestic utilities and thermal insulation in 2019.
- Installed refuelling stations with 100% solar energy for electrical cars in the framework of the Green Drive project.
- Plans to gradually deploy 250 solar charging stations in the framework of "Madin' Drive".

Employment, education and training

- Organised a competition for apprentices in vocational training in March 2019.
- Organised a local job and education fair focused on digital recruitment in June 2019.

³ www.transitionenergetiquemartinique.mq

Competitiveness, entrepreneurship and Single market

- Adopted the Local Scheme for Economic Development, Innovation and Internationalisation in 2017 providing funding to improve production, performance and employability; set up a partnership to provide information services to businesses.
- Started an annual 3-day business forum “OSE!” in 2018, to provide a networking opportunity for established businesses and guidance on starting up a business.

Digital accessibility

- Is rolling out fibre optic connecting educational institutions with the support of the European Agricultural Rural Development Fund and optical-fibre high-speed broadband networks with the support of the European Regional Development Fund.
- Displayed a “digital village” at the 2019 forum “OSE!” in view of promoting the take-up of digitalisation – for example 3D printing - amongst local businesses.

Cooperation with the neighbourhood and beyond

- Organised three Councils of Ministers of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States in the fields of health, education, and environment.
- Launched the project for Trade Enhancement for Eastern Caribbean (TEECA) in January 2018 to assist 30 local businesses in exporting to Caribbean states.
- Collaborated as a partner in the Odyssey project (February 2019) in the field of blue economy aimed at enhancing blue tourism and growth in the Caribbean.

5. Reunion Island

Reunion Island is focusing on many sectors of the Communication, in particular circular and blue economy, energy, research and cooperation with neighbourhood countries.

Blue economy

- Launched a maritime spatial planning project (2018-2020) in the south-western Indian Ocean basin (OCEAN MÉTISS) in partnership with the State, the Indian Ocean Commission and the European Commission.
- Set up a “Blue Institute” in March 2019 to coordinate and design public policies in blue economy.

Agriculture and rural development

- Is developing an agricultural model promoting local production and ensuring agro-ecological transition (AGRIPEI 2030 project).

Biodiversity

- Provided training and support to set up projects with EU financing from LIFE and BEST in 2018 and 2019.
- Carried-out projects with European Regional Development Fund support to protect endangered species: the Maillard harrier and plants’ species (ESPECES project).

Circular economy

- Designed a regional waste prevention and management plan with the State and local authorities, setting up regional objectives e.g. “zero waste” and ensuring coordination.
- Developed a regional action plan on the circular economy to define the strategic vision and concrete measures to achieve the “zero waste” objective.
- Implemented 22 circular economy projects (February 2018 – June 2019) ranging from design and life duration of products to recycling.
- Is participating in the REPLACE project (August 2019, funded by Interreg Europe), with the aim to define and implement policies for circular economy.

Energy

- Has set up a task force on energy transition together with the State and the European Commission in February 2018.
- Is implementing two projects with European Regional Development Fund support:
 - SOLARPLEXUS, to design an innovative system providing remote sites with access to electricity, water and communication services;
 - MICRO-MAFATE NETWORK, experimenting an electric micro grid in the Mafate circus, with the aim to achieve self-sufficiency.
- Has been conducting thermal renovation works in 18 secondary schools since 2018.
- Is developing sustainable vehicles such as electrical scooters for urban mobility with European Regional Development Fund support (Project VELOCE of March 2018).

Research and innovation

- Is implementing the project VALOBIO (supported by the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund, May 2019) using an innovative method to transform discarded fish co-products thrown in the sea into liquid organic fertilizers for sustainable agriculture.
- Launched the assessment of its smart specialisation strategy in April 2019 to analyse the regions' potential in various areas and identify niche markets of strategic interest.

Employment, education and training

- Set up the CAMPUS SUD project in November 2017 with European Regional Development Fund support, to regroup and extend the offer of the regional university, as well as creating a techno pole ("Vallée Blanche" project).

Competitiveness, entrepreneurship and Single market

- Created the "Financière Région Réunion" Fund worth €50 million (European Regional Development Fund, European Investment Bank, region) to support small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) through a loan and a private equity instrument. As of June 2019, the Fund financed 135 SMEs with €13 million.
- Participates in the REACT project supported by HORIZON 2020 to decarbonise the energy systems of the island.

Digital accessibility

- Is completing broadband rollout expecting to reach all non-covered areas by the end of 2022, with European Regional Development Fund support (major project 2019).

Cooperation with the neighbourhood and beyond

- Is implementing a project (TIS AEDES OI, under Interreg) exploring a technique to control the Aedes "tigre" mosquito.
- Is reinforcing the capacity of private and public structures in partner countries by sending local graduates to these countries, with the support of Interreg.
- Concluded framework agreements with neighbours under the "Indian Ocean" Interreg programme (for example in April 2019 with Seychelles), improving coordination on areas of common interest.
- Created a business support service in July 2019 in Mozambique to support the internationalisation of local enterprises and regional cooperation.

6. Saint-Martin

Saint-Martin is implementing the Communication on the outermost regions within the particular context of the post-Irma island reconstruction. The focus is therefore on rebuilding improved infrastructure and providing adequate responses to climate change.

Blue Economy

- Is providing professional training on related sea activities as from 2018.

Agriculture

- Is planning to launch innovative solutions for agriculture such as cultivating without soil, and investing in removable enclosures of livestock farms, to be dismantled in case of bad weather.

Circular economy

- Is raising awareness and implementing communication actions on recycling and waste sorting, as well as establishing a waste collection point and carrying out a joint study for the island as a whole (supported by the Interreg Caribbean programme) to improve waste management.

Climate change

- Has set up in 2018 a risk management system for disasters by carrying out warning exercises, raising public awareness, assessing the alert systems, and acquiring a meteorological radar to improve weather forecasts (Interreg Caribbean).

Energy

- Initiated pre-feasibility studies on potential geothermal resources on the islands of Saba, Sint Eustatius and Sint Kitts and on electricity interconnection between the islands to promote renewable energy (Interreg Caribbean, July 2019).

Digital accessibility

- Is establishing underground optical fibre networks, to improve digital connectivity in all districts, as part of the reconstruction.
- Is carrying out prefeasibility studies for digital interconnection between the Leewards islands (northern islands of the Lesser Antilles chain).

Cooperation with the outermost regions' neighbourhood and beyond

- Was granted the observer status in the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States.

7. Mayotte

Mayotte is implementing the 2017 Communication with a significant focus on blue economy.

Blue economy

- Launched a working group in 2018 to prepare a regional blue economy strategy: collecting data on blue economy sectors and organising exchanges with stakeholders on blue growth (training, tourism, fisheries and aquaculture).
- Is drawing up a Regional Spatial Planning scheme, with a specific chapter on sea planning, as the basis for all activities related to the coast.
- Is developing a fleet management plan together with the national authorities, as well as a master plan for aquaculture.
- Is investing in previously abandoned aquaculture facilities and supporting the capacity of local stakeholders.

Biodiversity

- Is setting up a regional biodiversity agency in partnership with the national authorities.

Energy

- Is implementing a pilot project involving electric vehicles and charging stations powered 100% by solar energy for sustainable transport (2019).
- Is studying the potential of photovoltaics in schools and public buildings, as solar energy is the most important renewable energy of the region.

Competitiveness, entrepreneurship and Single market

- Launched a technopolis project in 2017 to bring together manufacturing and service companies in the high-tech sectors aimed at enhancing the capacity of their businesses to operate in the single market.

Transport

- Is working on an inter-urban transport project setting up three bus lines to connect south, centre and north of Mayotte with the capital Mamoudzou, and involving potential maritime links for 2021 to improve connectivity.
- Launched a project to improve safety at Mayotte's airport in 2018 with European Regional Development Fund support.

Cooperation with the neighbourhood and beyond

- Signed an agreement to make it possible for Mayotte university students to undertake mobility in East African countries, in the fields of digital technology, animation and culture (February 2019).

8. Portugal

Portugal works closely with the autonomous regions of the Azores and Madeira to implement the 2017 Communication, particularly on circular economy, climate change and research.

- Developed cooperation in 2018-2019 between the National Institute for Statistics and the Regional Statistics Departments of the Azores and Madeira to improve data collection and management, in particular in the fields of agriculture, sea and air transport.

Circular economy

- Supported projects promoting a more efficient use of resources in Madeira and the Azores under the national Environmental Fund in 2018 and 2019.
- Facilitated the participation of citizens from Madeira and the Azores in events on the circular economy and climate change in continental Portugal (higher reimbursement of expenses).

Climate change

- Provided support to projects promoting the installation of charging stations for electric vehicles in the Azores, through calls under the Environmental Fund in 2018 and 2019.
- Provided Madeira and the Azores with funding under the Programme “Environment, Climate Change and Low Carbon Economy”.
- Organised sessions in Madeira and the Azores in March 2019 to present the EEA-Grants Financial Mechanism⁴.

Biodiversity

- Launched in 2019 a call for projects to promote sustainable development models in all Portuguese Biosphere Reserves, five located in Madeira and the Azores.

Research and innovation

- Started the International Satellite Launch Programme in September 2018, to create an international spaceport on the island of Santa Maria, in the Azores; the spaceport is due to be operational by end 2021.
- Established the Portuguese Space Agency, in March 2019, located on the island of Santa Maria in the Azores.

Digital accessibility

- Created the Working Group “Submarine cables CAM – Mainland, the Azores and Madeira” in May 2019 to analyse the best way to replace the submarine cables that ensure communication connections from Madeira and the Azores to the mainland. The group issued conclusions in December 2019.

Transport

- Proposed to include the airports of Funchal, Porto Santo and Ponta Delgada in the TEN-T core network, in reply to the consultation on the revision of TEN-T guidelines.

⁴ <https://eeagrants.org/about-us>

9. Azores

The Azores are implementing the 2017 Communication focusing mainly on blue economy as well as on energy and research.

- Is collecting data on employment and activities in the fisheries sector for all islands.

Blue economy

- Created a working group in 2018 to set up the Atlantic Observatory dedicated to maritime scientific research, including the protection, research, monitoring and socio-economic exploitation of maritime spaces.
- Is leading the MarSP project (2018-2019), to develop Maritime Spatial Planning schemes in the Azores, Madeira and the Canary Islands.
- Concluded MISTIC SEAS II and is coordinating the MISTIC SEAS III project (2019), to evaluate the Marine Strategy Framework Directive.
- Is participating in the AQUA-LIT project (2019) to prevent marine littering from aquaculture activities and to remove litter from aquaculture facilities.
- Launched the pilot project “E-log” (2019) to electronically monitor small-scale fishing and support local actors.
- Promoted the Azores Declaration for the Defence of Pole and Line Tuna Fishing (October 2018), to raise awareness on sustainable fishing techniques.
- Established the “School of the Sea” (2019), to foster qualifications and training and is participating, under Erasmus, in the MATES project (2018-2021) aimed at fostering a Marine Technology Skilling Strategy.

Agriculture

- Plans to complete a “Strategic Plan for the dairy sector” in 2020, to identify new markets and promote innovation and internationalisation of dairy products.
- Supported the use of remotely piloted aircrafts for forest management (co-financed with the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development).

Biodiversity

- Is assessing the pollution caused by plastics in deep sea with European Regional Development Fund support (PLASTDEEP 2019).
- Is carrying out three projects supported by the EU LIFE programme: LIFE VIDALIA (2018-2023) for the conservation of flora species at risk of extinction; LIFE-IP AZORES NATURA (2019-2027) for the preservation of habitats and protected species; and LIFE Beetles (starting in 2020) to reduce risks to endangered species.
- Is implementing the project MOVE I (2018-2021) and launched MOVE ON (2019-2022) in compliance with the EU Biodiversity Strategy, to map and assess the state of the ecosystems and their services.
- Supported the project BIOINVENT to study soil microbial diversity in grassland ecosystems in the Azores, and the project MARFOR to study the dynamics of responses of marine forests to global change (both 2017-2020).

Climate change

- Approved, in September 2019, the Regional Programme for Climate Change, aimed at minimising greenhouse gas emissions and reducing exposure to climate risks.

Circular economy

- Is due to adopt the Tourism Management Programme for sustainable development in the sector.

Energy

- Launched the “Azorean Energy Strategy 2030” in October 2018 to exploit the potential of natural resources and emerging technologies; and is working on the “Azorean Action Plan for Energy Efficiency”.
- Established the 2018-2024 “Action Plan for Electric Mobility in the Azores”, which includes the operation of charging points for electric vehicles on the nine islands.
- Is developing an energy transition agenda supported by the Clean Energy for EU Islands initiative; is analysing the use of undersea cables to connect the power grids of its islands.
- Is participating in a Horizon 2020 project (2019-2021) on deep geothermal energy and in the Interreg E-MOBICITY project (2019-2023), for the optimisation of public policies regarding electric mobility in urban areas.

Research and innovation

- Launched an international spaceport on the island of Santa Maria in September 2018, which is expected to be operational by the end of 2021.
- Approved the “Plan for the Internationalisation of Science and Technology” in 2018 aimed at promoting science and attracting external projects and partnerships.
- Approved, in 2018, the Transfer+ initiative and participates in the FANBest project to promote technology transfer in local SMEs, in particular in the blue economy.

Employment, education and training

- Promoted employment through the initiatives INOVAR (since March 2019) for the young unemployed, Berço de Emprego (updated in 2019) for temporary replacements; and Movemprego (in 2020) to promote geographical mobility of human resources.

Digital accessibility

- Launched the Action Plan for Scientific and Technologic Culture in 2018, which supported the establishment of school labs for informatics, robotics and programming.

Transport

- Launched an international tender to build one ship for passengers, vehicles and freight to connect all the islands all-year round (January 2019).

Cooperation with the neighbourhood and beyond

- Is participating in the Marine-Earth Observation project to develop tailor-made technology based on Copernicus Downstream Services aimed at improving maritime awareness.

10. Madeira

Madeira is progressing in the implementation of the 2017 Communication, focusing on the blue economy, circular economy, climate change, research, energy, employment and skills.

Blue economy

- Launched the INVESTE RAM2020 credit line in 2018, a financial instrument to facilitate access to finance for small-scale operators (€20 million).
- Developed the Maritime Environment Spatial Plan, a territorial management tool to promote sustainable blue economy.
- Created in 2019 a consortium responsible for the Integrated International Centre for Training Education for the Sea in Madeira due to start providing training in 2020.

Agriculture and rural development

- Introduced legislation establishing a technical commission for the evaluation of conformity of agricultural products and foodstuffs of Madeira in 2018 to ensure that products benefiting from an EU quality scheme are in conformity with EU legislation.

Biodiversity

- Strengthened the management of protected areas and Natura 2000 network sites (since 2017) by reviewing and updating management plans, strategies and classified areas.

Circular economy

- Developed a Regional Agenda for the Circular Economy to mitigate the environmental impact in pursuit of sustainable economic growth (2019).
- Prepared the “Waste strategy 2020-2030” to enhance waste management (2019).

Climate Change

- Boosted the implementation of the Regional Strategy for Adaptation to Climate Change through projects supported by Interreg and the EU LIFE programme and started updating it.
- Is developing a software and systems to evaluate, prevent and mitigate forest fire risks and improve forest fires’ management with Cohesion Fund support .

Energy

- Implemented the project “Sustainable Porto Santo – Smart Fossil Free Island” (2019) aimed at promoting electric vehicle use and smart charging systems.
- Is about to conclude the expansion of the hydroelectric project Calheta III supported by the Cohesion Fund.
- Participated in several EU energy projects including ENERMAC (2017-2019) on the planning of strategies for the implementation of renewable energy infrastructures.
- Is promoting clean transport with European Regional Development Fund support: purchase of 5 electrical minibuses and 25 clean buses (2019).

Research and innovation

- Cooperated in the SMART4HEALTH project since 2019 to enable citizens to manage and keep records of their own health data throughout the EU and beyond.

- Reassessed the Regional Strategy for Smart Specialisation (2019) to prepare the launch of strategy 2.0 for the period 2021-2027.

Employment, education and training.

- Developed measures to support the unemployed, including programmes aiming at job creation for young people, such as PROJOVEM. In 2018, the 68 approved projects under the Unemployed Entrepreneurship Stimulus Programme created 118 new jobs. These measures covered 5 512 people during 2018.

Digital accessibility

- Signed a contract in 2018 for the supply of a new telecommunications link in submarine optical cable between Madeira and the Portuguese continent.
- Developed courses to improve digital skills in schools (2018-2019) through the "Strategic Plan for Educational Innovation of Schools", including STEM projects (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics).
- Introduced the "Future Classroom Lab", providing robotics kits to schools in 2018-2019.

Transport

- Approved the Action Plan for Sustainable Mobility in Madeira (June 2019). The plan is due to support the transition towards clean and safe transport.

Cooperation with the neighbourhood and beyond

- Re-launched the Macaronesia Archipelago Summit in 2018, which fosters debate on joint challenges related to the environment and climate change, economy of the sea, trade and investment promotion, training, as well as student and teacher mobility.
- Is participating in the INTEGRA project, aimed at market integration and development of the economic and social neighbourhood of Macaronesia, approved in June 2019 (Interreg Madeira-Azores-Canary Islands –MAC programme).

11. Spain

Spain implements the 2017 Communication together with the outermost region of the Canary Islands within the framework of the constitutional distribution of competences.

Circular economy

- Participated in the launching of the Waste task force in November 2018 and in its subsequent meetings through the Ministry of Ecological Transition and the Customs and Excise Department; and is supporting the implementation of its action plan.
- Analysed the Comprehensive Waste Plan of the Canary Islands (PIRCAN) 2018-2025.

Energy

- Is supporting, within the EU Clean Energy Package, actions to introduce renewable energies in the islands, save energy, improve energy efficiency and promote sustainable mobility, including renewable energy auctions, interconnections between islands, and electric charging stations for vehicles.
- Developed and supported training and technological dissemination actions in the field of renewable energies.

12. Canary Islands

The Canary Islands are implementing the 2017 Communication with a focus on energy, research and circular economy.

- Are developing official data on local production since July 2018 through an agreement with the local Statistical Institute (ISTAC).

Blue economy

- Set up a working group on blue economy in February 2018; carried out a SWOT analysis for all blue economy sectors to pave the way for the Blue economy Strategy planned for the first half of 2020.

Agriculture and rural development

- Implemented a strategy to differentiate products based on their quality to increase consumption, promote ecological production and facilitate contacts between the agro-food sector and the administration.

Circular economy

- Launched a project for a biogas plant in 2017 with European Regional Development Fund support to valorise livestock waste.
- Cooperated in the creation of a Waste taskforce in November 2018, facilitating communication between stakeholders at all levels (European, national, regional and local) and in the shaping of an action plan for improving waste management.
- Set up a working group on Circular Economy in February 2018, carrying out a preliminary diagnosis of the situation on the islands.
- Adopted guidelines and recommendations for the reduction and recycling of single-use plastic waste in August 2018.
- Approved the Canary Islands Strategy for plastics in April 2019.

Climate change

- Launched the Canary Islands Observatory for Climate Change, a body for consultation, participation and development of actions (July 2018).
- Are updating the regional Climate Change Strategy.

Energy

- Participated in the Clean Energy for EU Islands Initiative: organised the second Clean Energy Forum for the EU islands in Lanzarote in November 2018; La Palma is implementing a pilot project in the framework of this initiative.
- Installed two innovative prototypes in 2019 for the use of marine wind energy on the PLOCAN platform.

Research and innovation

- Are leading the EU research FORWARD project to improve all outermost regions' participation in international research networks and programmes.
- Relunched the project RIS3-Net2 in October 2019 (as project leaders) in the framework of the Interreg programme Madeira-Azores-Canary Islands (MAC) to define a common framework for trans-regional RIS3 strategies.

- Are participating in the SOCLIMPACT project aimed at modelling climate change effects and their socio-economic impacts on European islands in the context of blue economy sectors.
- Are participating in the REACT project supported by HORIZON 2020 to decarbonise the energy systems of the islands.

Employment, education and training

- Are leading the GROW RUP project, co-financed by Interreg Europe since January 2017 to tackle long-term unemployment in the field of the green and blue economies.

Competitiveness, entrepreneurship and Single Market

- Launched an operational strategy for the internationalisation of the Canary Islands' economy in January 2018 with the objective of enhancing business competitiveness and entrepreneurship.

Digital accessibility

- Set up two calls for proposals to support the deployment of high-speed broadband infrastructures (in 2018 and 2019).
- Supported organisations to provide training on digital skills totalling 71 projects (in 2017-2019).

Cooperation with their neighbourhood and beyond

- Are leading the Interreg MAC HEXAGONE project with Madeira and the Azores to boost cooperation with neighbouring Mauritania, Senegal and Cape Verde by strengthening coordination between the European Regional Development Fund and European Development Fund programmes in the area (ends in December 2022).
- Implemented the VALCONMAC Interreg project focusing on the protection and development of forest habitats in the Macaronesia Atlantic archipelagos.