



UNIVERSITY OF
LIVERPOOL



Blue Growth Project Prospectus Call for Expressions of Interest



JAN 2015

Foreword

The Irish Sea Maritime Forum represents a unique European and International area. Linked as we are by geography, expertise and knowledge, the stakeholders within the Forum are on the threshold of realising the great potential for growth that the sea region presents.

This Prospectus outlines some of those opportunities and mechanisms showing how they may be successfully accomplished. But this is only the beginning of the process. It is now for all of us, whether we see our major interest as land based or sea based; whether marine, ecology, energy or maritime, to take advantage of all that is on offer, all that can be brought together, to make the future work for us and our region.

Our growing links with our European partners will also enable us to work with other key players in the development of the sea region. Working with the Conference of Peripheral and Maritime Regions will be significant in that regard.

It has been a great privilege to work with all colleagues over the last year or so as Chair of the Forum and I look forward to working with the new Chair, Cllr Dr Stuart Anderson, and all partners in the future. My thanks go to the Secretariat for their incredible work and sustained efforts on all our behalves.



Cllr Flo Clucas OBE
ISMF Chair 2014/15

Acknowledgements

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Introduction

Following a series of stakeholder meetings the Irish Sea Maritime Forum (ISMF) was launched in Belfast in June 2012.

The Objectives of the Forum are:

- To provide a broad based forum for all Irish Sea users and provide an opportunity for voices to be heard;
- To facilitate marine planning knowledge exchange and capacity building across all administrative areas and sectors;
- To facilitate sharing of data and information;
- To encourage and maintain political support for transnational partnership working in support of marine planning, with the aim of promoting sustainable development in the Irish Sea region;
- To facilitate a more coordinated, efficient planning process for transnational issues/projects and good working relationships among Irish Sea partners

Blue Growth was the focus of the third annual conference of the ISMF, which was linked to International Festival of Business held in Liverpool in the summer of 2014. The conference aimed to showcase the Blue Growth potential in the Irish Sea region. The first session set the scene by introducing the EU's ambitions for Blue Growth and how different parts of the Irish Sea region are taking this agenda forward including ideas related to the development of the Irish Sea Rim as a vibrant socio economic innovation. In the second session delegates participated in a series of workshops related to 7 Blue Growth themes: Commercial Shipping; Blue Energy; Fisheries and Aquaculture; Blue Biotechnology; Marine and Coastal Recreation and Tourism; Environmental and Coastal Protection and Monitoring and Surveillance. In the workshops delegates explored what might be key Blue Growth opportunities in the Irish Sea region and identified those areas where transnational cooperation and associated projects would be most beneficial to realise these opportunities.

This report takes forward the ISMF Blue Growth Conference discussions. It sets out a series of potential projects that could be the focus of future European Union and other funding bids. A follow up Blue Growth Partner Café will be held in Liverpool in Autumn 2015. We are now inviting initial expressions of interest in these project proposals as an input to the planning of this event.

You can register your interest via the Irish Sea Maritime Forum website or contacting us directly (see page 13 for details).

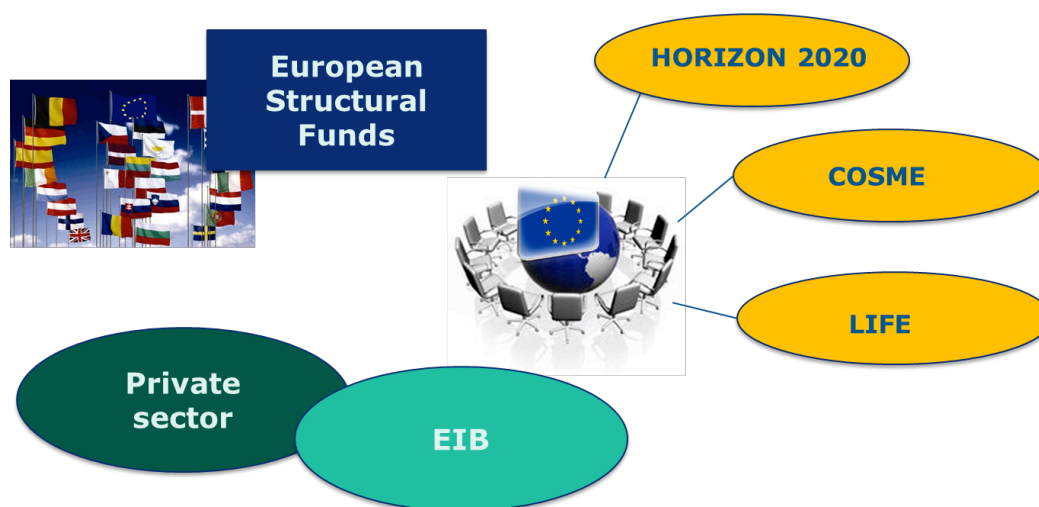
European Funding Opportunities

DG MARE, the European Union Directorate for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries contributed to the ISMF Blue Growth conference and identified the following European Union funding channels as possible sources of support for Blue Growth projects involving Irish Sea Partners.

The European Union Structural Funds (EMFF, ERDF, ESF) are all potential sources of Blue Growth project funding. It is up to the Member States to decide whether proposed actions could be funded using planned EU funding. The five Atlantic Member States have been encouraged to take the Atlantic Action Plan into account in their discussions with the Commission on their respective Partnership Agreements on the structural funds and links to the Action Plan are noted in the following sections. It should also be noted that for 2014-2020, there are two INTERREG cross-border programmes between UK and IE: (1) Ireland-Wales; (2) Ireland, Northern Ireland and Scotland that are of particular relevance to Irish Sea stakeholders interested in pursuing Blue Growth projects.

Funding might also come directly from the EU budget, for instance through as the financing instrument for the environment (LIFE+), the EU's research and innovation funding programme (Horizon 2020) or the programme to assist enterprise and SMEs (COSME).

In addition, the European Investment Bank stands ready to mobilise its financing tools and expertise in support of suitable projects in order to further the Action Plan's priorities.



Blue Biotechnology

Potential Projects	
BB1 Irish Sea / European Atlantic Blue Biotechnology Network	To establish and maintain a network between academia, business and public sectors in all components of the blue – biotechnology pipeline, including pharmaceutical and petrochemical companies.
BB2 Linking aquaculture and biotechnology processes	To convert current ‘waste’ products from aquaculture systems to feedstocks through biotechnology processing.
BB3 Promotion of ‘green’ properties of Blue Biotechnology	To explore and promote the advantageous properties of using marine biomass over terrestrial biomass including those related to land use, food versus fuel, water use, rapid algal growth and climate change mitigation.

Links to the Atlantic Action Plan

Priority 2 of the Atlantic Action Plan, to **“Protect, secure and develop the potential of the Atlantic marine and coastal environment”** supports some of the proposals related to Blue Biotechnology. The objective of *Laying the foundations for a sustainable, high-value-added European marine biotechnology industry* in particular could be supported through the development of Blue Biotechnology networks and platforms. Such collaborations could help in *strengthening links between research and industry in the Atlantic area in order to develop biobanks and identify markets for innovative marine bioproducts (biomedicine, tissue engineering, pharmaceuticals, industrial enzymes) and focusing research on delivering industrial processes for manufacturing them.* Linking aquaculture and biotechnology processes could be one of many focal activities for a Blue Biotech network.

In addition *promoting research, development and demonstration of technologies for the construction and maintenance of renewable energy installations for offshore wind, wave, tidal and biomass energies including integration with desalination plants and multipurpose offshore platforms* supports the development of marine biomass applications and the *exploitation of the renewable energy potential of the Atlantic area's marine and coastal environment.*

Blue Energy

Potential Projects	
BE1 Blue Energy infrastructure and co-location possibilities	To develop a platform for information exchange and capacity building related to co-location wind and wave power, wind and aquaculture/mariculture, wind and solar.
BE2 Blue Energy and ancillary industry development	To develop a platform for information exchange and capacity building related to opportunities for blue energy service industries such as sea survey work, guard duties, cable laying and tourism.
BE3 Opportunities for energy storage with the marine and coastal zone	To develop examples, knowledge exchange and capacity building related to opportunities for energy storage within the marine and coastal zone.

Links to the Atlantic Action Plan

Proposals for renewable energy initiatives largely fall under Priority 2 of the Atlantic Action Plan, to *“Protect, secure and develop the potential of the Atlantic marine and coastal environment”* as they focus on the *deployment of sustainable **offshore renewable energy*** and contribute to *Member States **maritime spatial planning and integrated coastal management** processes*. Considering *co-location possibilities, promoting research, development and demonstration of technologies for the construction and maintenance of renewable energy installations for offshore wind, wave, tidal and biomass energies including integration with desalination plants and multipurpose offshore platforms* provides for projects that can explore the siting of renewable energy technologies in conjunction with other activities. Such projects can also contribute to capacity building in maritime spatial planning. Developing *ancillary industry* related to the energy sector supports objectives under Priority 1 of the AAP. *Improving **skills** in ...the emerging sectors of the blue economy* will be required to ensure that ancillary services can be developed to their full potential. By *putting in place educational and training measures* the full range of ancillary industry is likely to be developed. *Energy storage* projects could be tied to a *European electricity transmission system that allows the balancing of loads between national systems and provides better links between offshore and onshore energies*.

Coastal Protection and Adaptation

Potential Projects	
CPA1 Developing the multi-functionality of natural and hard sea defences investments	Developing examples, information exchange and capacity building related to the scope for delivering multifunctional natural and hard sea defences offering social and economic (leisure and tourism) and environmental (habitats and climate change mitigation) benefits
CPA2 Linking offshore energy generation and coastal defence	Develop projects which demonstrate how offshore energy generation structures and coastal protection functions can be linked
CPA3 Improving links between coastal defence and marine and terrestrial planning	Developing examples, information exchange and capacity building related to improved integration and coherence in treatment of coastal defence issues in plans and planning decisions – Developing the role of Coastal Champions?

Links to the Atlantic Action Plan

Coastal protection is not explicitly mentioned in the Atlantic Action Plan, however they are an important part of coastal activities around the Irish Sea and will play an important role in climate change adaptation and mitigation. Within the proposals outlined there is scope for integrating multi-functional sea defences and linking offshore energy generation through *technologies for the construction and maintenance of renewable energy installations for offshore wind, wave, tidal and biomass energies including integration with... multipurpose offshore platforms*.

Activities for capacity building and sharing knowledge on links between coastal defence and marine/terrestrial planning can help to contribute to *Member States maritime spatial planning and integrated coastal management* processes as these are rolled out under the new Maritime Spatial Planning Directive.

Fisheries and Aquaculture

Potential Projects	
FA1 Fishing industry diversification	Developing examples, information exchange and capacity building related to diversification of traditional fisheries sector into areas such as aquaculture, seaweed products, marine monitoring, policing management measures associated with MPAs, and using sea expertise and capital equipment to offer seas services to other maritime industries and users.
FA2 Strategies for Aquaculture Development	Development of onshore and offshore aquaculture, development of networks of aquaculture business advisory and research centres, incorporated as part of a mixed use development philosophy of marine areas
FA3 Improving the added value of fish catches	To address the mismatch between local catches and customer preferences through improved education and promotion of local seafood, development of MSC and other marine sustainability standards in Irish Sea/ European Atlantic.

Links to the Atlantic Action Plan

Proposals for aquaculture projects support Priority 1 of the AAP, to “promote entrepreneurship and innovation” with particular regards to *supporting the reform of the **Common Fisheries Policy** and revitalising the EU's **aquaculture** industry*. Projects which encourage fishing industry diversification and supporting aquaculture development could be based around *carrying out research to improve the growth, productivity, competitiveness and environmental sustainability of aquaculture (including offshore aquaculture) and the industry's ability to respond to market needs*. In addition, concerted efforts to add value to catches by improving supply chains, *processing, labelling, traceability and certification* can strengthen the market position of locally sourced fisheries and aquaculture products.

Marine & Coastal Tourism/Recreation

Potential Projects	
MCTR1 Cruise Ports as gateways to wider region	Development of Irish Sea/European Atlantic Cruise routes and connections beyond e.g. Liverpool to Lake District and North Wales etc.
MCTR2 Irish Sea/Atlantic Coast wide Multi-access routes and events	Pick 'n mix coastal path/ cycling and sailing routes and events plus development of linked services.
MCTR3 Celtic Cultural Connections	Shared maritime history, links to saints, scope for common branding/marketing of features and collaborative events
MCTR4 Joint marketing of cities as Irish Sea/ European Atlantic Tourism hubs	Joint promotion of Irish Sea/European Atlantic City tourism. Could include links to major sporting events and idea of hubs linking to wider regional offerings. Liverpool to Lake District and North Wales etc.

Links to the Atlantic Action Plan

Priority 4 of the AAP – to “Create a socially inclusive and sustainable model of regional development” focuses on a number of tourism and recreation – related activities. The objective of *combating seasonality and improving prospects for SMEs through diversification of maritime and coastal tourism products and development of niche markets* provides links to all of the project proposals listed above, including:

- marine sport, marinas and nautical leisure activities; supporting multi-access routes and events,
- port services, including those for cruise passengers; which would support cruise ports as gateways,
- identifying and promoting cultural and natural attractions of the Atlantic seaboard such as artisanal fishing, local cuisine and maritime heritage – facilitating joint marketing efforts, and
- protecting and restoring tourist attractions, including coastal and underwater cultural attractions and maritime heritage sites, with archaeological, ecological or historical value – showcasing Celtic Cultural Connections around the Irish Sea region.

Shipping

Potential Projects	
S1 Irish Sea Hub	Development of Irish Sea port capacity and hub and spoke connections to as part of strategic response to changing patterns of global trade/logistics.
S2 Development of Leisure Boating and Cruise Tourism	Coordinated upgrading of new berths, marinas offers scope to take pressure off SW England. Improving Irish sea Cruise Tourism Connections/marketing.
S3 Linking Port and Regeneration of Coastal Communities	Developing spin off benefits of port development for local communities could include job creation, associated training and environmental improvements.

Links to the Atlantic Action Plan

Project proposals for shipping relate to three priorities of the AAP. Developing Irish Sea ports as a hub for global shipping routes corresponds to Priority 3, to “*Improve accessibility and connectivity*” of the Atlantic Area, whilst developing leisure boating and cruise tourism ties neatly to objectives for creating a *socially inclusive and sustainable model of regional development* under Priority 4.

Finally, in relation to port development and regeneration of coastal communities, any new developments in shipping or associated sectors such as engineering and logistics services will require a skilled local workforce. *Putting in place educational and training measures* and *raising awareness of sea-related careers* (objectives of Priority 1) will help to ensure that our coastal communities are well equipped to meet the demands of working in the maritime sector.

Monitoring and Surveillance

Monitoring and Surveillance	
MS1 New applications for Innovations in Marine Monitoring Technology	To match developments in marine monitoring technology with traditional and new marine industries.
MS2 Development of Citizen Science projects	
MS3 Socio-economic Monitoring of the Irish sea region	To extend monitoring in the Irish Sea region which is focussed on environmental conditions to include socioeconomic monitoring. This could include improved monitoring of security of goods in supply chains and illegal movement of goods and people.

Proposals for monitoring and surveillance projects largely contribute to the achievement of Priority 2 of the Atlantic Action Plan, to *“Protect, secure and develop the potential of the Atlantic marine and coastal environment”*. As part of this the AAP supports *developing new instruments and platforms for ocean observation and ecosystem monitoring*, but also recognises the importance of *developing a **European Atlantic ocean observing and predictive capability**, based on existing structures, platforms and mechanisms*. In this respect innovations in marine monitoring technology that make technology useful for both new and traditional sectors and feed into existing monitoring efforts could have great potential. Similarly, developing citizen science projects that increase environmental monitoring capacities should be explored.

The extension of monitoring systems in the Irish Sea to cover socioeconomic indicators responds to Priority 4 of the AAP, to *“**Create a socially inclusive and sustainable model of regional development**”*. Under this priority *developing appropriate and usable marine socio-economic indicators to measure, compare and follow trends in the development of the blue economy* is key to understanding and addressing the issues faced by Atlantic coastal communities.

Appendix 1

List of ISMF Blue Growth Conference Delegates

Action International Ministries (UK)	Reiver Renewables
AECOM	RIBA
Anglo-NI Fish Producers Organisation	Royal Haskoning DHV
Appleby Global	Scottish Power Renewables
BEACON Wales, University of Aberystwyth	SEACAMS Bangor University
British Irish Commercial Bar Association	SJF Archaeology
Cardiff University	Solway Firth Partnership
Celtic Seas Partnership WWF-UK	South West Regional Authority (Ireland)
Centre for Marine and Coastal Studies	Stena Line
Cheshire Wildlife Trust	University of Central Lancashire
Coastal & Marine Research Centre, University College Cork	University of Edinburgh
Conwy County Borough Council	University of Liverpool
Dublin Regional Authority	University of Ulster
Environment Agency	Warwick Energy Limited
European Commission, DG MARE	Wessex Archaeology
Harris Pye UK Ltd	Wirral Borough Council
IBERS, Aberystwyth University	
Irish Sea Rim	
Kingfisher Environmental Services	
LCRI Marine Energy	
Liverpool John Moores University	
Lloyd's Register	
Marine Management Organisation	
Marine Scotland	
MEDIN Partnership	
Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service	
Natural England	
Natural Power Consultants	
Natural Resources Wales	
NERC Centre for Ecology and Hydrology	
Newcastle University	
North East Partnership, Northern Ireland	
North Wales Tidal Energy & Coastal Protection Co Ltd	
North West Coastal Forum	
North West Energy Gateway Ltd	
Northern Ireland Marine Task Force	
NW Inshore and Fisheries Conservation Authority	
RAS Aquaculture Research Ltd	

Further Information

For further information and any queries about the Blue Growth Project Prospectus please get in touch with us at:

info@irishseamaritimeforum.org

Or if you wish to directly contact the ISMF secretariat:

Sue Kidd and Lynne McGowan
Department of Geography and Planning
School of Environmental Sciences
University of Liverpool
Gordon Stephenson Building
Liverpool L69 7ZQ
Tel: +44 (0) 151 794 3111
suekidd@liv.ac.uk
l.mcgowan@liverpool.ac.uk

Caroline Salthouse
Regional Coastal Project Officer
North West Coastal Forum
Ainsdale Discovery Centre
The Promenade
Shore Road
Ainsdale-on-Sea, Southport
PR8 2QB
Tel: +44 (0) 151 934 2966
caroline.salthouse@sefton.gov.uk

This report is also available to download from the Irish Sea Maritime Forum website:
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