Promoting Effective Governance of the Channel Ecosystem
Promouvoir une gouvernance efficace de l'écosystème de la Manche

# 11 Partnerships established across the Channel supporting sustainable marine governance.

## ABSTRACT

This report discusses the various forms of partnerships established across the Channel that potentially relate to sustainable marine governance. It is based on a review of experiences from the projects in PEGASEAS, including Interreg project partnerships themselves, in order to (1) identify different forms of partnerships and (2) determine how projects contribute to their development. This report presents a typology of partnerships supporting marine governance, which are found in the Channel region, with Interreg projects representing only one type of partnership. It then reviews the benefits and difficulties of project partnerships and reflects on how new project activity can be used as an opportunity to (1) build a temporary partnership or (2) to establish a more formal or long-term partnership.

## KEY WORDS

GOVERNANCE

PARTNERSHIPS

MANAGERS

STAKEHOLDERS

RESEARCH

POLICY

NGO

## DESCRIPTION OF KEY FINDINGS

A partnership is a relationship between individuals or groups, in which they agree to cooperate to achieve their mutual interests. They may have some sort of formal agreement as a basis, which may also be legal in nature. Marine and coastal governance is complex as it deals with many different interests, causes and campaigns, responsibilities, policy issues and sectors at inter-related scales. Partnerships can provide a mechanism to bring together and coordinate the complex elements of marine and coastal governance. In this way the activities of interested parties are more effective, support more efficient management and contribute towards meeting sustainability goals.

As a capitalization project, PEGASEAS provides the opportunity to examine the different forms of cooperation, considering the question: 'What are the forms of partnership in the Channel region that support marine governance?' For the purposes of this report, the definition of partnerships excludes commercial partnerships where services are provided for monetary reward or individuals working together. The first section proposes a typology of the partnerships observed in the Channel area that relate to coastal and marine governance. The second section identifies

key benefits and difficulties encountered in transnational projects. This is based on interviews conducted with project leaders in the PEGASEAS cluster. This review of partnerships does not include the discussion about stakeholders and public engagement which is dealt with separately under the theme "communication and stakeholder involvement".

## A typology of partnerships that support marine and coastal governance

A partnership is considered in this section to be any form of voluntary cooperation amongst organisations that has specific defined and agreed purposes from which mutual benefits are expected. Such partnerships are very variable according to their attributes, which include:

- Their purpose (campaigning, managing, guiding etc.)
- The type of partners involved
- The lead organisation (local government, industry, third sector or research)
- Their duration (limited or not)
- Their status (forming a legal entity or not)
- If they are funded publically or by private/voluntary subscription

Marine and coastal governance partnerships usually involve three different kinds of partners:

- Organisations with legally defined responsibilities (e.g. central or local government);
- Organisations representing interests (sectors, professions) or causes and campaigns (NGOs); and
- Experts (technical or scientific).

Two main kinds of partnerships are considered in this report, based on their relevance to the issue of developing partnerships for better environmental governance of the Channel:

- **Sectoral Partnerships** where participants have similar needs and expectations : e.g. a knowledge or data based partnership of scientists from different organizations or disciplines; a policy based partnership of managers from different sectors or governments or a campaigning partnership of stakeholder groups
- **Integrated Partnerships** which include several sectors. Such partnerships have proved very valuable in environmental management. They have great value in knowledge development and sharing, policy design and policy implementation or awareness raising. However, they can be more difficult to develop as they require people to collaborate across their organisations' 'cultural' boundaries and areas of interest.

Research partnerships exist in many different forms. Some are found in the formal structure of research organisations, such as joint research units or institutes where people from different disciplines and institutions work together. Others are more limited in duration and exist for a specific purpose. Projects funded by competitive calls are now the most common way to work in research and, in many cases, funding bodies call for collaboration between two or more organisations thus increasing the amount of scientific partnerships. Competitive calls are widely used to promote applied science, with incentives to work and partnership across discipline boundaries, and particularly for collaboration between natural and social sciences. That has, in turn, created an impetus for more formal cooperation agreements in the form of Memoranda of Agreement, and eventually re-organisation of research, allowing for more lasting collaborations. The calls for research projects also often refer to the need for inclusion of end-users, policy-makers and stakeholders. This has opened the door to science led integrated partnerships. This has proven to be essential in the area of environmental management as a way to link science and policy in which national funding agencies play a key part. The research Framework Programs of the European Union (e.g. Horizon 2020 over the next few years), has also fostered international collaboration in research over the past decades and has emphasized the need for inclusion of industry and other stakeholders.

It is generally considered that industry, as well as large NGOs, are very well versed in bringing groups together in order to lobby for their interests or concerns. The CAMIS project emphasises the fact that closer collaboration among the actors of given sectors such as ports, marinas or tourism should be encouraged, as more coordination provides potential for greater regional economic growth. The SETARMS project also indicated that such partnerships among operators could help facilitate collaboration and sharing experiences; in order to deal with environmental problems.

Environmental management is a domain for policy-makers at different levels and sectors within their administration to work together. Issues have become more complex and more inclusive. Participatory governance has been recognized as a way to improve policy efficiency, enabling stakeholders and scientists to work more closely. Beyond the simple consultation of stakeholders or ordering of expertise services, managers are engaging more in integrated partnerships under the aegis of projects, and even beyond. The reason for that is in part regulatory, as most national and European legislation in the domain of environmental management requires that such partnerships be instituted for the purpose of formal engagement. However, the ever-increasing complexity of issues also requires that cooperation be developed on a voluntary basis within day to day actions. Delivering planning and management of coastal and marine space at scales that are meaningful for environmental management, including considering the connection with watersheds, is a typical example. The implementation of the Water Framework Directive[1] and Marine Strategy Framework[2] Directive (WFD and MSFD) poses the challenge of such policy partnership across the Channel. At regional or global scales, international fora such as the OSPAR Commission[3] or the International Maritime Organization (IMO)[4] provide a framework for international cooperation in different fields. However, as demonstrated by projects dealing with marine conservation or invasive species in the Channel area, there is a need for cooperation at smaller scales and in many different areas. The Interreg projects are a good example of that, although the engagement of managers and local governments in such projects is not always easy to obtain for various technical and political reasons.

Most would not contest that integrated partnerships are essential for addressing environmental challenges. They are complex and require that policy-makers, managers, stakeholders and scientists work closely together. They can be science-, industry- or management-led projects or more lasting partnerships. Within the Channel area, it is recognised that Interreg is an important source of funding for such collaboration at the international level. More lasting partnerships exist also at different levels, from local to national. Some of them are statutory, and have to be set up formally as part of schemes to implement environmental policies (Water Framework Directive, Natura 2020, Marine Protected Areas) so as to guarantee some level of stakeholder engagement. Others are voluntary, with an emblematic example being the coastal forums in the UK. The consultative Sea and Coast Conference in Brittany[5] is one such example. This conference was established by the Brittany Region in 2009 as a consultative forum for stakeholders, local and state administration to discuss the coastal and marine policy agenda. It meets three or four times a year.

As mentioned already, the duration of partnerships is an important factor. Some partnerships exist in the long-term whereas others are more transient. The objectives of the partnership can often influence this; for example a partnership focused on a single and local environmental issue may resolve this relatively quickly so allowing the partnership to be dissolved. A partnership with a more complex set of issues to overcome may take longer or the partnership may have as an objective, for example, the long-term 'good management' of a site, therefore requiring its existence over many years.

1 European Commission (2000): *The EU Water Framework Directive: integrated river basin management for Europe.* Directive 2000/60/EC. Available at: http://ec.europa. eu/environment/water/water-framework/ index_en.html

2 European Community (2008). *Directive 2008/56/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 2008 establishing a framework for community action in the field of marine environmental policy (Marine Strategy Framework Directive).* Available at: http://eur-lex. europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ. do?uri=OJ:L:2008:164:0019:0040:EN:PDF

3 OSPAR Commission Website Available at: http://www.ospar.org/

4 International Maritime Organization Website. Available at: http://www.imo.org/ Pages/home.aspx

5 For further information see: http://www. bretagne.fr/internet/jcms/prod_207274/16e- conference-regionale-de-la-mer-et-du- littoral

A long-term partnership may also need some sort of formal agreement whereas collaboration between researchers for a particular project may be able to undertake its work without this formality. Such a formal agreement can in turn be implemented within a legal structure. Many are found in the form of association or charity. This allows for the members to act collectively as one legal entity but also to pool resources and to voice their opinions more efficiently. Such bodies, whether they be sectoral partnerships like an association representing an industry or an integrated partnership like a coastal forum in UK, are very valuable partners in projects as demonstrated by many Interreg projects. Such projects help maintain these partnerships to develop their action in the long term.

There are many way for a temporary partnership to be given longer duration for their action. Some projects, like the CHARM project, have been given the opportunity by Interreg to pursue their action under successive projects. In other cases, organisations from different sectors or with different functions have collaborated in projects that have provided opportunities to develop the scope of their cooperation in different areas and with different sources of funding. In that sense, Interreg programs provide a unique opportunity for organisations with very different cultures and interests to come to work together and create new partnerships.

As a last comment, we may also say that it is often useful to undertake an analysis of a partnership to review its effectiveness. This can be undertaken from within the partnership but can, on occasion, have a more objective critique if done externally such as by a specially initiated project or by a specialist consultant.

## Advantages and difficulties of partnerships

Partnerships provide a unique opportunity for those with a common interest to come together. Integration of many interests is therefore considered to be the key strength and value of partnerships. The common interests may be very general, such as the overall well-being of an area, or it may be very specific, and relate to a particular habitat or biological community. Partnerships can help overcome the differences in culture between organisations and sectoral groups. This section of the report analyses both the advantages of partnerships and some of the difficulties they encounter.

The way the partnership is made up depends very much on who needs to get involved according to their 'stake,' expertise or aspiration for change. A clear advantage of a partnership is therefore that a wide range of skills and expertise can be brought together. A range of different areas of expertise have been identified from the projects that have been analysed as part of the PEGASEAS project.

This benefits expected from these partnerships are numerous, including:
- Advice and experience, bringing different perspectives to the common research;
- Competences/skills on specific subjects, scientific methods, modelling and analysis;
- Data (for example to build models, study temporal series, make comparative analysis);
- The use of their laboratory and the sharing of materials/instruments and tools (for example in the CRESH project, the exchange of cuttlefish samples allowed to save time, get access to samples from different areas).

Partnerships often reveal new and useful links and opportunities to collaborate. An example is the cross Channel data collection enabled by Ifremer's links with Brittany Ferries within the CHARM project. Different benefits were observed when **stakeholders or managers** were involved in the partnership as their expertise of the marine governance was different from the scientist expertise. Partners may have interest in sharing:

- Knowledge and skills, which are really different according to the way that organizations (research or management) work, their experience, or their home country.

- Recommendations and advice. For example, in several Interreg projects such as VALMER and CRESH, meetings, fora and round-tables were organised with practitioners to talk about progress from the projects, explain their findings and also to acquire some feedbacks and comments from practitioners. By sharing field and scientific knowledge, the partners are able to produce management guidelines including research concerns and fitting local context. This is very valuable for long lasting sustainable governance. Besides that, working with researchers can provide scientific grounds to managers' action. It prevents the unjustified call into question of the managing propositions or actions and so is an important support to effective governance.

The CAMIS project has extensively used forums and workshops for sharing knowledge and skills, and to deliver recommendations and advice. There has been a real added value in the uniqueness of the partnership and the amount of communication and engagement.

In the Marinexus project, **volunteers** were involved within partnerships, specifically contributing to MPA monitoring and invasive species recording. Without these volunteers, the project would not have managed to collect such a large amount of data. The volunteers also gained benefits, specifically in the form of training, new knowledge and had a raised level of awareness.

The CAMIS project is a unique case considering the diversity of its partnership and the wide coverage of issues. It created a momentum for a durable cooperation among authorities across the Channel, with support from scientists and sectors. If supported further (financially and politically), this could lead to the creation of a permanent non-statutory forum that could advise policy and foster regional cooperation within and across sectors. Environmental governance and economic development would both benefit from the existence of such a forum.

Although most of the projects involved in PEGASEAS have a strong research component, the CAMIS project also highlighted the potential for partnerships among authorities or business operators[6]. Beyond the recognized benefits for economic development, these could also be advocated as a way to improve the environmental governance of the Channel. The SETARMS project, run by local and port authorities, addressed the issue of ports sediment management, a major environmental concern. Such cooperation allows for sharing of experience, expertise and resources. Many more environmental issues could be addressed in that way.

Thus, partnerships create links and enrich partner networks on which new projects or management organisations could rely on. In the case of European projects, they help develop a stronger cross-Channel link through common goals and activities. Finally whatever the form of the collaboration, working with different partners requires the building of common objectives and a shared governance of the project. This generates more robust results and brings different and new perspectives to the work.

Each of the studied projects had their own difficulties, which often depended on their size and budget but some of them seem quite common across all projects. The following reviews the difficulties most commonly mentioned by project leaders that have been interviewed.

**Language:** The need to work in both English and French in cross-Channel projects requires an amount of time and money that is often underestimated. Unfortunately it is not possible for all the partners to speak both English and French fluently. As a result, communication can be difficult during meetings. In the same way, it has sometimes been difficult to set up real cross-border exchange activities.

**6** See CAMIS Project Final Report at http://camis.arcmanche.eu/stock/files/user4/CHC Project FINAL REPORT.pdf (p. 27), and more sectoral reports about marinas (Marina 2020) at: https://camis.arcmanche.eu/stock/files/user4/Marina_2020_industry_report.pdf or the collaboration between port and local authorities (Port centricity) at: https://camis.arcmanche.eu/stock/files/user4/Port_Centricity_EN.pdf

Good communication is essential in projects and to be sure that everyone fully understands the meetings, it is essential to plan budget and time for translation. Each meeting and report should be in both languages (French and English for cross-Channel projects). One way to facilitate the meetings can be to do the PowerPoint presentation in one language and the talk in another. However, this may result in some confusion among the audience who understand both languages if the spoken and written content does not match. An alternative is the use of simultaneous or consecutive translation, but again confusion may occur if the translator does not interpret the spoken word in accordance with the content appearing in the PowerPoint. Different options for ensuring successful delivery of material to a mixed-language audience need to therefore be considered more often in planning events, for example.

**Administrative management:** Another issue raised by some project partners is that some people/organisation have encountered problems with regards to the complexity of the procedures, and suggest that making more details and explanations available would be welcomed. For example, this might include the need for training staff in the appropriate administrative skills necessary to deal with financial aspects of projects. While partners from businesses may have people with the appropriate skills already in place, some potential project partners may not be able to afford to employ people to undertake these tasks, particularly voluntary sector organisations. Appropriate training to help those organisations be able to participate in projects and to understand the administrative tasks and budget claims, for example, may need to be factored into grant applications, or negotiated between partners, to permit all partners to benefit from the skills and time required to complete the administrative aspects of a project. Clearly setting administrative rules at the beginning of the program and maintaining these throughout a project, particularly for expenses claiming, would be particularly beneficial. This could help minimise any issues towards the end of projects when partnerships are being dismantled and final outputs, deliverables or financial elements need to be completed.

**Identifying partners and partners' relationships:** It is not always easy to primarily identify which partnerships might be useful. Thus, the absence of industry was observed in several projects. They could have helped by advising on the research they would be interested in, providing tools, methods, access and contacts. When the projects were research (or stakeholder)-focused, the absence of stakeholders (or scientists and/or practitioners and/or judicial partner) was sometimes felt. However, to get involved in scientific partnerships, management agencies need to work on emerging themes that interest researchers. Unfortunately it is administratively heavy and not all types of organizations can participate as real project partners (and not solely be a research support). By having partnerships of these different governance components, the projects outputs could have been even better.

**Data collection, exchange and communication:** To avoid problem of data exchange, it should be clear which data should be exchanged between partners during the projects, which data/outputs should be communicated (via internet, papers, etc.) and shared with the public to raise awareness, avoid duplication and improve the governance with the exception of sensitive data. The partners should know if that would be the case before the start of the projects. For access to sensitive data, agreement on who should have access should be approved in advance. In addition, agreement between partners should be done at the start of the project in order to avoid, inconsistencies in data types, classification and incompatibility of data aggregation, for example. It also should be clear from the start of the project that each important outcome should be communicated by, for example, publishing scientific papers.

**Coordination:** Coordinators or project managers should monitor whether every partnership is working correctly (for example, the progress). In order to be sure that all partners are doing their actions fully and in time, every step should be fully explained in the project grant proposal. In case of non-compliance, modifications should be able to be made (e.g. redistribution of the funding).

There are project management issues in coordinating the different contributions by members of the partnership into common deliverables. The work done by people during the projects is never equal; some people will be more involved than others, especially in projects with a large number of partners. This might be due to different goals in the governance domains; in that case everything should be clear between partners from the beginning.

The coordinators should organise meetings in convenient place for most of the partners to be sure to have a high level of participation (a remote location is time consuming and expensive for some partners to attend).

**Stakeholder and manager involvement:** Some groups seem to not be receptive to scientific meetings (i.e. weak audience of practitioners). The question here is whether they do not want to hear scientist recommendations, or is it rather a problem of approach; do scientists overawe other partners? Is there a lack of capacity within research to communicate its findings? In addition, it appears that managers and policy-makers change quite often (depending on career stage or local authority elections, for example) and it makes the relationship more difficult if there is no continuity in representation. Some staff may have responsibility for an issue but are too busy to fully participate as they have other work responsibilities.

Finally, for some stakeholders and managers the fact that scientists solicit their advice or spread scientific concerns/knowledge without really getting involved in the field is a barrier to the establishment of a strong, long-lasting partnership. It also compromises the effective application of scientific recommendations. Thus, to build real cooperation and effective common work in 'governance' projects, the partners (both scientists and stakeholders) must share the management issues and not confine themselves to their direct interests. Inclusiveness should be a key concern for project leaders, both for internal coordination and for the engagement of stakeholders and managers.

# CONCLUSIONS/WORK LEADS

There are a wide range of partnerships which are of value for management and governance as it means more contacts, collective work opportunities and better information. Projects (within or outside Interreg) give the opportunity to establish, strengthen and develop collaborative relationships. Thus, the more complex the governance is, the more important and integrated partnerships need to be. Indeed, sustainable marine governance requires scientific knowledge in many different fields and the involvement and collaboration of a wide range of stakeholders. It therefore appears that research-manager partnerships will become more and more important in the future.

Involving managers from local, regional, national or cross-border scales may be difficult in partnership proceedings, but is offers benefits for the different collaborators as it stimulates cooperation. However, the relevance of a particular type of partnership depends on the purpose. For instance, adaptation to climate change, setting of MPAs, management of invasive species, safety of maritime traffic or fisheries management are themes for which cross-Channel partnerships (involving experts and managers) is very appropriate. However some problems will, by contrast, require strong local-level collaboration, with stakeholders being advised by experts (e.g issues of coastal water quality, planning of marine spaces). Sharing of concerns or experience among authorities, NGOs or businesses, or delivering environmental policy, does not necessarily require the presence of scientists.

Thus, an interesting way to promote effective marine and coastal governance would be to know what facilitates or complicates the feasibility of the collaboration and the institutionalization of partnerships. It is often difficult to work across political boundaries (inter-regional, international) although resource or environmental management requires cooperation for ecological or socio-economic reasons. In any case, communication and end-user engagement appear to be key factors for success, as they raise ownership of the outcomes of the collaborative work conducted under partnerships. Few specific areas of concern to be considered in the future were raised during the interviews conducted with project leaders or partners. They are the need:

- to consider and facilitate the participation of all parties needed to complete the objectives of a project; this includes particular attention to potential partners raising issues about their capacity to raise match funding or the necessary administrative skills,
- to support by training, and exchange of experience, adequate coordination capacity so that project implementation is carefully monitored,
- to address, in detail, the conditions for exchange and sharing of data when developing the project, so that it does not become an issue that impacts on the project's realisation; and also the conditions for communicating information outside the project,
- to consider that language is a major barrier to effective collaborative work across the Channel; sufficient resources should be devoted to ensure good communication within projects. The quality of exchanges should be a primary concern of the coordinators.

Finally, it is essential that the objectives of a project, or any other form of temporary or long-lasting partnership, be clearly set out and shared among all partners from the start. Good governance of partnership should also set clear procedures to make adjustments in the work plan in such a way that all parties concerned are involved and that the reasons for any changes be transparent to all in the project.

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