



OCTA Newsletter

Overseas Countries and Territories Association



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EDITORIAL

“Getting our message across: OCTA seeks to increase its visibility and build strategic partnerships through a revamped and effective communication strategy”

At the 14th Ministerial Conference of the Overseas Countries and Territories of the European Union held in Brussels on 25 February 2016 a new strategic direction post-2015 for OCTA was formally adopted. The OCTA Strategy 2015 - 2020 has three main pillars: improving policy dialogue; promoting strategic partnerships and fostering sustainable development in the OCTs. The three pillars are interrelated and mutually reinforcing. Their ultimate objective is the creation of inclusive, participative, smart and sustainable societies in the overseas territories. As enunciated in the new OCTA strategic document achieving the desired outcomes identified for each pillar depends much on the level of skill of the OCTs as well as on the visibility acquired by OCTA and the OCTs in their respective environments. In effect, communication and visibility provide a firm basis for each of the aforementioned pillars of the new OCTA strategy.

In view of its new strategic direction and the work that will have to be done during the coming years to implement the strategy OCTA has started work on a new communication strategy. The strategy will cover the coming three years, address both the internal as well as the external dimensions of OCTA’s communication and will be accompanied by a communication plan for the period 2016 - 2017. In addition a new user-friendly, interactive and updated website will be designed and made operational.

OCTA’s new communication strategy will be focussed on realising a greater engagement on OCT issues with stakeholders at the national, regional and international levels. Knowledge exchange, the sharing of best practices and linking up with relevant domestic and international sources of information on OCT matters as well as with social media will be the main features of our communication strategy. One of our main messages will be to inform the world of the added value of OCTs as important partners of global development given their roles as centres of excellence and hubs of innovation in areas of transcendental importance for the survival of humanity such as the adaptation to and mitigation of climate change and the use of renewable sources of energy.

Therefore an effective communication strategy for the coming years will go a long way in getting OCTA’s messages across.

Mrs Ann PHILLIPS, ExCo Secretary

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The implementation of the financial assistance provided to the OCTs under the 11th EDF: Allocations by sectors of concentration

On 22th February 2016, the European Commission has published a report to the Council summarizing the implementation of the financial assistance provided to the OCT under the 11th European Development Fund (EDF). Here is an outlook of the proposed allocations by sectors of concentration dispatched amongst the OCTs.

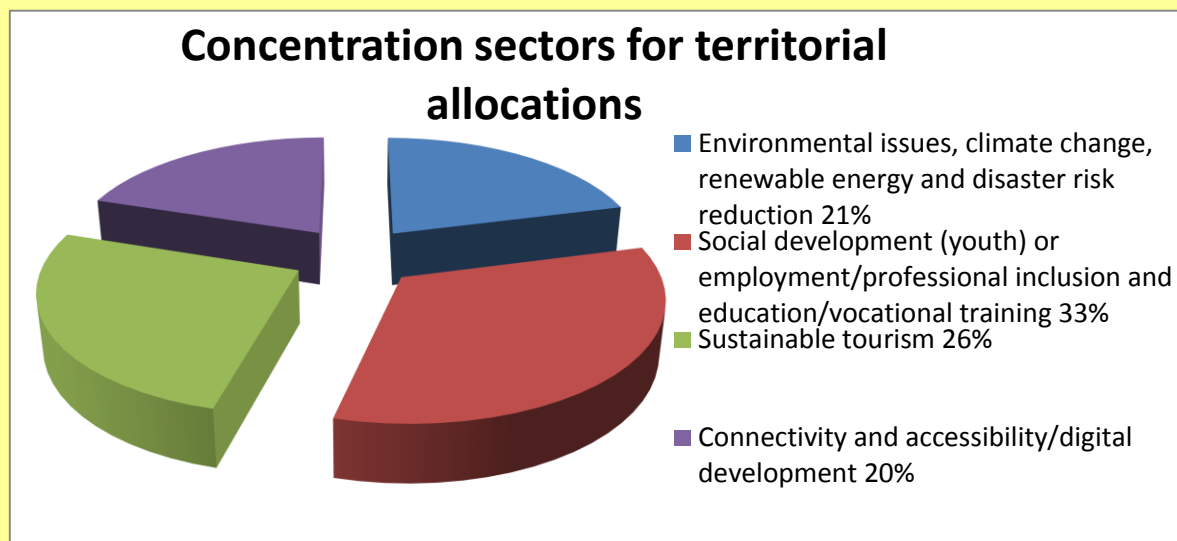
The 11th EDF-OCT resources available to the OCTs split into, among others, the two following allocations: EUR 229.5 million for the territorial (bilateral) allocations and EUR 100 million for regional cooperation and integration.

Proposed sectors of concentration

The strategic orientation of the programmes has been established, and concentration sectors have been proposed for all programmes, both territorial and regional/thematic.

Indeed, the proposed concentration sectors for the territorial allocations are markedly grouped around key themes, which broadly include:

- ☞ **Environmental issues, climate change, renewable energy and disaster risk reduction** (accounting for 5 of the 16 OCTs with indicative territorial allocations and representing 21% of the total 11th EDF-OCT territorial allocations);
- ☞ **Social development (youth) or employment/professional inclusion and education/vocational training** (accounting 5 out of 16 OCTs and representing 33% of 11th EDF-OCT indicative territorial allocations);
- ☞ **Sustainable tourism** (accounting 3 out of 16 OCTs and representing 26% of 11th EDF-OCT indicative territorial allocations);
- ☞ **Connectivity and accessibility/digital development** (accounting 3 out of 16 OCTs and representing 20% of 11th EDF-OCT indicative territorial allocations).



Concentration sectors by regions

The relevant proposals for concentration sectors are as follows:

- ☞ **Caribbean:** Sustainable energy and marine biodiversity;
- ☞ **Pacific Ocean:** Environment and sustainable management of natural resources (sub-sectors climate change and biodiversity);
- ☞ **Indian Ocean:** Observation, management, conservation of terrestrial and marine ecosystem;
- ☞ **Thematic programme (all OCTs):** Sustainable use of natural resources. Subsectors include: a) Climate Change, including disaster risk reduction, and b) Sustainable Energy). ☐

11 th EDF-OCT Indicative Territorial allocations		
OCT	(in million EUR)	Proposed sector of Concentration
Anguilla	14.05	Education
Aruba	13.05	Education
Bonaire	3.95	Social Development - Youth
Curaçao	16.95	Renewable energy
Falkland Islands	5.90	Connectivity and Accessibility
French Polynesia	29.95	Tourism
Montserrat	18.40	Sustainable Energy
New Caledonia and Dependencies	29.80	Employment and professional inclusion
Pitcairn	2.40	Tourism
Saba	3.55	Renewable energy
Saint-Pierre et Miquelon	26.35	Sustainable tourism and maritime connectivity
Saint Helena and Dependencies	21.50	Connectivity and accessibility
Sint Eustatius	2.45	Energy
Sint Maarten	7.00	Water and sanitation
Turks et Caicos Islands	14.60	Education
Wallis et Futuna Islands	19.60	Digital development
Total	229.5	
Greenland (Heading 4 of EU budget)	(in million EUR)	Sector of Concentration
Total	217.8	Education and vocational training

11th EDF-OCT Indicative Regional allocations		
Region	(in million EUR)	Proposed sector of concentration
Caribbean	40.00	Sustainable energy and marine biodiversity
Pacific	36.00	Climate change and biodiversity
Indian Ocean	4.00	Observation, management, conservation of terrestrial and marine ecosystem
Thematic programme (all-OCT)	16.00 – 18.00	Climate Change, including disaster risk reduction, and Sustainable Energy
Support measures to the Association of OCTs (OCTA)	2 – 4.00	Technical Assistance to OCTA
Total	100,00	

11th EDF-OCT Technical Cooperation Facility		
Technical Cooperation Facility	(in million EUR)	Comment
Total	8.50	EUR 3m committed in 1/2015 (EUR 1m contracted by end-2015)

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REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE COUNCIL on the implementation assistance provided to the Overseas Countries and Territories under the 11th European Development Fund

NetBiome and BiodivERsA networks events 4th - 6th April 2016, Brussels

During the three-day event, the networks NetBiome and BiodivERsA discussed the relevance of research cooperation for the sustainable management of OCTs and Overseas Regions (ORs) biodiversity assets.

The BiodivERsA Workshop “*Identifying overseas research needs and priorities*” was coupled with the presentation of the 7 collaborative research projects funded by the 2010 NetBiome ERA-Net joint call; these projects aim at reinforcing the NetBiome/BiodivERsA governance of overseas entities biodiversity research in support of their sustainable development. Among other results, the mapping of research centres on biodiversity, the stakeholders engagement and the science-policy interfacing society were highlighted.

Towards strengthening OCTs’ place within the ERANET structure



© NETBIOME - CSA 1

Recommendations such as better directions for key research cooperation, improvement of tools for effective participation in biodiversity management and mapping of ecological limits to extractive activities were identified.

The comparative advantage of the overseas entities regarding biodiversity management is a clear asset to the EU. ORs and OCTs science based results should be additional to the EU based research. The challenge that ORs and OCTs face is to make their voice heard in the EU relevant institutions.

To maximise the added value of Europe’s overseas entities, collaboration and recognition of the overseas entities specificities, OCTs and ORs as strategic space in the overall European Research Area still needs to be acknowledged. On this basis, overseas entities could organise strategic joint forces to convey to policy makers the importance that this particular areas hold in the light of EU’s socio economic challenges.

Netbiome’s final event at the European Parliament

The last day of the events was dedicated to the final event of the NetBiome-CSA project, held on the European Parliament premises on the 6th April.

Over 50 participants attended the 2nd NetBiome-CSA International Conference entitled “Boosting Biodiversity Research Cooperation – A NetBiome Roadmap for European (Sub)Tropical Overseas”, including the French overseas ministry, fisheries and other research organisations, and Officers from some EC DGs (Environment, Research & Innovation).



©MEP EP INTERGROUP CLIMATE CHANGE, BIODIVERSITY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The event was dedicated to presenting the birth and evolution of the NetBiome network and the future pathways to explore and integrate research outputs for the improvement of (sub)tropical biodiversity management. NetBiome stands as a unique example of the promotion of a research network built by and for the overseas, fostering open innovation and open science, facilitating the uptake of results. The conference was chaired by Ricardo Serrão Santos MEP and Co-Chair of the Working Group “Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services” of the EP Intergroup “Climate Change, Biodiversity and Sustainable Development”, member also of the BiodivERsA Advisory Board.

The first panel tackled the birth of the NetBiome network and the major scientific opportunities for research in EU overseas entities supported by the 2010 NetBiome ERA-Net Joint call. Research priorities have been better aligned with societal and sustainable development at the local level and clear assets have been identified.

Added-value of the Netbiome network

The NetBiome network has:

- Showcased OCTs and ORs as hotspots accounting for most of the EU’s marine and terrestrial biodiversity, including iconic ecosystems;
- Served as open laboratories for Climate Change as unique ecological systems for pilot test and data collection, involving local stakeholders at all stages of the projects, understanding and conserving biodiversity and providing solutions to environmental issues;
- Built a transoceanic and transregional network of partners with complementary skills and expertise, strengthening links between mainland EU and overseas biodiversity research.

Better coordination of research activities

The second panel tackled the improvement of research activities coordination in the overseas entities, the need to use of existing networks and the importance of user driven research. It was showed how the NetBiome network started a consistent engagement with policy makers and other stakeholders. The development of the [Biodiversity Management Toolbox](#), an interactive one stop shop for biodiversity management is a clear response to the need of an improved research cooperation in the overseas entities. It was also pointed out that the [policy recommendations and research priorities](#) identified by the NetBiome-CSA project shall now be put into policy and research actions to an effective smart and sustainable management of (sub)tropical biodiversity in ORs and OCTs.

Once more, OCTA was made visible in this dialogue by the active participation of its representatives on the NetBiome/BiodivERsA events, as well as through its participation in the [NetBiome-CSA promotional video](#) that was projected in the framework of the 2nd NetBiome-CSA International Conference at the European Parliament conference. OCTA is also member of the Advisory Board of BiodivERsA.

In sum, both events allowed to broaden the discussion around ORs and OCTs as important repositories of biodiversity and natural wilderness over which the European Union is accountable. Fundamental research should be secured under EU funding, to support evidence-based responses not only to cope with the EU’s societal challenge in the light of the sustainable development of its overseas entities, but also being regarded as knowledge of global significance. □

The Technical Assistance Team (TAT)

Training on European institutions in Paris 7th and 8th April 2016

The second module of the training course provided by the European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA), commissioned by OCTA, on “*Promoting better understanding of the functioning of the Commission and European institutions*” was held in Paris on 7th and 8th April 2016, in the premises of the Delegation of French Polynesia for the second time in a row.

A maximum of ten participants were required for each day of the course to allow individual coaching. Except for the French Southern and Antarctic Lands (TAAF) which were unable to attend, all other French countries and territories expressed interest and were present: New Caledonia (two participants), French Polynesia (six participants), Saint-Pierre et Miquelon (two participants), Saint-Barthélemy (one participant) and Wallis and Futuna (two participants). The people present represented a wide range of



working environments, from those well versed in Europe and its workings, to those with occasional contact with it, to beginners.

Better targeting to improve influence towards European bodies

The instructor, Koeth Wolfgang, offered numerous tips on how to initiate, improve and optimise the choice of targets on which to best focus human and financial resources when addressing and influencing the EU and its 28 Member States. Then, following lunch featuring local dishes, participants concentrated on a practical case study of restrictive draft regulation on *aloe vera* that might directly impact small OCT producers.

All of the participants considered the course to be a huge success. Not only was it accessible, but it provided everyone with the same information at the same time. There was clear interest in the topic of lobbying, and the course gave everyone an opportunity to better understand the European context and the strategies we need to apply to defend our OCTs' interests.

Unanimous interest in the organisation of a third training module

All participants agreed that this training programme should be held on a regular basis. At the conclusion of the course, the participants expressed a general desire for a third module with a practical focus, addressing an issue facing participating OCTs. It could include role play for example to allow participants to experience the various decision-making phases in a concrete way.

Last, and beyond purely professional aspects, the course provided an opportunity to share ideas between all the participants and experiences specific to our respective regional and local authorities. □

Mrs. Sandrine ILALIO-UGATAI

OCTA, IRENA and the QuickScan questionnaire: Supporting the OCTA Sustainable Energy Roadmap

Following the accession of OCTA to IRENA's SIDS Lighthouse Initiative in August 2015, OCTA has continued the work on Sustainable Energy and is currently identifying a baseline, using IRENA's QuickScan questionnaire.

The information coming out of the analysis of the QuickScan questionnaire will provide an assessment of the state of affairs of renewable energy in each of the OCTs, which would give us a better idea of where the individual OCTs are with regards to their own sustainable energy development and deployment, but also how advanced they are in the implementation of the OCTA Sustainable Energy Roadmap, signed in June 2015.



The QuickScan questionnaire developed as a survey tool

This assessment is being done through the use of the QuickScan questionnaire, developed by the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), as a survey tool to provide an initial baseline assessment of the readiness to deploy renewable energy, aiming at identifying key areas¹ for focusing potential support and engagement. This activity is funded by the European Union under the Technical Assistance Project to OCTA, and comes at no cost to the OCTs; however, their engagement is required, in order to be

able to finalize the assessment, and for it to have the relevant information.

An efficient way to measure challenges and opportunities

In recognizing that the OCTs have great diversity amongst them of renewable energy (RE) sources, stages of RE deployment and development, completing the QuickScan questionnaire would be the first step of a longer process to would allow stakeholders and donors have a better idea of the challenges and opportunities specific to each OCT, but also per EU Member State grouping, and on this basis have a more targeted approach to addressing technical assistance, funding and capacity building needs; either through OCTA, their EU Member State, and/or individually.

OCTA's visibility enhanced during the 2nd Summit of OCT Energy Ministers in June

The results and next steps of this activity will be discussed during a proposed 2nd Summit of OCT Energy Ministers, planned for mid-June of this year, back-to-back with the EU Sustainable Energy Week (EUSEW), for which OCTA has already secured a speaking slot at the Policy Conference (14th to 16th June 2016), for a joint event with IRENA and the Dutch EU Council Presidency, to create more exposure and awareness about the Sustainable Energy work in the OCTs. With the TA project coming to an end in May 2016, OCTA now benefits from having the step stones and momentum required to put the OCTs in the sustainable energy agenda of the EU, and create more awareness of the specific opportunities and challenges that OCTs have. □

¹ Namely in the sectors of: Institutional Framework, Knowledge Base, Planning, Financing, Deployment, Capacity Building and Cooperation.

The BEST 2.0 Programme: OCTs eligible for the next call

The BEST 2.0 Programme is part of the EU Biodiversity for Life (B4Life) Flagship Initiative, which covers the period 2014-2020. The objectives of this global initiative are to respond to global threats to biodiversity and address the need to enable sustainable development as part of the efforts to conserve ecosystems.

BEST 2.0 is meant to serve as a funding facility for small-scale and medium-scale field actions in the EU's Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs), with the overall objective to promote the conservation of biodiversity and sustainable use of ecosystem services in OCTs. The BEST initiative includes actions using ecosystem-based

approaches to climate change adaptation and mitigation, as a



basis for sustainable development. The specific objective is to enable, empower and strengthen local authorities and civil society organizations, which are committed to local development, biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of ecosystem services in OCTs.

A second call launched on 5th of May 2016

Funding opportunities under BEST 2.0 are implemented through calls for proposal within EU OCTs, which are divided into 2 categories, open at different times in the different regions. Small grants, are for activities equal or under € 50 000 and Medium Grants are for activities between € 100 000 and ≤ € 400 000. The BEST 2.0 first call for proposal was launched in 2015 and the second call for small grants was launched on the 25th of April, 2016 (for the Caribbean and the Pacific regions). On the 5th of May 2016, the second call of medium grants for the South Atlantic, Indian Ocean and the Polar/Subpolar regions has been launched.

Eligible entities to BEST 2.0

Eligible entities that can submit projects to the calls are primarily public and private bodies in the EU Overseas Countries and Territories, local NGOs, local government, municipalities, site managers, small and medium enterprises, research institutions and non-governmental organizations, involved in biodiversity conservation and sustainable development actions including also actions for climate change adaptation and mitigation.

In order to secure transparency and ownership by the OCTs in this Programme, OCTA, as the Association of the Overseas Countries and Territories of the European Union, has requested without success to be involved in the selection process of the projects. □

For more information, please visit: <https://portals.iucn.org/best/>