



**2021**  
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The Azores Declaration  
on  
*ALL ATLANTIC RESEARCH & INNOVATION FOR A SUSTAINABLE OCEAN*

*Connecting, Acting, Cooperating on Space-Climate-Ocean  
interactions*

*Ponta Delgada, Azores, June 4, 2021*

This declaration was prepared in the context of the high level Ministerial and Stakeholder forum on “ALL ATLANTIC RESEARCH & INNOVATION FOR A SUSTAINABLE OCEAN CONFERENCE”, 3-4 June 2021, co-organised by the Portuguese Presidency of the European Union Council and the European Commission following the previous “All-Atlantic Ocean Research “ fora in Brazil, Belgium and South Africa

Recognizing the contribution of the All-Atlantic Conference to the enhancement of the science diplomacy efforts focused on the Atlantic Ocean, notably those of the Action Plan of the EU Atlantic Strategy, of the Galway and Belém Statements (2013 and 2017, respectively) and of the Arrangements between the European Commission and Cabo Verde, Argentina, and Morocco, that are strengthening the cooperation across and along the Atlantic Ocean from “pole to pole”.

Acknowledging the symbolic significance of this event taking place in the middle of the Atlantic, conveying an important message about our scientific cooperation and common achievements for the benefit of the All-Atlantic community and people, so that they can trust science and its use for them and for building a sustainable future.

Highlighting both the scientific and societal forming angle and goals for the All-Atlantic community joint work, recognizing the collective inspiration and the mutual trust that has been built since the start of this All-Atlantic collaboration, in 2013, connecting more than a thousand scientific groups in recent years, with relevant results to the scientific community and our citizens.

Considering this cooperation is instrumental to respond to the challenges and ambitions stated in national and global strategies to ensure the sustainability of our Ocean.

Recognising the important role that the Atlantic International Research (AIR) Centre is playing – alongside many other research centres - in working as knowledge brokers contributing to the implementation of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development.

Highlighting the multiple sectoral perspectives discussed in the All-Atlantic Conference, combining a mission-oriented, demand-driven and problem-solving approach, which incorporates key stakeholders and covers diverse geographies, cultures and technology readiness levels.

Acknowledging that discussions fully accommodate local priorities and global challenges and thus strengthening the contribution for the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, the European Green Deal and the Horizon Europe “Starfish” Mission on Healthy Oceans, Seas, Coastal and Inland Waters, among others.

Highlights of this Conference include:

- A collective action towards a systemic approach to strengthening knowledge about the interactions between the **ocean and space for climate change and food** through integration of advanced Earth Observation systems and in-situ observation across the water column and deep ocean bottoms. This need to be complemented by advanced, user-driven, citizen-based information systems, from pole to pole, including massive data processing and the use of artificial intelligence that apply to Atlantic Ocean marine ecosystems and the human ecological impacts it is facing.
- The pandemic with which we now live demonstrates the importance of knowledge to be able to ask more accurate and difficult questions and better understand the risks we face, as well as to evolve in this new geological era of the “Anthropocene”.
- New scientific knowledge on ocean-climate interactions to effectively support the challenges of the green, blue and digital transitions that are seizing opportunities across all disciplinary areas.
- Innovation across our current institutional landscape and with diversified stakeholder groups, building the necessary economic and environmental resilience, but also addressing the social context and, above all, the inequalities that persist across our societies.
- The advancement of observation and monitoring methods, which will help guide our common future, to better understand climate changes, and to act on ocean and their ecological impacts, including the development of early warning and monitoring systems for a clean and predictable Atlantic Ocean.
- Concerted actions across the **continuum of ocean-climate-weather-space interactions** that spans from basic and translational research through **market-oriented research** into full deployment, and close links with already existing or new high-quality networked infrastructures.
- A collaborative Roadmap on ocean-climate-food-space interactions to include existing and new actors, promoting scientific and technological applications for the inclusive benefit of the communities living along and across the Atlantic. In particular, the establishment of the AIR Centre in 2018 aims to promote a collaborative and integrative approach to climate science from a knowledge-based perspective and the related international dialogues on “Atlantic Interactions”, to further develop an “Atlantic Constellation” of low-altitude microsatellites.

- The "**Digital Twin of the Earth**" concept - as realized in the EU **Destination Earth initiative (DestinE)** - as a very relevant, innovative and important objective towards a sustainable ocean. It requires the creation of a **high precision digital model of the Earth** to visualize, monitor and forecast natural and human activity on the planet aimed to support the sustainable development and adequately monitor and act on climate change and also to include Earth Observation, but equally other elements such as communication.

Our common aim is to:

- Continue to connect researchers and communities and bring people and young ocean ambassadors and entrepreneurs in contact with scientific research to deploy their results.
- Follow up on the strengthened vision of 'Connecting-Cooperating-Acting' together for the Atlantic Ocean and on the pledges made in the All-Atlantic Pledging Platform.
- Deliver solutions to accelerate a green, blue and digital transition, while building an equitable and resilient society and ocean community. These efforts should build on digital tools (e.g., space and ocean observation), with the aim to have a sustainable ocean with thriving ecosystems from 'pole to pole'.
- Further develop a common and improved scientific knowledge of ocean, climate change, food, and space interactions;
- Encourage actions to be taken from now on to consider the "**All-Atlantic Pledging Platform**", as a new tool to the existing cooperation, enhancing capacity building and promoting stakeholder participation to co-design and to monitor the progress of the cooperative efforts.
- Facilitate the uptake of different space and in-situ data and assets, as well as services and information derived from many different existing sources and based on the FAIR and CARE Principles in support to the All-Atlantic partnership and policies.
- Mobilise all relevant stakeholders to contribute to research, education, capacity building, innovation & entrepreneurship in downstream applications.

To conclude, as demonstrated in this Conference, the All-Atlantic multilateral cooperation is a tangible example of a global approach to international science, research and innovation.

Ponta Delgada, Azores, 4<sup>th</sup> of June 2021

- **Manuel Heitor**, Minister for Science, Technology and Higher Education, Portugal

