

**Flash Note**  
**Belém All-Atlantic Research Forum**  
**23-24 July 2018**  
**Salvador da Bahia, Brazil**

The Belém All-Atlantic Research Forum advanced the implementation of the Belém Statement and deepened the partnership of the three signatories by:

- Reflecting on existing and planned cooperative research and innovation activities within the framework of the Belém Partnership to demonstrate its scope;
- Discussing the socio-economic and political impact of Atlantic Ocean research initiatives, emphasising the imperative for the Belém Partnership to demonstrate material impact, in addition to generating excellence in science;
- Deliberating on specifically focused interventions where the Partnership should consider and prioritise within the framework established by the Belém Statement.

Overall the Forum was very constructive, with good energy, good discussions and perspectives for the future of our All Atlantic Ocean Research cooperation.

With over 150 stakeholders participating in the Forum from Europe (~40), Brazil, South Africa, Cape Verde, Namibia, Angola, Argentina, Uruguay, and the United States, it was suggested that an All-Atlantic Forum be organised in Brussels next year.

It is also worth mentioning that a number of side discussions took place during the Forum regarding the governance of the Horizon 2020 Coordination and Support Action [AANCHOR], which will be tasked with supporting the implementation of the Belém Statement.

Below are some key themes and challenges discussed during the few days, while a more comprehensive report of the Forum will be drafted in the coming weeks.

**All Atlantic Community** - At the beginning of the Forum we set out to build an All Atlantic community, but what we saw after the couple of days is that there already is an Atlantic community. It is now the question of finding itself, its courage, its voice and desire to respond to the problems we are facing.

There are a sheer array of actions, projects, energy, infrastructures and a contextualisation of what we are doing, and the awareness, the urgency, the scale and the need of the different people who need us.

**"Atlanticism"** - We are entering a new era with a new concept of "Atlanticism", which is a new way of science, research and innovation coming together to create the future tense which is what science does, and how progress is made. It stands for something very ambitious which will change how we operate on and in the Atlantic.

**Data** - Some important questions were raised such as how we are going to work together with open data, open science and open knowledge. Infrastructures in particular being a central part of the conversation.

**Socio-economic Context** - The socio-economic context in which we have to frame what we are doing must be hard-wired into this work from the beginning.

**Generation Sustainability** – We have the responsibility to give the younger generation the tools to design the solutions of the future. [Three students showcased next generation in ocean sciences by presenting their research topics].

It was clear that we have the partnerships, the capacities, the motivation and new ideas for implementing the Belém Statement however, a few **challenges** remain:

**1. Impact – How can we maximise impact of research?**

At the heart of all of this is research with a purpose. It is not only about excellent science (sine qua non), but also about demonstrating the socio-economic impact. Across initiatives there needs to be a balance between focus on science and the focus on impact.

**2. Innovation** can be a key to increase impact of research. How can we ensure and incentivise innovation in all its forms (technological, organisational, etc.?)

**John Bell and Sigi Gruber** called to move away from a linear process for innovation, instead have co-creation process where users are involved from the start in the research design. Public engagement will be key, but also dialogue with industry.

**3. Measuring and defining success**

What does success look like? How can we define concrete targets and indicators to measure our success and progress (e.g. SDG indicators)? We need to keep the sense of urgency, we need to keep the motivation amongst all actors involved and that is why it is important to put clear milestones with concrete indicators in place.

Creating long term solutions through research and development which will last for generations, for example the creation of **long-term observations** was suggested to be the most important legacy we can leave for our next generation.

**4. Communication and Outreach**

How will we keep track and make sure that for example all the presentations are made available to the all Atlantic research community? Especially if we have over 1000 research teams working in and across the Atlantic Ocean by 2020.

Questions were raised such as who needs to be part of conversation? Which networks, partners, organisations? Linked to this is also the challenge of organising and mapping all the ongoing initiatives/projects etc.

**5. Other mechanisms that can support the implementation of the Belém Statement**

How can we ensure that we use all instruments at our disposal? KICs, other departments? Private sector and industry? Development Banks?

**6. Capacity Building and Training**

The importance of capacity building, access to education and training at all levels was evident, with summer schools, fellowships, Universities of the Sea, simplify exchange of personnel, etc., discussed.

**7. Ensuring gender equality**

Although the message was quite clear: just do it!! It's 2018 after all!