

Atlantic Watersports Games, Cantabria 2010: the sporting showcase for Atlantic marine leisure

The 2010 Atlantic Watersports Games finally took place in the bay of Santander from Saturday 30 July to Thursday 5 August. Organised by the government of Cantabria and the regional sporting federations, with backing from the International Games Committee, the NEA2 project, and the CPMR (Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions of Europe) Atlantic Arc Commission, this much-acclaimed edition hosted – in addition to a wide audience – 389 competitors from 12 regions*: a record turnout! The sporting level rises constantly. Nowadays, amongst the participants, there are a good many young people competing at high national or even international levels. After five years of sporting domination by the Spanish regions, Brittany made a comeback with 9 gold medals against Cantabria's and Catalonia's 8 gold medals apiece.

* *Wales, Devon, Cornwall, Brittany, Pays de la Loire, Aquitaine, Basque Country, Cantabria, Asturias, Galicia, Norte Portugal, and Catalonia.*



www.jniea.eu / www.jnacantabria2010.eu



European Conference “Nautisme Espace Atlantique”, Challenges and opportunities for sustainable development of the marine-leisure sector in the Atlantic regions

Concluding the NEA2 project, which finishes at the end of 2011, and looking towards the future, the regional council of Brittany, the Finistère departmental council and the NEA2 partners are to host a European conference on sustainable marine leisure in the Atlantic Area in the Quartz centre in Brest on 26 and 27 October 2011. This will bring together the European, national and regional representatives and decision makers in the “marine leisure” sector, as well as political, financial, environmental and social institutions... from the Atlantic Area concerned with or involved in marine-leisure matters. This transnational event will be an occasion to underline the importance of the marine-leisure sector in the Atlantic Area, and to propose new courses of action for the future, aimed at promoting its sustainable development. These discussions will take place amidst a flurry of developments in Europe related to the Integrated Maritime Policy. An announcement from the European Commission on a “European strategy for the Atlantic” is in fact expected at the end of the first half of 2011. The CPMR’s Atlantic Arc Commission is to share in the organisation of this event.

Galician Francisco Quiroga elected as President of the International Committee.

At the general assembly in Santander on 3 August 2010, the International Committee elected a new President to replace Jean-Pierre Thomin, from Brittany, who had held the post for six years. "I feel it is not right that Brittany should permanently occupy this position at the heart of an association aimed increasingly at representing the movers and shakers of marine leisure throughout the Atlantic area", he declared. The newly-elected President is Francisco Quiroga, President of Agan (Asociacion gallega de actividades nauticas – the Galician marine-leisure association), who is very involved in Spanish water sports and known for his continuous support for the Watersports Games since their inauguration in Brittany. The four Vice-Presidents are Jean Kerhoas (Brittany), Rafael Munilla (Basque Country), Guilherme Guimaraes (Norte Portugal) and Alan Grenville (Wales). The accession of the Pays de la Loire to the International Committee brings its membership to 13 regions.

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European consultation on the Atlantic Arc

The European Commission is to make an announcement on the Integrated Maritime Policy for the European Atlantic Area in June 2011. To this end, it launched a public consultation – an important opportunity, seized by the NEA2 network, to set out the need to maintain marine leisure at the heart of the future Atlantic strategic project. The Interreg NEA2 project has seen 23 partners commit themselves from 2009 to 2011 to 22 common initiatives based on the sustainable development of the marine leisure sector in the Atlantic Area. In Falmouth on 14 and 15 October 2010, the partners of the NEA2 project unanimously adopted a contributory text for the consultation. A crucial factor in the Atlantic maritime economy and a major link between the ocean and the population, the Atlantic marine leisure sector carries high hopes for our regions.

This sector is capable of generating a pioneering development project at international level, bringing real profit to the Atlantic Arc.

Laying great emphasis on innovation, economic performance, and the protection and development of the environment, it also contributes towards social and territorial cohesion, the quality of governance, the integrated management of coastal zones, and the creation of a strong Atlantic identity.



Nautisme Espace Atlantique 2

The success of the conference on Marine Leisure and Innovation in Falmouth

The first NEA2 conference on Marine Leisure and Innovation, organised by Cornwall County Council, Cornwall Marine Network, the Cornwall Development Company and COAST, took place on 12 and 13 October 2010 in the National Maritime Museum Cornwall in Falmouth. Around 100 delegates, a quarter of whom were from Portugal, France and Spain, explored innovative boatyards and facilities, and followed with great interest the talks by experts such as Tanguy Le Bihan (E3H in Brittany, behind the Remora electric service boat designed for marinas), Fernando Morino (Portuguese textile sector specialising in marine clothing), Howard Davey (innovative eco-friendly surfing products)... This common initiative by the NEA2 project fosters cooperation in the domain of innovation within the Atlantic marine leisure sector in a bid to meet the challenges of the future: economic efficiency, environmental protection, contributing to social cohesion and the wellbeing of the populations.



In the SPOTLIGHT...

Helmets for the marine leisure activities

Jeff Sacrée, director of Gecko Head Gear, in Cornwall, designs and produces a range of innovative helmets aimed at water-sports activities and marine rescue. It all began in 1994. Nowadays his clients include: RNLI Lifeboats, Royal Air Force, Irish Coast Guard, the SNSM (French lifeboats), Red Cross and Greenpeace.



Innovation in the breton marinas



Formed in 1992, the Breton association of marinas (APPB) encompasses very many local councillors and marina managers from Brittany's four départements. Its General Secretary, Jean-Michel Gaigné, presented cutting-edge services installed in Breton marinas: the automatic card-controlled system of access to a slipway, operational in Perros-Guirec, and the automated launching system in the dry dock at Crouesty marina, as well as the digital berthing passport.

Towards ecological equipments

The famous naval architect James Wharram championed a marine-leisure economy geared towards developing small craft built of organic materials such as wood in small, locally-based production units. "We have in our Atlantic Marine sector designers who can design appropriate, simple but exciting small sailing craft." We have sheltered waters. We have rough waters. We have beautiful ancient towns and villages to sail to. We have space for many sailing schools. There is hope for the future", James Wharram concluded

Outstanding initiatives in the Regions.

Brittany: Inshore navigation week

An NEA2 initiative implemented by Nautisme en Finistère, the inshore navigation week offers week-long sailing cruises for small sailing craft of less than 8 metres. 36 crews navigated the three circuits tested in 2009. In 2010, 172 people in 58 crews plied the five itineraries set up in July. Taking place both on water and on land (during stopovers), every week is full of human encounters and natural, cultural and heritage discoveries. The Semaine du petit cabotage has become a marine-leisure product with tremendous potential for tourism throughout the Atlantic façade.



www.semainedupetitcabotage.com

Portugal: Watersports Ferias

50 socially-excluded or disabled young people from Portugal's Mealhada region, aged from three to fifteen, were thrilled to receive an initiation into watersports activities. This day, implemented by Adelo (Barraida and Mondego association for local development) is a fine illustration of Action 5.4: "Organisation of marine leisure events for the democratisation of water sports and development of public practice regarding integration and handicap".

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Galicia: Balade nautique in Cambados

The Balades Nautiques specifications were adopted by the NEA2 partners. After Brittany and the Pays de la Loire, Galicia has, via Activity 3, "Nautisme et économie", implemented its very first marine leisure outing: "Discover Cambados by Kayak". Located in the Rias Baixas, the sea at Cambados is characterised by calm, navigable waters. The two kayaking trips allow visitors and the local population alike to enjoy the marine environment as well as the rich history of one of Galicia's most unusual cities.



North Devon Plus: Surf bus



From April to October 2011, and during 2012, a coach specially adapted and converted into a Surf Bus will ply the North Devon lanes, serving the surf spots. As Isabelle Bromham from North Devon Plus explains, "this project is great news for North Devon; it will reduce the number of cars, and make the water sports more accessible for car owners and non-drivers alike; on top of that, this service will make the region more attractive to visitors." The Surf Bus will also accept bicycles.

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Mid-West Regional Authority (Ireland): energy seminar

Organised by the Tipperary Energy Agency under the aegis of the Mid-West Regional Authority, the seminar entitled "Energy efficiency and renewable energy options for watersports clubs and centres" took place in Limerick on 2 September. Above all, it appears that it is essential to reduce energy consumption before installing any renewable technology. Various conferences have dealt with this crucial matter from different angles: "Energy management in watersports facilities", "MWRA sustainable energy in watersports and energy efficiency and renewables on the water", and "Renewables for sports facilities".

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