



What would Europe be without half of its population?

50% of Europe's population lives within 50 km of the sea



CPMR's 160 Member Regions
Wish you a Happy New Year 2008.



INTERVIEW WITH JACQUES BARROT, COMMISSIONER FOR TRANSPORT AND VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

France 3 & CPMR - Commissioner, European affairs take time to mature, but where do we stand now after 10 years of discussion. Have we reached a turning point?

"We are making progress. Firstly, with regard to ports policy. We now have a pragmatic approach that takes into account the diversity of ports in Europe and which is very proactive. We want to adapt and modernise ports. It is all about infrastructures. Infrastructures need to be built taking on board environmental problems, but the environment must not constitute an obstacle to the necessary modernisation process. Moreover, we need to adopt a pragmatic approach to port services with regard to competition and quality of services. Concessions need to be granted in a transparent manner, but with the concern to guarantee investors the sort of return they can normally expect. Finally, we also want ports to be places where there is a real social dialogue, as in Dunkirk for instance. It is in these pragmatic approaches that the future of our major European ports will be decided."

France 3 & CPMR - 10 years ago, it was said that ports were perhaps unprofitable.

"Ten years ago, we completely underestimated the need for these port infrastructures. We now realise that world trade is developing very fast and in particular due to maritime transport. One only has to look at the container vessels that I saw in Bremen, with 12,000 containers arriving from China, to realise immediately that ports are becoming one of the keys to European competitiveness. Not only does the port need to be able to provide berthing facilities for these big ships involved in global trade, but it also needs to dispatch the goods. There therefore has to be a good connection between the port and the hinterland, not only with road links but also rail and river links. In this respect, our Member States, and especially France, need to put emphasis on modernising ports and their links with all inland areas. This is a fundamental issue."

France 3 & CPMR - Following your speech and the press conference, one gets the impression that you are seeking a little "help" from the Regions, because they are dynamic, while the States occasionally tend to be somewhat reluctant.

"It's quite normal. The maritime Regions are staking their future on maritime policy. As maritime transport occupies a central role, the maritime Regions are in the best position to develop logistics services. This is the art of distributing the goods that are produced, and it creates many jobs. The maritime provinces obviously have a tremendous chance, so it is up to them to lobby central governments to demand that port infrastructures and their connections with the hinterland are effectively put in place."

France 3 & CPMR - Just a word about the Mediterranean - it appears to me that the Mediterranean is still "mission territory".

"The Mediterranean is a sleeping beauty. Some Mediterranean ports have already been adapted and modernised. We need to pay attention, because with the widening of the Suez Canal, large vessels will be arriving in the Mediterranean, and where will they be unloaded? We know that on the southern shore of the Mediterranean there are some big port investments, particularly in Tangiers. Our southern European ports need to be able to respond to the demand, which will be very high. We can see very well for example the role that Marseille could play with the river and rail links that connect it to the rest of Europe. Marseille just has to agree to make the necessary adaptations. And I have high hopes."

France 3 & CPMR - Can you explain the notion of "European maritime area"? Are we not restricting ourselves when we are living in a global world with a global economy?

"The maritime area is still divided. Today, oddly enough, a vessel sailing from one European port to another is subject to customs and administrative controls as soon as it leaves the territorial waters of one Member State and enters the territorial waters of another Member State. This ought not to happen insofar as it remains within the European maritime area. So an area where these barriers are lifted is a major element, and I will be setting out some detailed proposals in 2008 in order to achieve this barrier-free maritime area."

Interview conducted by France 3 and CPMR

during the seminar on "Ports and Maritime Transport: The Regions in support of an ambitious and balanced EU policy"

organised by the CPMR and the Principality of Asturias with the backing of the City and Port Authority of Gijón, 19 November 2007

G. SACCONI: "THE "CLIMATE" IS CHANGING AT LAST!"

Global warming is a subject of great concern for us all, however from now on it is, above all, a political "emergency" for the European Union and several of its member states. As an example, Slovenia and France, the next Presidencies in 2008, have introduced this theme in their priorities and six months ago the European Parliament created an ad-hoc Commission for Climate Change, chaired by **Guido Sacconi**, the Party of European Socialists Tuscan MEP.

Mr Sacconi, what is the aim of this temporary commission that you chair and, in particular, what are its expectations?

"The objective is to increase the European Parliaments' powers and proceed to concrete action in the struggle against climate change and global warming, not only on a European level, but also by involving the entire international community."

This ad hoc Commission is celebrating its first "half-birthday", what conclusions can be drawn from these first six months?

"The result is positive. It is positive because we have established solid in-depth work; however the real novelty is the integrated approach. The approach that we wanted to give to our work involves all existing policies. A necessary approach, as climate change is no longer a single concern, but a "global" issue: the economy is also at stake and the UNO Security Council has even met on this subject..."

The EU is, without any doubt, one of the "pillars" in the fight against climate change, but what can we do to heighten awareness in countries which are indisposed to this kind of problem?

"We can only be confident! The "climate" is changing... China, Australia, the United States who, only yesterday were still reluctant, are also aware of the problem today. No-one doubts the existence of global warming; of course, there is often a strong resistance to accepting restricting commitments, but I am optimistic and think that the European commitment over all these years is finally starting to bear fruit."

Have you seen Al Gore's film? Did you like it? What do you think of the Nobel Peace Prize which was awarded to him?

"Yes, I have seen it, it is a genuine demonstration that the "climate" is changing...I find it significant that the Nobel Prize for Peace, and I emphasize for Peace, be awarded not only to Al Gore, who is a very worthy winner, but above all to the IPCC Scientists (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change), who, after being "mistreated" are now recognised at world level"

Climate change is affecting most existing policies, what impact will climate change have on the future of cohesion policy? And what role could the Regions play with particular regards to "the adaptation" to climate change?

"Even if, by the end of the century, we manage to limit global warming to 2 degrees Celsius, the consequences in some Regions will nevertheless be irreversible. The adaptation policy is, therefore, the only road to take. However, in order to encourage this adaptation, it must concern all policies, including cohesion policy, and a lot of money will have to be invested in research and innovation. I am thinking in particular of new insulating materials for construction or of revolutionary systems for water adduction...In this context, the Regions could play a truly decisive role: the exchange of best practice or regional cooperation can help Europe to confront the current global warming and to encourage the economic and social adaptation to these worrying changes."

Interview conducted by Enrico Mayrhofer, enrico.mayrhofer@crpm.org

ARTICLES

AQUACULTURE IS LIKE A RIVER...

In the words of **Mr Pier Salvador**, President of API (Associazione Piscicoltori Italiani), "Aquaculture is like a river, with producers on one side and consumers on the other. These conferences are the water where we meet". This years thematic conference, "European Aquaculture and its Opportunities for Development", organised by the CPMR on behalf of DG Fish, acted as a "river", bringing together a balanced representation of the main stakeholders to discuss the future of the European Aquaculture Industry. At a time when the industry can be considered to be at a crossroads in its development, this 2 day conference provided a platform for dialogue between 200 participants, including professionals from different sectors, representatives of national and regional authorities, non-governmental organisations, scientists and researchers.

The European Commission Conference, held in Brussels on 15-16 November, began with a plenary session, and continued with two parallel workshops, which examined the role of public authorities in finfish and shellfish aquaculture respectively. The speakers discussed a wide range of topics, including the challenges facing the

sector in relation to environmental issues, sustainability, spatial planning, public health, animal health and welfare, markets and commercial issues, research and technology, and governance.

A second plenary session concluded the conference and gave the opportunity for feedback from the workshop *Rapporteurs*, as well as to discuss the potential for development and lessons which can be drawn for the future. In his closing address on the need for an EU strategy on Aquaculture, Commissioner **Joe Borg** stressed that regions have a key role to play in EU Aquaculture Policy, stating that the Commission should “*cooperate with regions to promote exchanges on maritime spatial planning experiences and disseminate good practice*”.

This kind of event is extremely relevant to CPMR Member Regions, because regional delegates can learn how to deal with such technical issues and can exchange best practises with other participants. Indeed, according to **Josie Simpson**, Vice Convenor from the Shetlands Islands Council, the PESCA conference is an opportunity to meet people from different regions. “*We can learn a lot from one another at this time...I think it is very important that local and regional areas keep control so that they can discuss with one another – if we take it away from local and regional control, I think that will make it very difficult*”. He said. **Mr Rolf Gydemo**, Fisheries Director from Gotland County Administration, confirmed the thought of Mr Simpson. “*The issue of spatial planning and utilisation of resources between stakeholders is one of the main, perhaps the most important learning that we can take from this occasion. ...There are a lot of regions with various geographical differences, but with a lot of problems in common.*” Moreover, he added that he hoped that it would be possible to continue to create networks and improve aquaculture in the future.

However, unfortunately a permanent dialogue amongst all stakeholders – the regions, the research centres, the companies and people who are truly involved in the fisheries sector – is missing in Europe. “*That is why I think the CPMR is very useful.*” **Mr Simpson** stated. “*At different workshops, there are people from peripheral regions all around Europe and I think that is the best way for the local regions, if we can feed in our feelings.*” **Mr Gydemo** added, “*We know from the past that the CPMR really has had an impact on legislation. That just goes to show that the CPMR is really necessary for the regions, because it is not always that regional interests and national interests are the same!*”

Clare Booth

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FOCUSING ON INNOVATION...

TOWARDS THE NEXT REGIONAL POLICY PROGRAMMING PERIOD (2014-2020)

Over the last few years, reducing the innovation deficit in European regions and improving territorial competitiveness has become one of the key targets of the European Policy Agenda. In line with this priority, the European institutions have already carried out several initiatives, such as the funding of concrete programmes like the FP7 or CIP, and the earmarking of the Structural Funds in favour of the Lisbon strategy targets.

Bearing in mind this new reality, we decided to widen our political reflection to the next Regional Policy programming period (2014-2020), focusing on the relations existing between Structural Funds and regional innovation strategies. Therefore, following the initiative launched at our 2006 General Assembly by the President of the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission, Mrs Christel Liljeström, we also agreed to set up a working group on innovation, called the **TN-RIS project** (*Towards a New Regional Innovation System*).

Drawing on the experiences acquired by eight CPMR Regions (**Basque Country; Brittany; Emilia Romagna; Uusima/Helsinki; Highland and Islands; Lisbon; Stockholm and Tuscany**) the CPMR working group, under the leadership of Stockholm region, has since 2007 been analysing the Regional Innovation Systems. Who are the main actors involved in the regional governance of innovation? How do the regional innovation systems work? Which are their strengths and weaknesses?

Beyond that, since 2007, the **TN-RIS project** has been giving special attention to creativity and clustering. For instance, is creativity a nuance of the meaning of innovation or should we add something more? What is the regional approach to the competitiveness model scheduled by Clustering? Is there some difference between the regional definition of Clusters and the concepts applied by the European Institutions?

To respond to these questions, we have submitted to the TN-RIS member regions a questionnaire (Work-Packages I & II). Currently, we are producing a draft summary on the regional responses in order to present it before an Advisory Council (Work-Package III & IV). Indeed, we wish to develop a wider discussion by involving several think-tanks, the European Commission and the OECD, some researchers, and so on. Finally, we will share all the information obtained through the TN-RIS project with other European regions during a Seminar on European regional policy and Innovation during the French Presidency in 2008.

Giuseppe Sciacca

EVENTS

1 January 2008, Slovenian Presidency of the EU

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/cms3_fo/showPage.asp?lang=EN

8 January 2008, The EU in 2008: what MEP's expect, EPC, Brussels (BE)

<http://www.epc.eu/en/cal.asp?TYP=ABOUT&LV=224&PG=AE/en/calendar&AI=1&see=n>

10 January 2008, Breakfast Policy Briefing - An ocean of opportunity, Brussels (BE)

<http://www.epc.eu/en/cal.asp?TYP=ABOUT&LV=224&PG=AE/en/calendar&AI=1&see=n>

14 -17 January 2008, European Parliament Plenary Session, Strasbourg (FR)

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/activities/public/plenSession.do;jsessionid=758B06461084CBB831EBC1AAEC260454.node1?language=EN>

18 January 2008, CPMR/CoR Seminar, "Which future for Regional policies after 2013?", Séville (ES)

<http://www.crpm.org/index.php?act=6,1,2,64>

19 January 2008, CPMR Political Bureau, Rhodes (GR)

<http://www.crpm.org/index.php?act=6,1,2,63>

21 January 2008, L'UE garante de sécurité ou source d'insécurité pour ses citoyens?, Rennes (FR)

http://cejm.univ-rennes.eu/themes/rendez-vous_Europe/2008/

30 January 2008, EU sustainable Energy Week "Energy in Peripheral and Maritime Regions", Brussels (BE)

<http://www.crpm.org/index.php?act=6,1,2,61>

29-30 January 2008, Impact assessment for better governance of regional innovation policies, Bilbao (ES)

http://www.innovating-regions.org/network/events/eventDetails.cfm?eve_id=487&period=current

6-7 February 2008, CoR Plenary Session, CoR Brussels (BE)

<http://www.cor.europa.eu/en/activities/sessions.htm>

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