



## INTERVIEWS

### EMSA<sup>1</sup> APPRECIATES THE ADDED VALUE OF REGIONS ON MARITIME SAFETY

"AQUAMARINA", a working group of 40 maritime Regions<sup>2</sup> created at the initiative of Jean-Yves Le Drian, President of the Regional Council of Brittany (FR), met for the first time on 26 March 2008 in Brussels at the Committee of the Regions to follow up the implementation of the EU action plan resulting from the Blue Book "An Integrated Maritime Policy for the European Union".

Maritime safety was at the heart of the debates during this first meeting organised in the presence of Mr Emilio Martin Bauza, Advisor-Maritime Affairs at the European Maritime Safety Agency.

**EM: Mr Martin Bauza, how will EMSA be involved in the creation of the EU maritime policy?**

EMB: "As a technical organisation, we are not dealing with political matters and EU maritime policy in general. Creating the EU maritime policy is EU Institutions' task. On the other hand, we continuously provide EU Institutions with facts on maritime safety in Europe and outside Europe, as requested by our founding regulation 1406/2002 of 27 June 2002. The EU Commission uses this information, the most significant occasion being the recent drafting of the third package of maritime legislation safety."

**EM: What do you think is the role regions should play in the creation of the EU maritime policy?**

EMB: "I think regions have to check how the Constitution may help them to be better listened to in the framework of the Committee of the Regions. Now, do all European regions have the same viewpoint on a same issue? Finding consensus between 27 Member States has proved uneasy. Adding 154 regions would increase difficulties! I think regions are in their role when they content themselves with pushing and inspiring Member States and EU Institutions."

**EM: The recent Erika judgment underlined the importance of local authorities in the field of maritime safety. Do you think that it could be useful to involve these local authorities in the works of EMSA?**

EMB: "Coastal regions are in the frontline when a marine pollution occurs, and EMSA is well aware of the role that they can play in increasing the awareness in favour of maritime safety and protection of marine environment, as well as a culture of prevention and fast reaction when an accident at sea happens.

Member States are fundamental stakeholders for EMSA, and they are involved directly in EMSA work, as stated in the Founding Regulation. Clearly local authorities can channel their needs and suggestions through their national authorities, to give their direct contribution to our work.

We often take part to events organised by local and regional authorities, and we continuously appreciate the added value of these contacts on the field, as well as the steady work of CRPM in support of the maritime safety."

Interviewed by Enrico Mayrhofer ([enrico.mayrhofer@crpm.org](mailto:enrico.mayrhofer@crpm.org))

<sup>1</sup> European Maritime Safety Agency - <http://www.emsa.eu.int/>

<sup>2</sup> Midtjylland Region, Bornholm, Pays de la Loire, Bretagne, Aquitaine, Nord-Pas-de-Calais, Haute-Normandie, Languedoc-Roussillon, Guadeloupe, Basse-Normandie, Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, Poitou-Charentes, Schleswig-Holstein, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Region of East Macedonia and Thrace, Region of Central Macedonia, Western Greece, Tuscany Region, Regione Puglia, Rabat-Salé-Zemmour-Zaer, Province Noord-Holland, Province of Zeeland, Aust-Agder County, North Norway, Telemark Fylkeskommune, Centro Region, Xunta de Galicia, Gobierno de Aragón, Catalogne, Principauté des Asturies, Comunidad Valenciana, Västra Götaland Council, Blekinge Region, Skåne Region, Shetland Islands Council, West Sussex, Southern England Local Partners, Aberdeen City Council, Northern Ireland, Lincolnshire County Council, Devon County Council

## A FOOD POLICY FOR EUROPE

*Béatrice Gendreau, Vice-President of Aquitaine Regional Council (FR)*

A technical meeting to discuss the Health Check of the CAP, organised by Aquitaine Region and the CPMR, took place in Brussels on 25 March 2008. **Patrick Anvroin**, CPMR's Director for agriculture and responsible for this initiative, declared himself satisfied with the outcome of the meeting, at which fifty-five participants from thirty-three Regions discussed the positions that could be jointly defended by the regions during 2008 on the European Union's agriculture, food and rural development policies.

*"CPMR wishes to contribute to the debate on the future of the Common Agricultural Policy," said Mr Anvroin. "This policy is set to undergo changes following the 'Health Check' currently under discussion within the EU institutions and a perhaps more significant reform as of 2014."*

The meeting was chaired by **Béatrice Gendreau**, Vice-President of Aquitaine Regional Council, who launched the idea of a regionalisation of the CAP.

**Ms Gendreau, more than thirty regions today debated the "Health Check" of the CAP. Do you think this policy is really "ailing"?**

**BG:** *"No.... the CAP is not ailing, but it needs to be renovated and I think this is something very important. In 2003, the CAP took a new direction which, in my view, is not at all suited to the nature of farming today, above all in areas with a lot of small farms and diversified agricultural production. We know that agricultural policy has neglected certain sectors: I am thinking of organic farming, market gardening, fruit farming, etc... Unfortunately today these are not taken into account."*

**Do you think that Europe needs to "regionalise" the CAP, to take a more territorial approach?**

**BG:** *"Nowadays it is the regions that are closest to farmers and to the world of agriculture in general. They are confronted with the real problems at grass roots level, which is not the case of Member States. To come back to organic farming: we have a policy at regional level to support organic farming. However, at the national level in France, there is little aid for this sector even though there is very strong demand for organic products. Consumers want organic products, but cannot find them in the shops because production is limited. Aquitaine Regional Council provides some support for organic farming, but it remains insufficient because our budget is limited. If we had access today to European funding to help us provide incentives for this sector, I believe consumers would be grateful. I have taken the example of organic farming, but the same is true for other sectors, because the regions are closer to the rural world."*

**Commissioner Mariann Fischer Boel, along with the French Agriculture Minister Michel Barnier will take part in the Seminar on "The future of the Common Agricultural Policy" being organised by the CPMR in Nantes in October 2008 (date to be confirmed). What do you expect from the European Commission on this subject?**

**BG:** *"I hope that they will hear what we have to say, and especially our wish for regionalisation. I will say to them that I would re-name the CAP a 'food policy', because that is the real challenge for Europe today. And that we want to see a strong, competitive agricultural sector, in which small farms still have their place. I don't wish to see us move towards the American model; Europe needs therefore to be strong enough to counter the American system."*

**We must be optimistic then?**

**BG:** *"Of course! I am."*

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## WHAT STRATEGY FOR THE OUTERMOST REGIONS?

*Jessica Julan-Aubourg, Head of Fisheries and Agriculture, Guadeloupe Regional Council (FR)*

Ms Julan-Aubourg is Head of Fisheries and Agriculture at Guadeloupe Regional Council. She attended the first meeting of the "AQUAMARINA" working group at the Committee of the Regions on 26 March 2008, where she intervened several times during the debates to draw attention to the differences between the outermost regions and the continental coastal regions in the context of maritime policy.

*"In Guadeloupe, we face a number of constraints. Guadeloupe is an outermost region with many handicaps stemming from its geographical situation as well as related to regulations and customs duties. It is important for us to participate in the work of the 'Aquamarina' group in order to highlight these difficulties, which are specific to the outermost regions."*

**The "Aquamarina" working group, made up of about forty EU regions, will monitor the Blue Book and maritime policy. In this context you mentioned the "specific" features of the outermost regions. How do you think the interests of the outermost regions can be reconciled with the interests of the more "continental" regions?**

**JJA:** *"That is the question I asked this morning. The reply I received was that we should focus, at our level, on the Communication of 12 September 2007 on a 'Strategy for the outermost regions: Achievements and Future Prospects'. We have already agreed that each of the outermost regions will make a contribution, and that a summary of these contributions will be submitted to the Conference of Presidents of Outermost Regions. After that we hope to work closely with DG MARE and collaborate with the CPMR to ensure that the issues that are specific to the outermost regions are taken into account and recognised and not swamped by other contributions from other regions."*

**Do you think that so far the Commission has taken account of the needs and specific features of the outermost regions in the context of its maritime policy?**

**JJA:** *"Yes and no. But I have to admit that on certain issues the Commission has provided a response. We have the possibility of having a specific strategy for the outermost regions. Not all the geographical areas have been given this opportunity to have their own specific strategy. We on the other hand do have it. Now it is up to us to make something of this opportunity. When we are given an opportunity to express ourselves, it is up to us to show willing and take steps to ensure that our special problems are recognised."*

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## PRESTIGE NUNCA MAS

**Mrs Cayetana LADO CASTRO-RIAL**, one of the Spanish government's lawyers in charge of the "Prestige" case, took part in the CPMR-AQUAMARINA meeting in Brussels on 26 March 2008.

The meeting, supported/chaired by Brittany Region and hosted by the Committee of the Regions, focused mainly on maritime safety and underlined that coastal authorities are the first to be affected by maritime accidents.

Only a few days before the decision of the Council to reduce the measures of the ERIKA III package, **Mrs Lado Castro**, informed the CPMR Regions about the most recent news on the Prestige case:

*"The most recent news on the Prestige case is the admission of the plaintive presented by a private organisation called NUNCA MAS which means NEVER AGAIN. This plaintive is to be admitted by the judge in September 2008".*

**What do you think is missing today in EU maritime legislation? Are you satisfied with the proposition of the Green Paper, the Blue Paper, and also the Erika package? Do you not think we must go further?**

*"Yes, we must go further. Of course the measures taken after the Prestige's accident are positive but they are not enough. Indeed, I believe that the possibility of claiming more responsibility to the flag states is more than important! We should go further in this direction, and we also have to consider other kinds of responsibilities, such as the classification societies\*, especially in the measures that have to be taken not only during these accidents, but also before, to prevent these accidents from happening."*

**Do you not think that in a country where the responsibilities are clearly shared between Regional and National Governments is it bit easier to face these kinds of accidents?**

*"Oh, definitely. Regions must have experts, and human and material resources to prevent these accidents from happening because they are the first to handle and to deal with these disasters. We need collaboration and cooperation, total cooperation, I would say, not only among States – I mean central states – but also among local authorities. For example the volunteer movement, during the Prestige accident was promoted and coordinated by local authorities. Moreover, it is very important to collaborate and not to use the disaster politically to fight against parties. On the political level it is very easy to criticise. It is not so easy to make a decision and to put all those human and material resources at the disposal of the prevention of the disaster."*

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\* In the shipping industry, classification societies are non-governmental organizations or groups of professionals, ship surveyors and representatives of offices that promote the safety and protection of the environment of ships and offshore structures

## EVENTS

**22 April 2008**, Are the priorities of the French presidency the right ones? IFRI, Brussels (BE)

[http://www.ifri.org/frontDispatcher/ifri/manifestations/d\\_jeuners\\_et\\_diners\\_d\\_bats\\_1043938397808/publi\\_P\\_ma\\_ifri\\_bxl\\_debie\\_1206717314410](http://www.ifri.org/frontDispatcher/ifri/manifestations/d_jeuners_et_diners_d_bats_1043938397808/publi_P_ma_ifri_bxl_debie_1206717314410)

**8-10 April 2008**, CoR Plenary Session, CoR Brussels (BE)

<http://www.cor.europa.eu/pages/EventTemplate.aspx?view=folder&id=87402c77-d94a-4381-95b0-5ee5b3ec2d2d&sm=87402c77-d94a-4381-95b0-5ee5b3ec2d2d>

**21-24 April 2008**, European Parliament Plenary Session, Strasbourg (FR)

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/activities/plenary/agenda.do?language=en>

**23-25 April 2008**, Regional Actions for Sustainable Buildings, Umeå Folkets Hus (S)

<http://www.crpm.org/index.php?act=6,2,2,40>

**23-25 April 2008**, 6th European Eastern e-Government Days, Prague (CZ)

<http://www.epma.cz/6-sup-th-sup-eastern-european-egov-days-2008-in-prague.html>

**12-14 May 2008**, 2nd International Convention on a Regional and Local Approach to Development, Tanger (MA)

<http://www.crpm.org/index.php?act=6,1,2,71>

**30 May 2008**, European Meeting on renewable energy, Marseille (FR)

<http://www.crpm.org/index.php?act=6,2,2,43>

**11-13 June 2008**, General Assembly of the CPMR Baltic & North Sea Commissions, Herning (DK)

<http://www.crpm.org/index.php?act=6,1,2,70>

**12-13 June 2008**, CPMR "Employment and Training" Working Group, Tuscany (IT)

<http://www.crpm.org/index.php?act=6,1,2,69>

**12-13 June 2008**, General Assembly of the Atlantic Arc Commission, Deauville - Basse-Normandie (FR)

<http://www.crpm.org/index.php?act=6,1,2,67>

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