

Priority 4: Enhancing biodiversity and the natural and cultural assets

ERDF: EUR 52.6 million

This priority will serve the identified need of protecting the environment and promoting cultural identity in order to make the Atlantic region a more attractive place for local communities and visitors. Securing its vast natural heritage and the richness of the existing natural resources, as well as further protecting the cultural heritage that gives the Atlantic Area its unique character will be key for promoting a sustainable economic and territorial development. This priority has two objectives:



Objective 4.1: Improving the protection of biodiversity and enhancing ecosystems' services

Support cooperation in the field of environmental and natural resources management. The common challenges to tackle here are the following: acquiring an in depth knowledge of the Atlantic ecosystems, their wealth and their vulnerability, and the conditions for their preservation in connection with the development of new marine and land activities.

Some examples of actions to be supported:

- ✓ Development of pilot actions to test new solutions and methods concerning the preservation and restoration of biodiversity;
- ✓ Development of methods for quality monitoring and enhancement of the coastal and inland waters;
- ✓ Development of collecting and disseminating natural environmental data (environmental observatory network), modelling aimed at improving forecasts and environmental management.

Objective 4.2: Enhancing natural and cultural assets to stimulate economic development

Support ways to exploit and preserve the natural and cultural heritage as a key element of the Atlantic Area identity. The intention is to promote cooperation in order to generate new sources of wealth and a sustainable development of the area. A specific emphasis is placed on locally based actions, with the involvement and empowerment of local communities and local authorities, therefore playing a key role in bringing concrete benefits to their territories.

Some examples of actions to be supported:

- ✓ Development of joint actions to preserve the cultural and natural heritage;
- ✓ Enhancement of the attractiveness of traditional economic and productive activities, jobs and services;
- ✓ Practical on-the-ground demonstrations of new techniques and processes and of best practices.