

# BELGIAN-PORTUGUESE ROUTES FOR THE BLUE ECONOMY

19<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2019



## EVENT REPORT

JANUARY 2020



ORGANISED BY:



BELGIAN-PORTUGUESE  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

PARTNERS:



CÂMARA MUNICIPAL  
VIANA DO CASTELO



Clusters for Innovation



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# BELGIAN-PORTUGUESE ROUTES FOR THE BLUE ECONOMY

19TH NOVEMBER 2019

## EVENT SCHEDULE

9:00 AM	<b>Registration at Portuguese Permanent Representation - Avenue de Cortenberg 12, 1040 Brussels</b>	
9:30 AM	Opening Session	António Alves Machado – Ambassador of Portugal to Belgium; Rui Faria da Cunha – President of the Belgian-Portuguese Chamber of Commerce; Duarte Bué Alves – Deputy Permanent Representative of Portugal to the OECD – Session Rapporteur.
9:45 AM	Panel I Private Sector Showcase	<b>Moderated by:</b> Miguel Marques (PWC) – Partner at <a href="#">PWC Portugal</a> , Lead of PWC for the Economy of the Sea <b>Panelists:</b> José Miguel Pinheiro – WindFloat Atlantic Project Director, <a href="#">EDP Renewables</a> ; Pieter Jan Jordaens – Cluster Manager <a href="#">IBN Offshore Energy</a> .
10:05 AM		Stakeholders view
10:25 AM		Debate
10:35 AM	<b>Coffee-Break</b>	
10:45 AM	Panel II Opportunities and Innovation	<b>Moderated by:</b> Piet Haerens – Business Unit Manager Marine and Coastal Engineering, <a href="#">Witteveen+Bos</a> <b>Panelists:</b> Frederico Ferreira – Project Officer, <a href="#">Fórum Oceano</a> ; José Maria Costa – President of the <a href="#">Municipality of Viana do Castelo</a> ; Noémie Wouters – CEO, <a href="#">GreenBridge</a> ; Melina Boneva – Policy Officer, DG CLIMA – <a href="#">Innovation Fund</a> ; Pia Nieminen – Policy Advisor, <a href="#">European Investment Bank</a> .
11:35 AM		Stakeholders view
11:55 AM		Debate
12:05 PM	Panel III Constraints and Obstacles	<b>Moderated by:</b> Paula Abreu Marques – Head of Unit for Renewables and CCS Policy – DG ENERGY <b>Panelists:</b> Ann Dom – Deputy Director, <a href="#">Seas at Risk</a> ; Ann-Katrien Lescauwæet – Director of International Relations, <a href="#">Flanders Marine Institute</a> ; Giles Dickson – CEO of <a href="#">WindEurope</a> ; Gonçalo Lobo Xavier – Secretary General, European Wind Towers Association; Kathryn Stack – Secretary General, <a href="#">Federation of European Aquaculture</a> ;
12:35 PM		Debate
12:45 PM	Closing	Pedro Lourtie – Deputy Permanent Representative of Portugal to the European Union
12:50 PM	<b>Networking Lunch - ParkSide Brasserie (5 min away from venues)</b>	
14:30 PM	<b>Registration at the European Parliament - Room JAN 6Q2</b>	
15:00 PM	Panel IV European Parliament Discussion	Opening Session – Cláudia Monteiro de Aguiar – Host MEP Presentation of Morning Conclusions by Session Rapporteur – Duarte Bué Alves
15:30 PM		<b>Debate and Discussions</b> Christos Economou – Head of Unit, DG MARE; Matthijs Soede – Research Programme Officer, DG RTD;  OTHER CONFIRMATIONS PENDING: DG CLIMA, DG ENERGY, MEP's, Council Representatives
16:30 PM		<b>Closing Session</b>

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# INTRODUCTORY NOTE

## SUMMARY

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This event brought together private initiatives in the Blue Growth realm together with financing agents, academia, clusters, sectoral representatives, administrations and politicians from both Portugal, Belgium, and the EU. The morning session took place at the Portuguese Permanent Representation to the EU and it was dedicated to promoting interaction between industry players in order to identify opportunities and constraints in the area of the Blue Economy. In the afternoon session, at the European Parliament in Brussels, the findings of the first session were reported to European institutions' representatives.

## OBJECTIVES

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- To identify potential Blue synergies between Portugal and Belgium,
- To report new opportunities on the ocean economy, and;
- To identify legal constraints at the European level on the development of sustainable activities in the oceans.

This event took place back to back with G-STIC 2019 of 20-22 November in Brussels (Connecting Technological Innovation to Decision Making for Sustainability). In the future, there is the aim to broaden the event to all areas of the blue economy, however, this first edition was focused on industries related to offshore energy production.



# SUMMARY REPORT

## CONTEXT

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The ocean is of critical importance to the global economy. According to an OECD report (2016), its economic output is currently around 1.5 trillion USD, corresponding to 2.5% of the world gross value added. The same study projects that by 2030 this could reach USD 3 trillion, employing 40 million people, with significant growth expected in offshore wind energy, marine aquaculture, fish processing and port activities.

In such a context, the pressure on the ocean is rising and may jeopardise the long-term economic forecasts. The threats to blue economy are clearly identified (climate change; pollution; illegal fishing; overexploitation) and these bring us to new challenges that economic stakeholders must identify and cope with. These challenges are in line with the most recent state of the art in terms of international priorities (inter alia Agenda 2030), as well as with the concerns of the business community. This one-pager aims to sum up the main conversation that took place during the seminar The Belgium-Portuguese Routes for Blue Economy, organized by the Belgium-Portuguese Chamber of Commerce and held in Brussels, on November 19th 2019.

## SOME KEY-IDEAS

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As the debate unfolded, some key ideas emerged. One of the most significant ones to retain was **sustainability**. The critical issue is to know how to manage natural capital, without destroying the ecosystems. **Sustainable blue economy** is, therefore, not just a trend or a symptom of the air du temps. It is a precondition, as millennials and the generations Z consumers will not accept otherwise. At the same time, to scale projects up or to make them bankable (a must for all companies, especially for SME's), the financial sector is no longer looking just at the balance sheets but also at the long-term environmentally sustainable effects.

The bilateral synergies between Portuguese and Belgium stakeholders were on the table. **Partnerships** came up as a tool to bring people together and make sure that no-one is left behind. The role of universities was mentioned (cfr. the current joint project of the Universities of Gent and Oporto) as well as the potential to deepen this path and to make sure that research and development is integrated in the daily life of private companies.

Some private foundations (such as Gulbenkian or Oceano Azul) are playing a very relevant role. An integrated and holistic approach to the economic value chain is something that we can all benefit from.

Several participants underlined that Portugal and Belgium – as two coastal countries – need to cooperate more and in a more structured way, at all levels, to deepen a win-win perspective. Mutual learning is crucial, as **Portugal is a front-runner** and a pioneer in maritime affairs (e.g., the Framework Law on Maritime Spatial Planning; the role at the UN as a leading oceanic nation; the relevance of maritime scientific knowledge; the weight of blue GVA and blue employment in the Portuguese economy; the UN 2020 Conference in Lisbon).

## SOME CHALLENGES

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It is also worth singling out some concrete challenges that the representatives of both Portuguese and Belgium stakeholders referred to as part of their learning curves. One of them, already mentioned, is **financing and access to capital**, to scale projects up, to invest in R&D and to access new markets. The conditions to make projects bankable were mentioned as an important concern of several participants.

Not less relevant is the need to **diversify the blue portfolio**. When we see that coastal tourism represents 1.7 billion euros in Portugal, fisheries and aquaculture 1.2 billion and maritime services M€741, and we compare these figures with the modest ones of the new emerging sectors, it is necessary to reflect what can be done to accelerate the potential and relevance of blue biotechnology, offshore wind farms, maritime based cosmetics and medicines, the role of algae in new food trends or the growing demand for rare-earth materials.

As consumer patterns changed in the last decades, companies will have to change alike. Today, in Portugal, 51% of the consumers consider themselves “strongly engaged in sustainability”; 48% claim to have environmentally responsible consumption patterns. **Sustainability** is at the heart of the economic cycle, more circular and less linear.

For both companies and consumers, **digital transition will require new skills**, giving answers to new oceanic generations, some of them brought up in green and blue schools. The growing weight of robotics in blue economy has a role to play in terms of expanding

knowledge to new frontiers that remain largely unknown. The current process to extend the continental shelf in Portugal poses new challenges to public and private entities.

The European Commission top priority to a **European Green Deal** has also a role to play in blue economy, namely to foster energy policies oriented to carbon neutrality by 2050. Wind farms and tidal energy can greatly contribute to this new political agenda.

From a broader geopolitical perspective, some participants also mentioned **the role of China as a global game-changer** at all levels, namely in the blue economy sector (China is already the number 1 producer of aquaculture).

The Seminar had its closing session at the European Parliament, which was kindly hosted by MEP Claudia Monteiro de Aguiar. It was consensual among all the participants that this initiative of the Belgium-Portuguese Chamber of Commerce was of utmost relevance and should, if possible, be repeated on a regular basis.

*Duarte Bué Alves – Seminar Rapporteur*

*Paris, Dec. 30th, 2019*

*Duarte Bué Alves obtained his law degree from Lisbon University and a LL.M. on European Affairs from the Portuguese Catholic University. He joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1999. Between 2004 and 2011, he served in the Portuguese embassies in Luanda, Brussels and Tokyo. In 2011, he became Head of Cabinet and diplomatic adviser of the Minister of Agriculture and Sea. He was the Minister's Sherpa for the Strategic Council for Open Economy. Between 2015 and 2016, he was chargé de mission in view of the opening the Consulate General in Guangzhou, China. In 2016-2017, Duarte Bué Alves was Head of Unit for Transnational Threats. As from August 2017, he is the Deputy Permanent Representative of Portugal to the OECD and since 2018, external advisor to the UN Special Envoy on the Ocean.*

## SPECIAL NOTE ON PANEL 3

Speakers at Panel 3 have highlighted the interesting potential of offshore energy that will be instrumental for the EU to attain its renewable energy objectives. However, there is a need to accelerate the pace of innovation and deployment in this sector in order to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050.

There is consensus on the main constraints and obstacles that have to be addressed in 8 main points:

- Need to think long term and to remember that offshore energy is an area where the EU is still leading world efforts; this is a sector where jobs can be created in Europe;
- Need to reinforce the interconnections both inland and offshore;
- Need to avoid silo approach; oceans offer multiple uses that have to be accommodated; importance of an enabling maritime spatial planning; an integrated approach is necessary;
- New skills are needed;
- The EU has the right legislation and regulatory framework in place but it needs to be enforced and implemented correctly; monitoring of implementation is equally fundamental;
- Need to come up with sustainable financing schemes;
- It is important to address societal concerns and get public acceptance to the deployment of offshore energy;
- International collaboration is needed and key for success to create the critical mass, accelerate innovation and deployment and reduce costs; partnerships like those being promoted between Portugal and Belgium are commendable.

*Paula Abreu Marques - Panel Moderator*

*Brussels, Nov. 21st, 2019*

*Paula Abreu Marques is the Head of Unit for "Renewables and CCS policy" in the European Commission, DG ENER since August 2013. She is responsible for defining and steering the EU renewable energy policy, including the implementation of the Renewable Energy Directive and the definition of a policy framework for Post-2020, as well as the EU policy strategy in the field of Carbon Capture and Storage. Previously Paula Abreu Marques was the Head of Unit for "International Relations and Enlargement" in the European Commission, DG ENER, being in charge of defining and steering the international energy relations set in the context of the EU energy policy strategy. She has an economic background and joined the European Commission in 1994.*

# MEDIA REPORTS

The organisation of this event has been featured in several national and international media outlets. In the following section, you can find links for the some of the media reports: [EU Today](#) | [EU Political Report](#) | [We Love Brussels](#) | [Buscardini Communications](#) | [Agricultura e Mar](#)

# PHOTO REPORT

The photo report for the event can be accessed through the following [link](#). The organisation would like to thank [Buscardidni Communications](#), our partner communication agency for covering the event.

# END NOTE

*This report was elaborated by the Belgian-Portuguese Chamber of Commerce in cooperation with the Rapporteur of the event and other panel moderators. In the name of the organisation, we would like to thank all participants and supporters of this event who allowed it to take place. The contribution of all was crucial to achieve the publication of this report, which we hope will be able to communicate to interested stakeholder the main conclusions and themes discussed during the event.*

*Brussels, January 2020.*

Organiser:



Partners:

