

**STATEMENT OF CONCLUSIONS
OF THE
INTERREG V INDIAN OCEAN
PROGRAMME
MONITORING COMMITTEE**

3rd December 2019

CCI 2014TC16RFTN009



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Interreg Monitoring Committee (CSI/IMC)*

1. Decisions of the Interreg Monitoring Committee of 3rd December 2019

1.1 State of progress of the Interreg Indian Ocean programme

The committee noted the progress made by the programme, notably characterised by a rate of programming of 62 % as on 3/12/2019.

1.2 Update on assessments and communication

The committee noted:

- Adjustment of the assessment plan of the Interreg programme regarding the assessments schedule.
- Assessments planned for 2020: assessment of implementation and assessment of all the programme's priorities. The terms of reference of these assessments will be submitted to the members of the monitoring committee by written procedure.
- Actions carried out regarding communication and information, in Reunion, Mayotte and in the partner countries.

1.3 Context and means of preparation of the 2021-2027 Interreg programme

The committee noted the context and the procedures for preparing the coming 2021-2027 Interreg programme, presented by the managing authority. It was specified that the orientation document of the European Commission for the Indian Ocean will be sent to the members of the committee for comments on diagnosis and strategy.

2. Summary of discussions

Main introductory and cross-cutting points

Mrs. Yolaine COSTES, Vice-President, representative of the President of the Regional Council, opened the plenary session by stressing the importance of the present monitoring committee, which has asserted itself as a major element of cooperation between the territories of the Indian Ocean. She indicated that the progress of the programme has been positive, with a programming level of €45 million, corresponding to 61.5% of available funds, certified expenditure which has made it possible to exceed the threshold for automatic decommitment since the end of 2018, with a very low rate of error. The modification of the model proposed by the managing authority during the 2018 monitoring committee, and validated by the European Commission in February 2019, has made it possible to continue the dynamics of the programme in 2019.

Mrs COSTES also expressed the desire of the managing authority to begin working on the preparation necessary for the coming programme as from the start of 2020, involving partners as early as possible. With regard to the draft regulations for the coming programme, she pointed out that, while simplification measures were proposed, the European Commission had not learned lessons from the difficulties in obtaining agreements from third-party countries. Finally, she emphasised that the progress made in terms of EDF-ERDF coordination on this programme allows us to be confident for the future.

In response to the representative of the European Commission comments on the framework of the Interreg programme for the period 2021 to 2027, Mrs COSTES pointed that it was up to Mayotte to decide which option they preferred for their territory and that the Regional Council of Reunion supports Mayotte authorities stance for two distinctive programmes. Concerning Reunion Island, in order to avoid any delay on the preparatory works for the next programme, she indicated that the managing authority will engage its works throughout Reunion Island and Indian Ocean countries in 2020.

Mr. Daniel Gonthier, 3rd Vice-President of the Departmental Council of Reunion, welcomed the progress made by the programme and emphasised that the success of regional cooperation is decisive for the future of the Indian Ocean region. He recalled that the priorities of the programme are perfectly consistent with those of the Departmental Council, in favour of human development, solidarity and mutual knowledge of partners in the Indian Ocean. This complementarity is illustrated through the many projects implemented by the Departmental Council of Reunion with the assistance of Interreg, such as the Iconotheque (virtual image library) of the Indian Ocean or the mobility programme of the Department in favour of qualified young Reunionese. There remain many prospects for exchanges, as evidenced by the recent school exchange between a junior high school in Reunion and an establishment in Seychelles, selected within the framework of the call for Indian Ocean Regional cooperation projects for young people. He concluded by recalling that the youth of the Indian Ocean remain a priority for future actions.

Mr. Sidi MOHAMED, 6th Vice-President in charge of decentralised cooperation and European affairs and regional cooperation for the Departmental Council of Mayotte, welcomed the positive dynamics of the programme, which has achieved its regular rate of progress. He is delighted about the participation of Mayotte in more than 28 operations. Despite their timid beginnings, operations piloted by beneficiaries in Mayotte should continue to progress with the recent signature of an agreement between the Departmental Council of Mayotte and France Volontaires. He also emphasised that relations between Mayotte and Reunion have been considerably strengthened in recent years and that they contribute to improved coordination between the two Interreg programmes: Indian Ocean and Mayotte, Comoros and Madagascar. He proposed that the managing authority could organize two Interreg Steering Committees in Mayotte in 2020, in March and in August. As for the next programming period, the Departmental Council of Mayotte would like to maintain two separate cooperation programmes that reflect the priorities of each of the territories of Reunion and Mayotte. He concluded by expressing the commitment of the population of Mayotte to the strengthening of ties with their neighbours through regional cooperation.

Mr. Benoit ARNAUD, Deputy Secretary General for Regional Affairs, representative of the Prefect of Mayotte, shared the observations of the Departmental Council. He also wished to express his thanks to the managing authority for the organization of the various work sessions, which are all the more crucial

in this pivotal period of completion of the 2014-2020 programme and preparation of the 2021-2027 programme.

Mr. Danny AUBEELUCK, First Secretary representative of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Mauritius, expressed his country's attachment to the implementation of the Interreg programme, which contributes to consolidating the traditional deep friendship between Reunion and Mauritius. Witness of this are: the opening of the regional office in Mauritius in April 2015, the signature of the Interreg framework agreement in October 2016, and finally the 78 selected projects which involve Mauritius as a partner in fields as varied as agricultural training, international solidarity volunteers, the structuring of economic exchanges and cultural and tourist cooperation. He noted that there remain many challenges for the Indian Ocean and that the Mauritian side hopes that the next Interreg programme will make it possible to strengthen the partnership in order to rise to the challenges in terms of economic development, the environment and also maritime security.

Mrs. Mialy ANDRIANAIVO, Vice-Consul of Madagascar, representative of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Madagascar noted with satisfaction the excellent dynamics observed in terms of economic projects, mobility and training, in view of the priority set by the Malagasy government to develop economic exchanges and of the young profile of the population. She recalled that the involvement of the Reunion Regional Council office in Madagascar enabled the country's participation in the programme, which is illustrated by the large number of operations in which her country participates. Finally, she wished to congratulate the managing authority, which has spared no effort in the effective and efficient implementation of the program, which is making good progress.

Phd. Marina CONFAIT, General Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Seychelles, representing the Vice-President and Minister for Foreign Affairs, expressed the attachment of the Republic of Seychelles to foster cooperation between the islands of the Indian Ocean. The signing of the Interreg framework agreement with the Regional Council of Reunion last April has made it possible to consolidate relations between the islands and offer a new impetus to their bilateral cooperation. The Interreg programme provides an essential framework for continuing and strengthening cooperation in the fight against climate change and the protection of biodiversity. The Reunion Regional Council office in Seychelles must continue to help identify the opportunities for future cooperation.

Mr. Mahamoud SOILIH, Ambassador of the Union of the Comoros declared he was delighted to participate in this monitoring committee in Reunion, which constitutes a space of peace and harmonious encounter of cultures in the Indian Ocean. He underlined that the axes of the Interreg programme correspond closely to the development priorities of the Comoros presented in the framework of the Paris Conference, particularly in terms of economic and scientific development. He noted that the efforts of the Reunion Regional Council office in the Comoros to support pilots of projects, in particular those in the private sector, are essential to the successful implementation of projects. He recalled that during this period of launching of the preparation of the coming programme, it is crucial to adapt it as far as possible to the specific contexts of our territories.

Mr. Pierre Emmanuel LECLERC, geographic rapporteur for GD Regio at the European Commission, thanked the managing authority for organising all the meetings and visits which have been very rich. He welcomed the presence of his colleagues representing the delegations of the European Union in Mauritius and Madagascar and was delighted that thanks to the exchanges during this committee, he had been able to achieve a better understanding of the practical and operational coordination between the EDF and the ERDF. Regarding the coming programme, he would like to share more information with the committee members. First of all, the European Commission remains very attached to the principle of partnership, which is reflected in particular in the need to prepare the coming programme with all the partners. In addition, he recalled that one of the main priorities of European Union policies is the fight against global warming, within the framework of the "Green deal" proposed to Member States, which implies a policy of cohesion and thus involves the future Indian Ocean programme. He indicated that at this stage in the negotiations, while the budget remains uncertain, the funds of the future programme will have to be coordinated with those of other funds available (other structural funds, EDF-ERDF). Finally, he informed the members of the committee of the publication by the European Commission of an orientation document setting out the Commission's ambitions for the Indian Ocean,

which should feed the discussions for the future programme and be the object of consultation, the terms of which are yet to be defined by the managing authority.

In response to the representative of the Departemental Council of Mayotte, Mr LECLERC indicated that the European Commission will not approve the renewal of the previous programme 2014-2020 which was disappointing, for the period 2021-2027. Furthermore, he was not convinced by the arguments against the creation of a subprogramme and he is waiting for a written submission on this point by the managing authority. He also reminded the managing authority that an answer to the Director general of DG REGIO's letter concerning the choice of prefinancing option must be sent before the 31st December.

Mr. Pascal GAUCI, Secretary General for Regional Affairs, representing Mr. Jacques BILLANT, Prefect of Reunion, welcomed the organisation of the present committee, which represents an opportunity to bring together all the partners of the programme and constitutes a concrete expression of the cooperation between Reunion and Mayotte and their neighbours. He is delighted with the progress of the programme, which has seen its programming progress by 20% since the last committee, thanks to the efforts of the managing authority, in particular through the adjustment of the schedule, which will make it possible to progress towards a total achievement of available funds. Mr Gauci recalled that the President of the Republic, during his visit to the Indian Ocean last October, emphasised the importance of Indian Ocean cooperation. The Interreg programme is a powerful lever for achieving projects around the priorities which are: air-transport connectivity, sustainable tourism, environment, maritime safety, student exchanges, research and culture. Finally, he recalled that in 2020, efforts will have to be maintained in order to continue the momentum around these priorities, strengthening the link between the EDF and the ERDF and promoting the adhesion of South Africa by presenting to its representatives the many possible fields of cooperation (marine science, biodiversity, blue economy). He concluded by emphasising the full mobilization of State services for the success of the programme, both through the involvement of its embassies in the area and the availability of the Regional Cooperation Fund, complementary to Interreg.



INTERREG MONITORING COMMITTEE

ANNEX 1 :

Presentation support

INTERREG Monitoring Committee Plenary session



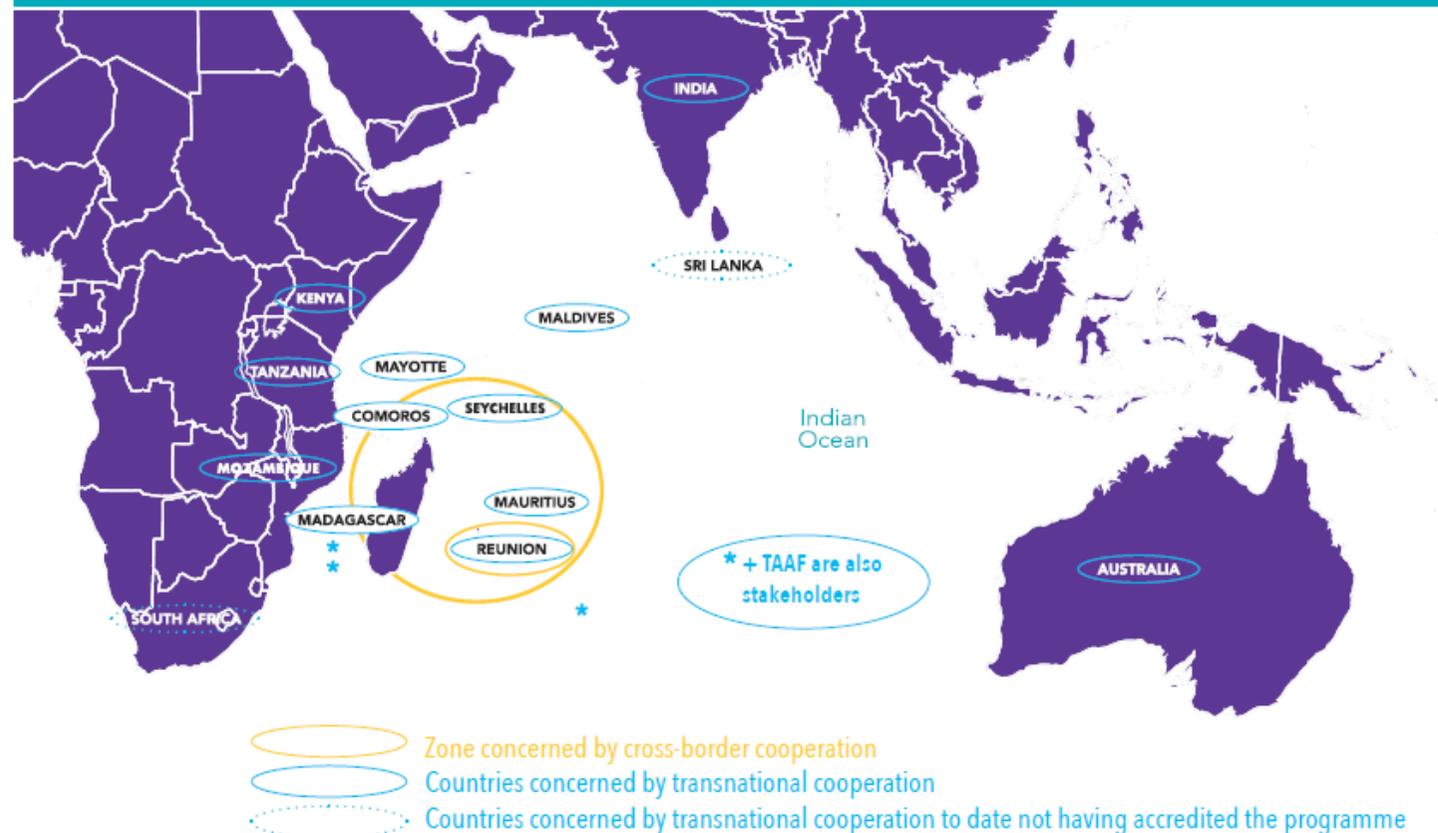
AGENDA

1. Presentation of progress of the programme
2. Update of assessments and communication
3. Presentation of context and means to prepare 2021-2027 programme

1- Dynamics of progress of the programme

Presentation of Interreg V IO Programme

GEOGRAPHIC AREA OF THE PROGRAM



Implementation of programme

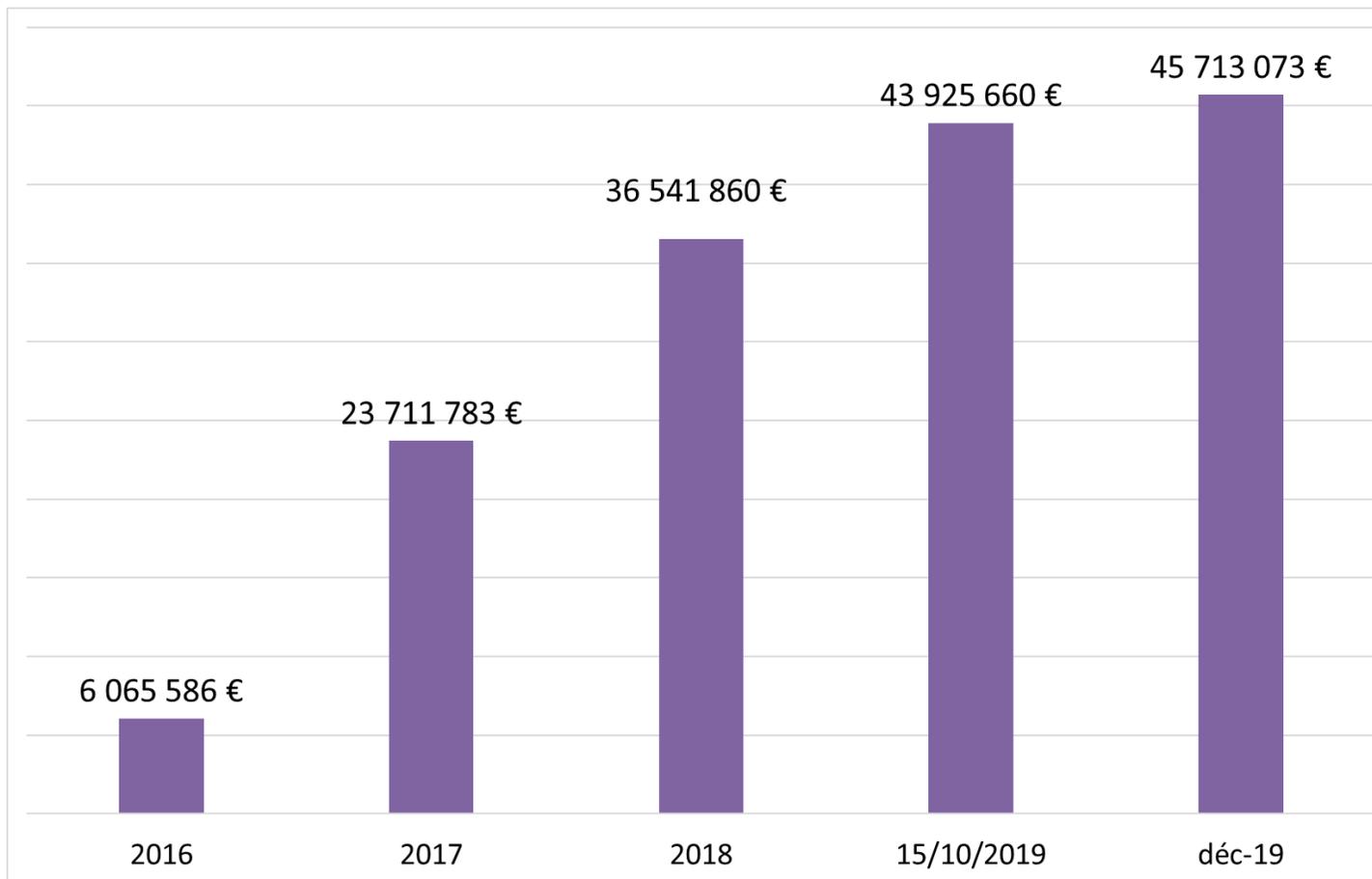
Adoption of OP in 2015 and setting up of action framework early 2016

From mid-2016 to 2019, dynamic implementation, with 7 programming committees held between February and September 2019

Modification of financing of OP proposed to Interreg Monitoring Committee from November 2018 and adopted by the Assessment Committee in February 2019 to give the best support possible to the second phase of implementation of the programme

Overview of progress - Programming

Progress of programming since July 2016 (total cumulated eligible cost)



As on 03/12/2019 :

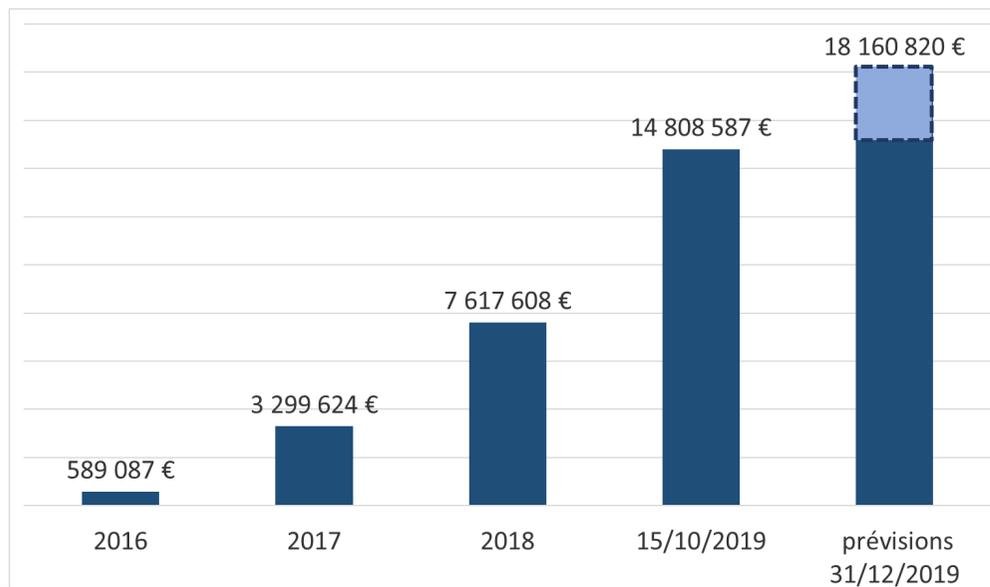
167 *projects*
programmed for a
total cost of
€45.7 M
(representing 62%
of the total
programme)

Overview of progress - Certification

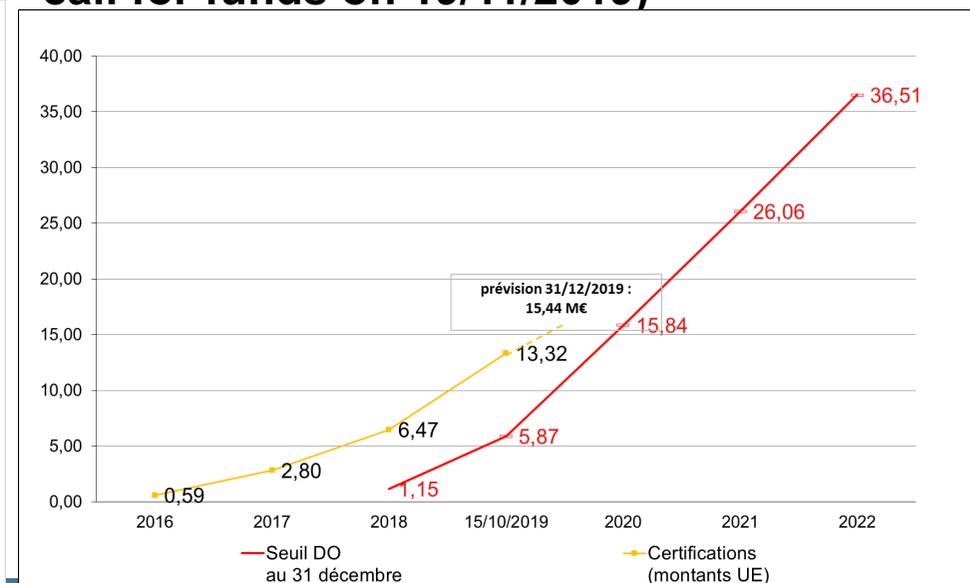
The current level of certification (€14.8 M total eligible cost) makes it possible to:

- Achieve FEDER certified amount of €13.3M: far higher than the automatic decommitment threshold for 2019 set at € 5.87M ;
- Be well in advance as regards achieving the 2020 threshold (€15.84M)

**Evolution of certification since July 2016
(total cumulated eligible cost)**



**Progress of automatic decommitment
(cumulated certified FEDER funds,
call for funds on 19/11/2019)**



Other elements of implementation of the Interreg V Indian Ocean programme

EDF-ERDF and AFD coordination

Concerning EDF and FEDER, evolution regarding the 11th EDF:

- Mutual development with upstream identification of priorities
 - €2 M indicated in the 'food security' project document attributed to the CIRAD ;
 - Fisheries surveillance missions integrated in the SMARTFISH programme estimate.

Concerning coordination with the AFD (French Development Agency), several levels of action:

- Contribution by AFD of public funds or co-financing;
- Complementary character of AFD and Interreg financing.

Update on Interreg framework agreements



Framework agreement signed on 11th October 2016



Framework agreement signed on 30th November 2016



Framework agreement signed on 14th August 2017



Framework agreement signed on 6th April 2019

Elements resulting from technical meeting

Observations concerning progress of OP	Information provided by the managing authority
<p>The European Commission representative emphasised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The adequate progress of the programme, which already makes it possible to achieve the automatic decommitment threshold for 2019 and to register a significant advance on the 2020 threshold ; -The methodological readjustment made by the Managing Authority for the implementation of projects that are complementary to EDF-ERDF. - The representative of the EU delegation in Mauritius added that the 11th EDF will integrate a project aimed at adapting to climate change. The latter could be the object of complementary funding with actions carried out by the PIROI financed by the ERDF. <p>The French State and the AFD pointed out that other sources of funding would be mobilised (Convergence Contract, AFD)</p>	<p>The managing authority thanked the European Commission for its positive comments and its responsiveness when approving modifications to the programme, that made it possible to preserve the dynamic character of programming.</p> <p>Regarding the complementary character of the EDF, the managing authority welcomed the resources dedicated to disaster management, TO 5 of the Interreg OP being currently saturated.</p>

- You are invited to note the progress of the Interreg Indian Ocean programme.

2- Update on assessments and communication

Proposed adjustment for the assessment plan

- During the November 2018 monitoring committee, the launch of a thematic assessment targeting economic priorities (3 and 4) and training (9 and 10) was proposed.
- Following consultation with the Regional Assessment Committee, on 7th October 2019, the following calendar for the assessment plan was proposed:

Assessment half way through implementation
Launching end 2019, for work to start in 2020 (Lot 1)

Assessment of all achievements and initial results for all priorities
End 2019: launching for work to start in 2020 (Lot 2)

Presentation of assessment 2020

- An assessment of the Indian Ocean Interreg V OP for 2014-2020 will be launched to evaluate:
 - ✓ Implementation of OP
 - ✓ Effects of actions within the 5 topics covered (topic)



On 7th October 2019, the Regional Assessment Committee endorsed the mission brief and drew up the following schedule:

- Work contributing to
 - ✓ Possible adjustments to actions within the current programme
 - ✓ Preparation of the 2021-2027 Interreg programme, of which an initial version will be sent to the Commission in July 2020.



A few communication actions

Interreg handbook in English and French



Media press + TV (Antenne Réunion) partnership



Interreg Internet page set up in 2016 featuring

- All the action files
- Downloadable documents



Newsletters on supported projects aimed at partner countries

Monthly Reunion Regional Council news 5 issues featured Interreg in 2019

Information and communication in partner countries

Reunion

- Information for high schools following call for expressions of interest in “regional Indian Ocean cooperation aimed at young persons” in June 2019

Mayotte

- Information meeting with project pilots in Mayotte in July 2019

Comoros

- 2 monitoring committee meetings of the Interreg framework agreement (January, July)

Mauritius

- Information meetings, communication on social networks

Madagascar

- Monthly meetings with the Interreg focal person

Seychelles

- Information meetings organised by the volunteer in charge since November 2019

Elements resulting from the technical meeting

Observations concerning assessment	Information provided by the managing authority
<p>The European Commission representative questioned the Managing Authority about the delay in implementing the first assessments and about the content of assessment of implementation, which involves a specific point concerning preparation of the 2021-2027 programme</p>	<p>The MA reminded those present that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Reunion experienced a period of important social unrest et the end of 2018; -The second semester of 2019 was devoted to refining methodological work of drawing up the mission brief to be submitted to the a CRE, the body in charge of assessment. <p>The MA pointed out that preparation of the 2021-2027 OP is the object of a separate OMA but the implementation assessment which will be launched concerning the current OP will contribute to drawing up the coming programme.</p>

Elements resulting from the technical meeting

Observations concerning assessment and communication	Information provided by the managing authority
<p>The partners requested to be involved in the assessment work.</p>	<p>The MA will transmit the terms of reference of the assessment to the members of the IMC in writing and pointed out that in application of the regulations, the results will be presented to the monitoring committee.</p>
<p>The representative of the GD Regio informed the members of the Interreg Monitoring Committee that next year, the EC will celebrate the 30th anniversary of the INTERREG programme by organising events that could be held in parallel with the managing authority communication actions.</p>	<p>The managing authority remains available to the EC to inform them of all elements that could be useful for the organisation of these events.</p>

- You are requested to approve the adjustments made to the Interreg programme assessment plan and to note the progress of the progress of the communication plan.

3- Context and means of preparation of 2021-2027 Interreg programme

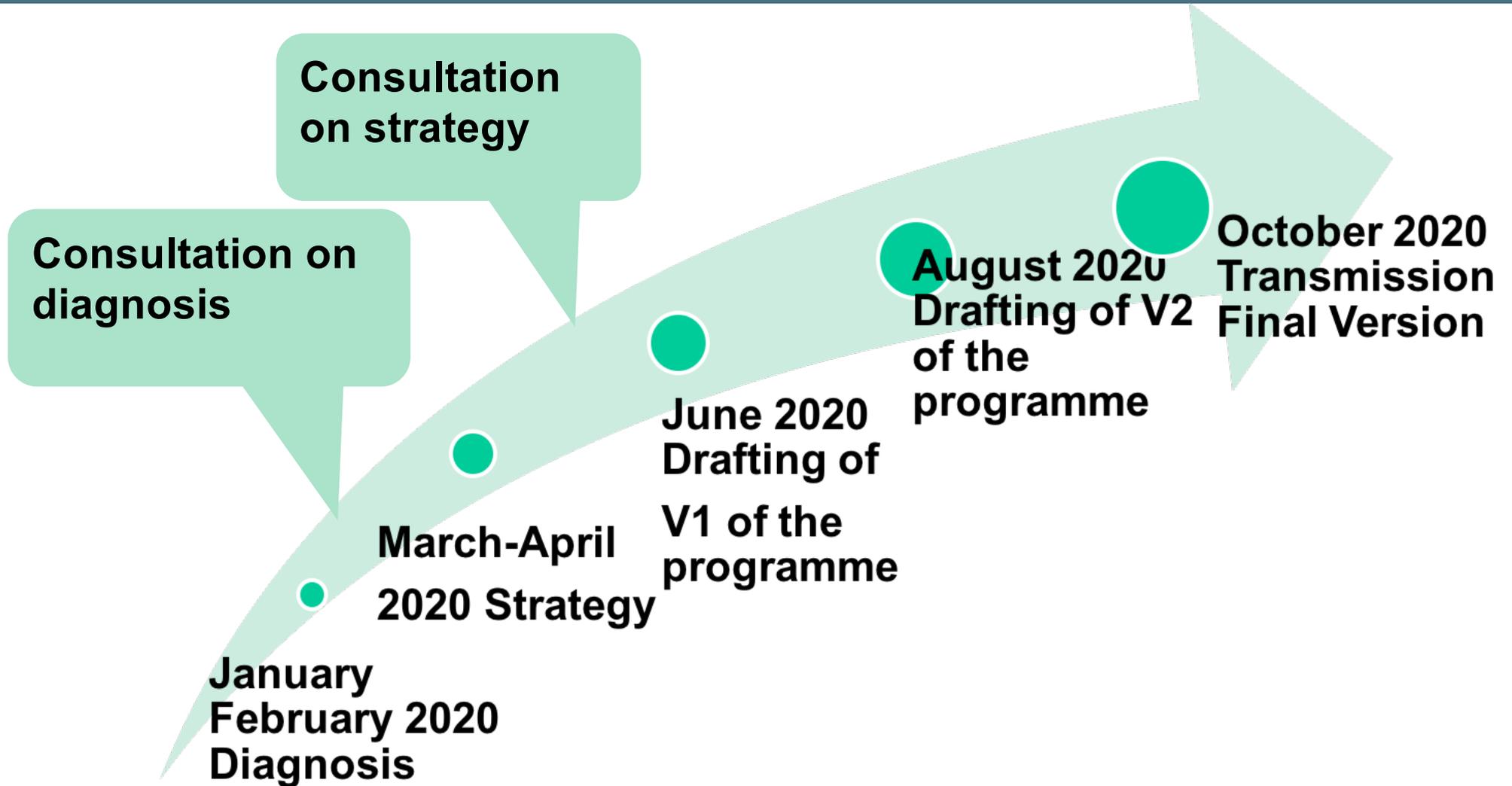
Preparation of the 2021-2027 Interreg programme

Assistance in project construction for drawing up ERDF/ESF+ and Interreg 2021-2017 programmes

Important role of consultation:

- ➔ For Reunion: coordinated consultation in the context of preparing 2021-2027 programmes
- ➔ For partner States signatories of Interreg framework agreements : consultation within committees already set up between Reunion Regional Council offices and the authorities

Preparation schedule



Elements resulting from the technical meeting

Observations concerning future programme	Information provided by the managing authority
<p>The representative of GD Regio presented the main provisions of the draft regulations for the future cooperation programme and the main elements of the guidelines for the Indian Ocean.</p> <p>In addition, he indicated that he will check to see whether the obligation to transmit the final version of the coming OP within 3 months following submission of the partnership agreement applies to the cooperation programme.</p>	<p>The managing authority will submit the guidelines to the members of the monitoring committee for observation concerning the diagnosis and strategy of the coming programme.</p>
<p>The representative of the EU delegation in Mauritius presented the developments of the future instrument for neighbouring countries that will replace the EDF.</p>	<p>The managing authority recalled that it plans to associate the representatives of the EU delegations, well in advance of preparation of the coming programmes.</p>

➤ Thank you for your attention