

Statement of conclusion of the INTERREG MONITORING COMMITTEE

25th November – 15th December 2020

**Written proceedings
Interreg V
Indian Ocean cooperation program 2014-2020**

REUNION ISLAND

FRANCE





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Due to the Covid-19 pandemic causing border-shutdown, and the implementation of social-distancing measures, the usual format of the Interreg Monitoring Committee meeting, in technical meetings, a plenary session, and visit of projects, could not be held in 2020.

In this context, in order to collect their notices, the members of the Interreg Monitoring Committee were invited to take decisions through a written proceeding from the 23rd of November to the 15th of December, concerning the following points:

- progress made by the 2014-2020 Interreg program
- actions of communication and information
- assessment of the 2014-2020 Interreg program
- contents of the 2021-2027 Interreg program

1. Summary of formal notices and response of the managing authority

1.1 Summary of formal notices

12 formal notices have been received during the written proceedings of the Interreg Monitoring Committee.

- **Notice from of Reunion Island prefecture**

By letter of 4th December 2020, the prefecture of Reunion Island takes notice and approves the points submitted under the scrutiny of the Committee.

- **Notice from the Departmental Council of Reunion Island**

By letter of 17th December 2020, the Departmental Council of Reunion Island agrees with the priorities of the 2021-2027 Interreg Program submitted under its scrutiny, and takes notice of the integration, in this program, of the new challenges highlighted by this sanitary crisis.

It indicates the priorities of the Departmental Council, namely: the development of agricultural exchanges, the promotion of the cultural heritage, and the support to actions of formation and educational exchanges.



- **Notice from the Economical, Social and Environmental Regional Council (CESER)**

By letter of 17th December 2020, the Council states that it will send its observations on the Interreg Program 2021-2027, during the next semester of 2021.

- **Notice from the Departmental Council of Mayotte**

By letter of 15th December 2020, the Departmental Council of Mayotte takes notice and approves the points submitted under the scrutiny of the Committee.

It states that the announced perspectives for the 2014-2020 program, and finds the transmitted data are reassuring.

However, the Departmental Council underlines that the implementation of Mahorais projects remains weak, despite the implemented measures to share information between the two managing authorities (Mayotte and Reunion Island), and the involvement of Mahorais partners.

About the 2021-2027 Interreg program, the Departmental Council confirms the scope of actions defined through exchanges with the General Direction of outermost territories.

- **Notice from the Community of Austral and Antarctic French Territories (TAAF)**

By letter of 11th December 2020, the Community of Austral and Antarctic French Territories agrees with the second version of the 2021-2027 Interreg Program.

The Prefect expresses its appreciation of the integration of the specific objectives 2.2 and 2.7 to the strategic objective “A European Green Deal” that take into account the priorities of cooperation defined beforehand by the Community Of Austral and Antarctic French Territories.

It also states that the specific objective 1.1 enables the support of collaborative and multidisciplinary research projects in the context of a renewal of the consortium between partners of the Indian Ocean on the Scattered Islands in the Indian Ocean.

- **Notice from the Indian Ocean Commission**

By letter of 7th December 2020, the Indian Ocean Commission states that the proposal of the 2021-2027 Interreg program is consistent with the axes of its Strategic Development Plan.

The Commission approves the points submitted under the scrutiny of the Committee.



- **Notice from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Maldives**

By letter of 15th December 2020, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Maldives states that the Interreg program is the key to find multilateral solutions to the common development challenges facing all countries, and approves the points submitted under the scrutiny of the Committee.

- **Notice from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Cooperation, and International Trade of the Republic of Mauritius**

By letter of 14th December 2020, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Regional Cooperation, and International Trade of the Republic of Mauritius, takes notice of the strategic objectives 1,2,4 and ISO 1 which will guide the 2021-2027 Interreg Program, and has no objections to the strategy submitted under the scrutiny of the Committee.

- **Notice from the Department of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Seychelles**

By email of 15th December 2020, the Department of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Seychelles takes notices, and approves the points submitted under the scrutiny of the Committee.

- **Notice from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kenya**

By letter of 9th December 2020, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kenya informs about its response to the managing authority through a letter dated on the 28th July 2020.

In this letter, expresses its appreciation of the opportunity to participate to the 2021-2027 program, and looks forward to cooperate with the other countries in addressing common challenges in the region, and particularly in maritime sector (namely trafficking in persons, illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing, marine pollution, smuggling of contraband, drug smuggling, cyber criminality, piracy, maritime terrorism...).

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kenya states that the proposition made for the 2021-2027 Interreg program identifies the main weaknesses that Reunion Island and the participating countries have in common. The Ministry joins in an attached document, comments and propositions of projects between Kenya and Reunion Island (however the attached document was not transmitted).

- **Notice from the European Union delegation of Madagascar**

By email of 14th December 2020, the EU delegation of Madagascar expresses remarks



on the following subjects:

- ***About the progress made by the 2014-2020 Interreg program:*** the delegation takes notice of the projects involving Madagascar and the Comoros, of the presence of new non-EU partners, and of the projects financed by both the European Development Fund (EDF) and the ERDF. The delegation expresses its appreciation of the experimentation led by the French Development Agency (AFD) for the period 2021-2027, of a common management of the EDF and the ERDF (for health actions), to improve the coordination of the existing range of financial instruments.
- ***About the actions of communication, information and evaluation:*** the delegation takes notice of the actions taken to communicate and inform carried on the Interreg program. The delegation makes itself available for further consultations about the evaluation of the 2014-2020 Interreg Program.
- ***About the contents of the 2021-2027 Interreg program:*** the delegation takes notice of the proposal submitted under its scrutiny, indicates that it will inform the Committee of the progress made on the NDICI program later on, and remains vigilant to the possible coordination of these financial instruments.
- **Notice from the European Commission representative at the DG-REGIO**

By a note to the managing authority of 16th December 2020, the European Commission representative underlines that the article 49-1 of the *EU regulation n° 1303/2013* provides that the Committee shall meet once a year, and therefore, the written proceedings does not respect this provision. Also, it should have been better to organize a meeting *via* videoconference.

The Commission made several observations on the different points submitted under the scrutiny of the Committee, namely:

- about the Interreg Program 2014-2020, the Commission asked for precisions about indicators on the projects of the Club Export and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Reunion Island. It also asked about precisions on the actions of communications led in the countries of the Indian Ocean (beyond the Indian Ocean Commission) and the role of the delegations of the EU in these actions.
- About the Interreg Program 2021-2027, the Commission made several observations related to the chosen strategy (perimeter of the Program, common challenges, choices and justification of the strategic and specific objectives) ; to the description of the priorities (types of actions, indicators) ; to the implementation of the future program (implication of the partnership, establishment of a common secretariat, coordination of the other financings of the EU); and related to the communication on the future program.



1.2 *Response of the managing authority*

The managing authority thanks all of the actors who contributed to the consultation, and takes note of the received notices. It expresses its appreciation of the number of notices received (12 notices), including two notices from two non-EU English-speaking countries (the Republic of Kenya and the Republic of Maldives), agreements from Mauritius, Seychelles, TAAF and Mayotte.

In accordance with the implementation of the 2014-2020 Interreg Program, the DG-Region requested information about two projects and about actions of information and communication. These requests are not related to the progress made by the Interreg Program, and some of them need to be treated in cooperation with other EU delegations of the Indian Ocean. Therefore, these elements will be transmitted to the DG-Region as soon as possible.

In accordance with the 2021-2027 Interreg Program, the representative of the European Commission expressed observations. Since the preparation of other programs for the period 2021-2027 is ongoing, the managing authority will organize a specific meeting with the representative of the European Commission in the beginning of 2021, to properly exchange about the future Interreg Program.

2. Decisions of the Interreg Monitoring Committee

The Interreg Monitoring Committee takes notice of:

- The progress made by the 2014-2020 Interreg program
- The actions of communication and information
- The assessment of the 2014-2020 Interreg program
- The contents of the 2021-2027 Interreg program

The Interreg Monitoring Committee approves the 2nd version of 2021-2027 Interreg program. Some sections are still subject to enhancements regarding the ongoing consultations of the partnership.