

## Annual Meeting of the Cooperation Platform between the Portuguese Speaking World, Nordic Countries & Russia (PSW-NC-R)

On 25 and 26 January 2018, the Alliance to Renew Co-operation among Humankind (ARCHumankind) co-organised the *Annual Meeting of the Cooperation Platform between the Portuguese Speaking World, Nordic Countries & Russia (PSW-NC-R)* together with the Kymenlaakso Regional Council, who hosted the two-day event at the Helsinki EU Office in Brussels.



**Mr Paulo Casaca**

which has now been implemented in a fruitful way. To make the plan work, ARCHumankind was able to count on the human and logistic support of our partners and friends of Kymenlaakso Council, who provided the reception and the facilities for the event.

The PSW-NC-R was born in [2012 in the Azores](#), Praia da Vitória, bringing together elected and administration officials, business people and other civil society people coming from three different cultural backgrounds to discuss global topics. Following the Presidency of Roberto Monteiro, former mayor of Praia da Vitória, ARCHumankind was invited to coordinate an annual gathering in 2017,



**Mr Jaakko Mikkola**

On 26 January, the networking reception with welcome addresses by Prof Ricardo Serrão Santos, Member of the European Parliament representing the Azores, and Mr Jaakko Mikkola, Regional Mayor of the Regional Council of Kymenlaakso, Finland, was offered to the participants. In his welcome address, Mr Mikkola introduced the audience to the Nordic component of the PSW-NC-R, particularly

The meeting was divided into four parts, which included a networking reception and welcome addresses, a conference on maritime sustainable development, an open discussion on the future of financing sustainable development in a changing Europe and a conclusion on tracking potential for the growth of the network.



**Prof Ricardo Serrão Santos**

to his home region of Kymenlaakso, which is, as an EU Peripheral Maritime Region, located in south-eastern Finland. Prof Serrão Santos, who is also an expert oceanographer from the University of the Azores, Portugal, reminded in his address of the paramount importance of the seas for the wellbeing of humanity.



The second day of the meeting started with opening remarks by Mr Toni Vanhala, Head of International Affairs of the Kymenlaakso Regional Council, and Mr Paulo Casaca, founder and Director of ARCHumankind as well as President of the PSW-NC-R. The ensuing conference led by Prof Serrão Santos and entitled *Blue growth*

*and sustainable development* triggered a lively debate on the impact of plastic and nuclear waste on the marine environment.

For the third part of the meeting, Mr Casaca stimulated a free exchange of opinion between the sphere of the European institutions and representatives of so-called “middle income countries”, such as South Africa, as represented by Her Excellency Ms Suhayfa E. Zia, Minister Plenipotentiary of the Embassy of South Africa to Belgium and the Mission to the European Union. During the debate, major issues with the *New European Consensus on Development*, regarding for example taxation and subsidies as well as entrepreneurial cooperation between European companies and small business owners in developing countries, were brought to light.



**Her Excellency Suhayfa E. Zia**

In the end, a meeting of the members of the network took place.

Among the conclusions of the conference, the following points were stressed:

- Ocean eco-systems destruction has to be prevented as a matter of great urgency;
- In view of its importance and challenges, an ‘Oceans European Agency’ is a necessity;
- An informal dialogue platform on sustainable development between European and ACP countries institutional actors needs to operate on a permanent basis to tackle a multitude of ongoing issues;
- European financial rules should not discriminate against ACP countries small businesses that often lack registration formalities existing in the European Union;
- Protection of the Amazonian rainforest should take precedent over any trade rules on timber products seen out of their context.

Please follow [this link](#) to the latest report of ARCHumankind on sustainable development entitled “For a meaningful SDG agenda: In the wake of the US declaration on the Paris Agreement”.

Please find below a **brochure** with additional information on the conference *Blue growth and sustainable development* as well as the **programme** with speakers’ biographies and further descriptions of items discussed during the meeting.

## BLUE GROWTH AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The Marine Strategy Framework Directive is thus the most important framework to measure when thresholds are reached, and activities have to be disciplined.

Blue Growth is not just investment or ocean-related industries. Blue Growth has to be a strong commitment to sustainability and ethics. If we are able to soundly bring together entrepreneurship and economic wisdom, fair social distribution of earnings and opportunities, such as employment, while respecting environmental barriers and even moral issues, then and only then, we may speak about Blue Growth. It is not just a question of geography or marketing. Blue growth is a matter of quality and future. We want to make sure that sustainable development is not just word added to every political speech. To do that, we also have to be creative, imaginative and daring.



*Mr Ricardo Serrão Santos MEP has been a Member of the European Parliament representing the Azores for the Socialists and Democrats Group since 2014. He holds scientific degrees from the University of Liverpool and from the University of the Azores and has in the past held positions including President of the Institute for Marine Research (Imar), President of the Azorean Fisheries Observer Programme (POPA) and Director of the Department of Oceanography and Fisheries at the University of the Azores. He is member of the Marine Sustainability Scoping Group of the European Academies Science Advisory Council, member of the Natural and Environmental Science Board of the Foundation for Science and Technology (Ministry of Education and Science), member of the Sea Cluster Strategy Board at the Oceano XXI Association, member of the Regional Strategic Consultation Council, member of the Mars Network Executive Board, corresponding member of the Lisbon Academy of Sciences and full member of the Naval Academy in Lisbon.*







## BLUE GROWTH

Not many decades ago, science and politics were both claiming that the oceans were inexhaustible and untouchable or even immune to threats. In fact, during the history of our planet there has been an amazing capacity of resilience, with the oceans playing a major role.

The problem is when a trigger, or a composite of triggers "... changes everything", to paraphrase the title of Naomi Klein's book on climate change. In the last 100 years mankind reached an overwhelming capacity of innovation and creativity leading to a "technological mastery of Nature". The result is population and economic growth in an unprecedented way. Since 1930 the world population increased from 2 billions to 7 billions people. A three+ fold increase. At the same time catches on fisheries increased 5 times, general consumption increased 150 times and energy/calories around 100 times. The amount of waste is huge. The most impacting example is probably the case of plastics, which begin to be produced industrially in 1930.

**In 2000 we were producing globally around 250 million tons, 125 times more than in 1950**

In 2000 we were producing globally around 250 million tons, 125 times more than in 1950. Now a days this is creating major environmental problems, including at sea and at the deep-sea. The case is so strenuous that in August 2016 at the World Geological Conference in Cape Town, South Africa, where the the International Commission Stratigraphy met to decide if the planet changed geological Era or Period. In this meeting it was agreed that planet Earth entered was not any more at the Holocene and had to entered the Anthropocene. One of the markers in discussion and vote to characterize this change are the micro-plastics in the seabed of world oceans. A techno-fossil has been discussed and voted as one of the potential marker of change of geological Era or Period.

Global security of natural resources and the resilience of the planetary system are now in big jeopardy.

While we urgently need to invest in reliable systems of mitigation and reversion of change, we plan the so called Blue Growth, which is seen as an opportunity for Europe at a time when Europe is falling short of economic opportunities.

The difficulty, in fact, is to determine the scale and size of activities related with the blue economy. As it is difficult to determine with precision how large these sectors are. Current EU estimates have shown that there are around 4.5 million persons employed in marine activities in Europe. The EC believes that this number can increase by at least 1.5 million until 2020. Most important is, however, that 75% of Europe's external trade and 37% of trade within the EU is already seaborne.

These estimates demonstrate the actual significance of the blue economy, the significance of developing further the blue economy, but also the potential growth of environmental impacts.

If we measure the contribution of ocean-based sectors to economic production and employment, the global ocean economy is already very significant. Preliminary OECD calculations show that the contribution of the economy of the sea in 2010 was €1.3 trillion, or, in other words, approximately 2.5% of the global gross added value (GAV). Although offshore oil and gas accounts for one-third of the value of marine-based industries, the fact is that, still according with the same report, the largest employer is fisheries with more than a third of the total of 31 million jobs in the marine economy. In practice what does this mean? It means that the two most important economic activities in the economy of the sea, one in terms of global added value and the other in terms of employment, are two extractive industries, respectively fossil fuels and living resources.

The way that growth will be done and the jobs will be applied is fundamental. Without reliable, cooperative, scientifically informed and politically wise decisions it may lead to cumulative effects of unsustainable growth. The Blue Strategy Communication of the EC is clearly inspired by green economy principles, as it is the recent resolution of the EP. Giving a prominent role to technology, efficiency and innovation is positive. But what happen when urgency in growth rates outstrip efficiency gains? Efficiency and greener technologies are not always sufficient or able to break the link between environmental damage and economic growth.



## PROGRAMME

### JANUARY 25th

- 18:30 *Reception* offered by Kymenlaakso Regional Council
- 19:00 *Welcome addresses*
- Ricardo Serrão Santos**, Member of the European Parliament (MEP) representing the Azores
- Jaakko Mikkola**, Regional Mayor, Regional Council of Kymenlaakso

### JANUARY 26th

- 9:00 *Opening remarks*
- Toni Vanhala**, Head of International Affairs, Regional Council of Kymenlaakso
- Paulo Casaca**, Director of ARCHumankind, President of PSW-NC-R
- 9:15 *Conference: Blue growth and sustainable development*
- Ricardo Serrão Santos**, MEP and Oceanographer, University of the Azores
- 10:30 *Coffee break*
- 11:00 *The future of financing sustainable development in a changing Europe – can the new consensus on development provide the solutions?*, open discussion moderated by **Paulo Casaca**
- 13:00 *Light lunch* offered by ARCHumankind
- 14:15 Election of new Presidency for 2018, tracking potential for network growth
- 15:30 Conclusions

### *Welcome address*

Our programme starts its proceedings with a reception on 25 January, opened by the Mayor of Kymenlaakso Council, Mr **Jaakko Mikkola**, and the Member of the European Parliament representing the Azores, Mr **Ricardo Serrão Santos**. The reception will be opened to guests and intends to get the participants to better know each other and to network.



**Mr Ricardo Serrão Santos MEP** (RSS) is a Member of the European Parliament since July 2014 and full Member of the Committees on Fisheries, on Agriculture and Rural Development and in the Interparliamentary Delegation EU-Canada. He is Coordinator for Socialists and Democrats on Fisheries. He is also the Vice-Chair of the Parliament Intergroups on "Seas, Islands, Rivers and Coastal Zones" and on "Climate change, Biodiversity and Sustainable Development". RSS holds a Doctorate Degree from the Universities of Liverpool and the Azores. RSS has also been the President of IMAR-Institute of Marine Research, and Pro-Rector and Director of the Department Oceanography and Fisheries at the University of the Azores, Vice-Chair of the European Marine Board and Chair of EurOcean. RSS was honoured as member of the "Portuguese Academy of Sciences" (Class of Sciences, Section of Biological Sciences) in 2009 and emeritus member of the "Portuguese Navy Academy" (Class of Arts, Letters and Sciences) in 2017.

---



**Mr Jaakko Antti Mikkola** has been holding since August 2016 the position of Regional Mayor of the Regional Council of Kymenlaakso, Finland. After having held positions as Regional Mayor of Itä-Uusimaa from 2003 to 2011 and Planning Manager of Kymenlaakso from 1996 to 2003 in the fields of regional development, international relations and regional planning, he served from 2011 to 2016 as Director of International Affairs at Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council with offices in Brussels and St. Petersburg. He was the executive secretary of the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission from 2000 to 2002. He holds two academic degrees, the one of M.Sc. in Helsinki University of Technology in 1986 in the field of urban planning and the other of M.S.Sc. in Helsinki University in 1996 in Political History.

---

*Opening remarks*

On 26 January, Mr **Toni Vanhala** – former president of PSW-NC-R and head of the international affairs department of the Kymenlaakso Council – and Mr **Paulo Casaca**, Director of ARCHumankind and current President of PSW-NC-R, will welcome you. Following the opening remarks, the event will proceed with two consecutive sections, the first one featuring a speech focused on marine sustainable development and the second one consisting of an open debate on the future of sustainable development in Europe.



**Mr Toni Vanhala**, Head of International Affairs at Regional Council of Kymenlaakso. Born 1974 in Kotka, Finland, he studied Political Science and history at the Ruprecht-Karls University of Heidelberg in Germany and graduated with an M.A. He has worked as a political assistant for an MP in the Parliament of Finland as well as for an MEP in the European Parliament, based in Helsinki. Since 2006 he has been working with regional development in the Regional Council of Kymenlaakso, including regional strategies, interest promotion and stakeholder co-operation, EU Structural Funds, with special focus on cross-border co-operation programs such as Interreg and ENI-CBC. He also has a 20-year experience of decision making on the municipal level, currently holding office as the 1st Vice-Chairman of the municipal council in Pyhtää, Finland.

---



**Mr Paulo Casaca**, founder of the international co-operation association registered in Brussels as ARCHumankind, “Alliance to Renew Co-operation among Humankind”; founder and Executive Director of South Asia Democratic Forum (SADF); founder of the “Euro Reform Initiative”, a consultancy company on sustainable development, Lessmeansmore, Land and Energy Sustainable Systems; fellow of the German Marshall Fund of the US in the first semester of 2010; team leader of a report commissioned by the US based NGO Committee to Study the Organization of Peace “A Green Ray over Iraq” presented to the UN. Mr Casaca was a Member of the European Parliament from 1999 to 2009, where he chaired the delegation for relations with NATO Parliamentary Assembly. He was a Councillor in the Permanent Representation of Portugal to the European Union from 1996 to 1999, chief of staff of the Minister for Territorial Planning and Public Works in 1995/1996, economics advisor for the socialist fraction in the national parliament in 1989/1990, 1992, 1994/1995. He is the author of several books and reports on the issue of religious fanaticism.

---

*Blue growth and sustainable development*

Mr **Ricardo Serrão Santos**, Member of the European Parliament representing the Azores and outstanding Oceanographer from the University of the Azores will make a conference entitled “Blue growth and sustainable development”.



*The future of financing sustainable development in a changing Europe – can the new consensus on development provide the solutions?*

With the participation of several diplomats, European Union civil servants and NGO representatives, the final part of the programme will be made up of an open discussion on sustainable development. Five items will be up for discussion.

*Item 1*

**“Is the EU ‘new consensus’ in line with SDG 2030 ambitions?”**

Point 103 of the joint statement by the Council and the representatives of the governments of the Member States meeting within the Council, the European Parliament and the Commission ‘THE NEW EUROPEAN CONSENSUS ON DEVELOPMENT ‘OUR WORLD, OUR DIGNITY, OUR FUTURE’ (published 2017.06.30) adapts to the EU the UN SDG-2030. It sets the ODA goal of 0.7% of EU GNI for ‘the time frame of the 2030 Agenda’. However, this was already the target to be reached by 2015, and therefore this corresponds to a postponement of objectives rather than setting new ones. ODA to LDC is supposed to attain 0.20 % in the same timeframe, whereas it reached 0.14% in 2010. In point 22, the EU reiterates its commitment to allocating at least 20 % of its ODA to social inclusion and human development.

*Item 2*

**“Will financial institutions’ loans as nearly exclusive instruments answer the goals?”**

**“Can we consider the ‘loan leverage impact’ to be filling the investment gap?”**

**“Are the budgeted amounts in proportion to the goals?”**

The EU ‘External Investment Plan’, approved shortly after, appears as the main instrument for EU ODA. It fully depends on EU-grants to international financial institutions, for these institutions to give loans to private and public investment. The European Commission quotes an annual 2.5 trillion USD investment gap to achieve key SDG goals, including an estimate of between 210 and 1200 billion USD for investment in Africa. However, the EIP budget up to 2020 for the European neighbourhood and Africa is set at 4.1 billion EUR, and it is claimed it will have a leverage impact of 44 billion EUR.

*Item 3*

**“Is the EU’s poverty commitment in line with the strategy and the means allocated to it?”**

The EU ‘consensus’ commits to ‘eradicating poverty’ as the main development goal, in line with the MDG and the SDG 2030. The consensus relates this goal with ‘an end to hunger and all forms of malnutrition as well as promote universal health coverage, universal access to quality education and training, adequate and sustainable social protection, and decent work for all within a healthy environment’. There is, however, no clear strategy for achieving this goal. There are no quantified indicators, no specific instruments to be used, no geographic assessment and no timeline on how this fundamental goal is supposed to be achieved. While there is a quantification of the EU support for action on climate change –



the EU says it is now attributing 2 billion EUR annually in public grants to developing countries to this end – no such quantification exists on poverty.

*Item 4*

**“Will BREXIT influence the main EU development indicators?”**

The United Kingdom was in 2016 the fifth biggest EU ODA contributor, with a contribution in line with European objectives of 0.70% of its GNI, well above the EU average of 0.51% of GNI in 2016. With BREXIT, if the EU will not take any specific measure, the EU ODA average is bound to fall.

Is the EU prepared to face BREXIT by increasing its ODA level? What measures have been thought up for this aim?

Is Brexit a symptom of distrust between citizens and the state, states and institutions? And if so how this will influence Europe’s achievement of the sustainable development goals?

Is Brexit also a symptom of distrust in the future of multilateralism in a changing world order? If so, is it also a subject that will influence the momentum, and direction with which the Agenda 2030 will be realised?

*Item 5*

**“What kind of partnership between EU and ACP should we aim at for 2020?”**

**“How can it support a development strategy in line with SDG 2030?”**

**“How shall it interact with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda?”**

The Partnership Agreement between the members of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States and the European Union and its Member States, signed in Cotonou in June 2001, is due to expire in February 2020. There is an ongoing discussion and consultation process on the issue that comprises evaluations and different scenarios.

Could the process of revision of Agenda be used to rethink the consensus on a wider scale than the European one?