atlas

UNDERSTANDING DEEP ATLANTIC ECOSYSTEMS

# A trans-Atlantic assessment and deep-water ecosystem-based spatial management plan for Europe

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 678760 (ATLAS). This output reflects only the author's view and the European Union cannot be held responsible for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.

www.eu-atlas.org

# At a Glance

## A Trans-Atlantic assessment and deep-water ecosystem-based spatial management plan for Europe

**Call:** EU Horizon 2020: BG-2015-2 (Unlocking the potential of seas and oceans)

**Duration:** May 2016 – April 2020 (48m)

**Consortium:** 24 partners +1 linked 3rd party, from 12 countries

**Budget:** €9.3M

**Coordinator:** University of Edinburgh (UK)

**Focus:** Providing essential new knowledge of North Atlantic ecosystems through data gathering and synthesis

**Impact:** Discoveries and outputs will inform and facilitate stakeholder agreement on marine policy and regulation and spur Blue Growth

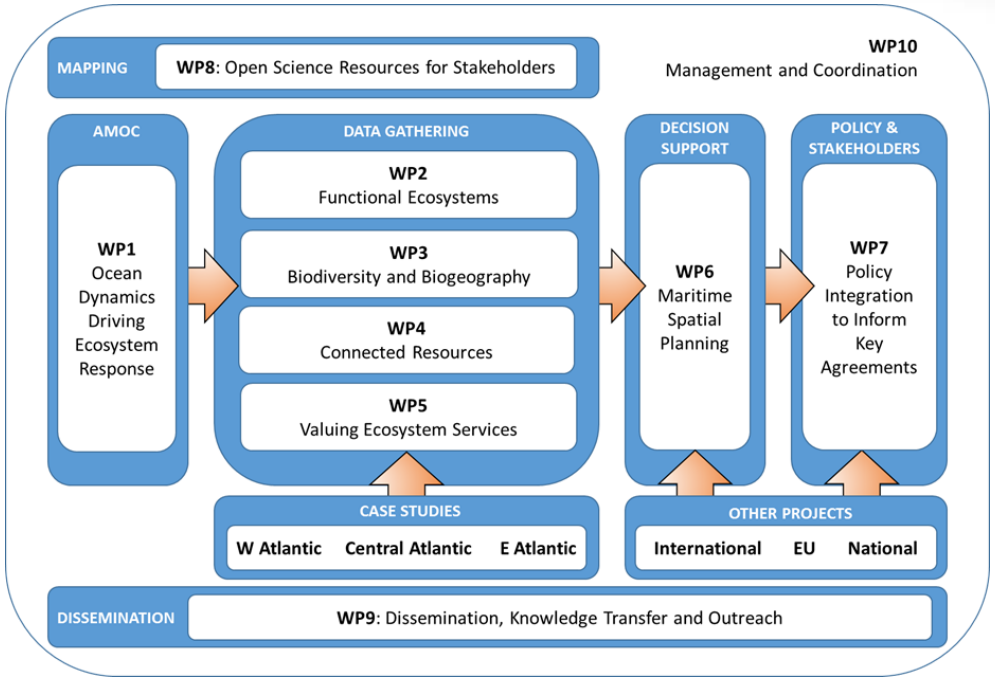
**Core activities:** 25+ research cruises investigating 12 case studies across the Atlantic

# ATLAS Objectives

- **Advance** our understanding of deep Atlantic marine ecosystems and populations
- **Improve** our capacity to monitor, model and predict shifts in deep-water ecosystems and populations
- **Transform** new data, tools and understanding into effective ocean governance
- **Scenario-test** and develop science-led, cost-effective adaptive management strategies that stimulate Blue Growth

# Workpackages

**WP1:** Scottish Association for Marine Science
**WP2:** Royal Netherlands Institute for Sea Research
**WP3:** IMAR-University of the Azores
**WP4:** French Research Institute for Exploration of the Sea
**WP5:** UIT The Arctic University of Norway
**WP6:** National University of Ireland, Galway
**WP7:** Seascape Consultants
**WP8:** University of Bremen
**WP9:** AquaTT
**WP10:** University of Edinburgh

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# ATLAS Case Studies

**12 Case Studies that follow the major Atlantic current patterns.**

- Selected on basis of: proximity to Blue Growth activities, presence of focal ecosystems, availability of existing data/samples and opportunities for offshore cruises during the ATLAS project.
- Case Studies cross-cut the project and give the biogeographic, regulatory and jurisdictional range needed to meet ATLAS's objectives.

| Case Study | Focus Ecosystems (CWC, cold-water coral) | Current and BG Sectors* | Lead & collaborators |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. LoVe Observatory (Norway) | CWC reefs, sponges | F, OG, T | Statoil, NIOZ, UEDIN |
| 2. West of Shetland and W Scotland slope (UK) | Sponge grounds | B, F, OG | UEDIN, BP, OGUK, MSS |
| 3. Rockall Bank (UK & Ireland)** | CWC reefs, coral gardens, carbonate mounds, sponge grounds, cold seeps | B, F, OG | MSS, IEO, OXU |
| 4. Mingulay Reef Complex (UK) | CWC reefs | F, T | UEDIN, MSS |
| 5. Porcupine Seabight (Ireland) | CWC reefs, coral gardens, carbonate mounds, sponge grounds | B, F, OG | NUIG, Woodside |
| 6. Bay of Biscay (France) | CWC on slope and in canyon settings | B, F | IFREMER |
| 7. Gulf of Cádiz/Strait of Gibraltar/Alborán Sea (Spain & Portugal) | CWC reefs, coral gardens, sponge grounds | B, F, OG | IEO, IFREMER, IMAR-UAz |
| 8. Azores (Portugal)** | Hydrothermal vents, seamounts, coral gardens, sponge grounds | B, F, M | IMAR-UAz, IEO |
| 9. Reykjanes Ridge (Iceland)** | Hydrothermal vents, CWC reefs, coral gardens, sponge grounds | B, F, M | UCD |
| 10. S Davis Strait/Western Greenland/Labrador Sea (Canada) | CWC reefs, coral gardens, sponge grounds | B, F | DFO |
| 11. Flemish Cap (Canada)** | Coral gardens, sponge grounds | B, F, OG | IEO, DFO, OXU, NAFO |
| 12. SE USA (Bermuda transect)** | CWC reefs on slope and in canyon settings | B, F, M, OG | UNCW, AP-TU, NOAA |

* Blue Growth sectors: **B**iotechnology; **F**isheries; **M**ining; **O**il & **G**as; **T**ourism; ** indicates data include ABNJ

# Expected Impacts

***Blue Growth: Opportunities for marine and maritime sustainable growth***

- Improve **resource management** (ecosystem approach) and governance
- Improve **cooperation** within EU and trans-Atlantic
- Contribute to the **EU Integrated Maritime Policy**
  - The Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD),
  - The Common Fisheries Policy (CFP),
  - The EU 'Maritime Strategy for the Atlantic Ocean Area'
  - The Galway Statement on Atlantic Cooperation
- Strengthen international **agreements to conserve** vulnerable marine ecosystems and ecologically significant marine areas

# WP5 : Valuing Ecosystem Services and Blue Growth Potential

ATLAS aims to provide a socioeconomic understanding of deep-water Atlantic ecosystems to evaluate and balance Blue Growth and conservation scenarios.

1) Inventories of ecosystem services for case study areas
2) Willingness to pay for protection of three case study areas
3) Q sort method and Delphi survey
4) Value transfer methods

# WP6: Maritime Spatial Planning Summary

Ten case studies will be used as a basis for delineating areas that might typically require marine spatial plans:

1) Set MSP goals and operational objectives.
2) Collate maps of VMEs, fish habitat and ecosystem goods and services.
3) Carry out Strategic Environmental Assessments.
4) Test new Blue Growth scenarios and propose appropriate adaptive management measures against a background of potential climate change.

# WP7: Policy Integration to Inform Key Agreements

- Stakeholder consultation: policy makers, industry and civil society.
- Case studies to highlight Blue Growth opportunities with reference to Europe's Integrated Maritime Policy (IMP) and MSFD-GES descriptors.
- Engage with US and Canadian partners to improve alignment of ocean observations and share data to assist the Galway Statement.

# WP7 Policy Stakeholder Engagement Report

- First stakeholder engagement exercise (July – August 2016).
- Questions: Blue Growth, levels of engagement with current policy instruments and area-based management tools, ATLAS Case Studies, major forthcoming policy challenges for the Atlantic.
- Findings:
  - All respondents considered Blue Growth relevant to their work
  - Challenges:
    - clarification of specific actions to protect the environment;
    - baseline data collection to support impact assessments;
    - balancing the needs of different users; managing blue growth within environmental limits.

# Many thanks!

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