



## **Arc Manche Assembly position statement on the strategic vision for the Channel area 2007 - 2013**

**15th September 2006**

The Arc Manche Assembly is delighted with the co-operation developed in the framework of the «Espace Manche Development Initiative» (EMDI) project, which fits perfectly with the main objectives of the Assembly:

- Representing the interests and the uniqueness of Arc Manche as a coherent co-operation area in the European Union;
- Strengthening the partnerships in the Channel area by facilitating the setting-up of joint projects of varying sizes and with different categories of stakeholders.

In the context of the preparation of the future European programmes 2007-2013, in particular the Co-operation Objective, the Arc Manche Assembly agrees with the production of a strategic vision for the Channel area, which identifies strategic issues and defines concrete co-operation actions.

The Arc Manche Assembly subscribes to the following main elements of the strategic vision produced in the framework of the EMDI project:

### **Main strategic issues**

#### 1. The Channel area and global issues :

- Globalisation : expansion of trade and growing economic interdependence;
- knowledge economy and innovation;
- increasing pressure on marine ecosystems;
- sustainable management of freight flows and maritime traffic;
- energy, climate change and preservation of marine ecosystems;
- demography.

## 2. The Channel area and European issues :

- a maritime gateway to North West Europe;
- a coveted area: a quality area close to highly populated regions, such as Paris and London ;
- an area of European integration between the British Isles and continental Europe;
- a common history.

### **Why co-operate at the Channel level ?**

The Channel sea is a specific issue for the Arc Manche territories, which are a maritime cross-border area.

Co-operation between the Channel area regions will enable us to: get the most out of the opportunities offered by the Channel; act at an appropriate scale according to the situation and resolve common issues jointly.

### **Addressing issues with five strategic orientations :**

- Strengthening the cohesion of the Channel area: inhabitants and stakeholders to recognise this cross-border area as an area of opportunities and mutual benefit;
- Taking advantage of and strengthening the territorial position of the Channel area in Europe: to make the most of the strategic position of this area in Europe for merchandise traffic and guarantee a balanced development of the coastline;
- Contributing to safe navigation in the Channel area: to reduce the risks of accident in this area and thus to ensure the long-term viability of its multiple uses;
- Ensuring the sustainable development of the Channel area: to become a region of excellence in the context of globalisation and the knowledge economy and react jointly to common environmental and social issues;
- Promoting integrated coastal zone management: to respond in a more appropriate way to issues facing coastal areas.

The Arc Manche Assembly calls for :

- these orientations to be turned into concrete projects within the framework of the future European programmes, in particular the Co-operation Objective;
- this strategic vision to be taken into consideration in the preparation of the future European programmes and policies currently being defined, notably the structural funds and the Green paper on a European maritime policy.

Friday 15 september 2006, Maidstone Kent.