Atlas of Good Practices Innovative Blue Tourism, Creative and Cultural Projects

SEA Lab Haus

Atlas of Good Practices Innovative Blue Tourism, Creative and Cultural Projects

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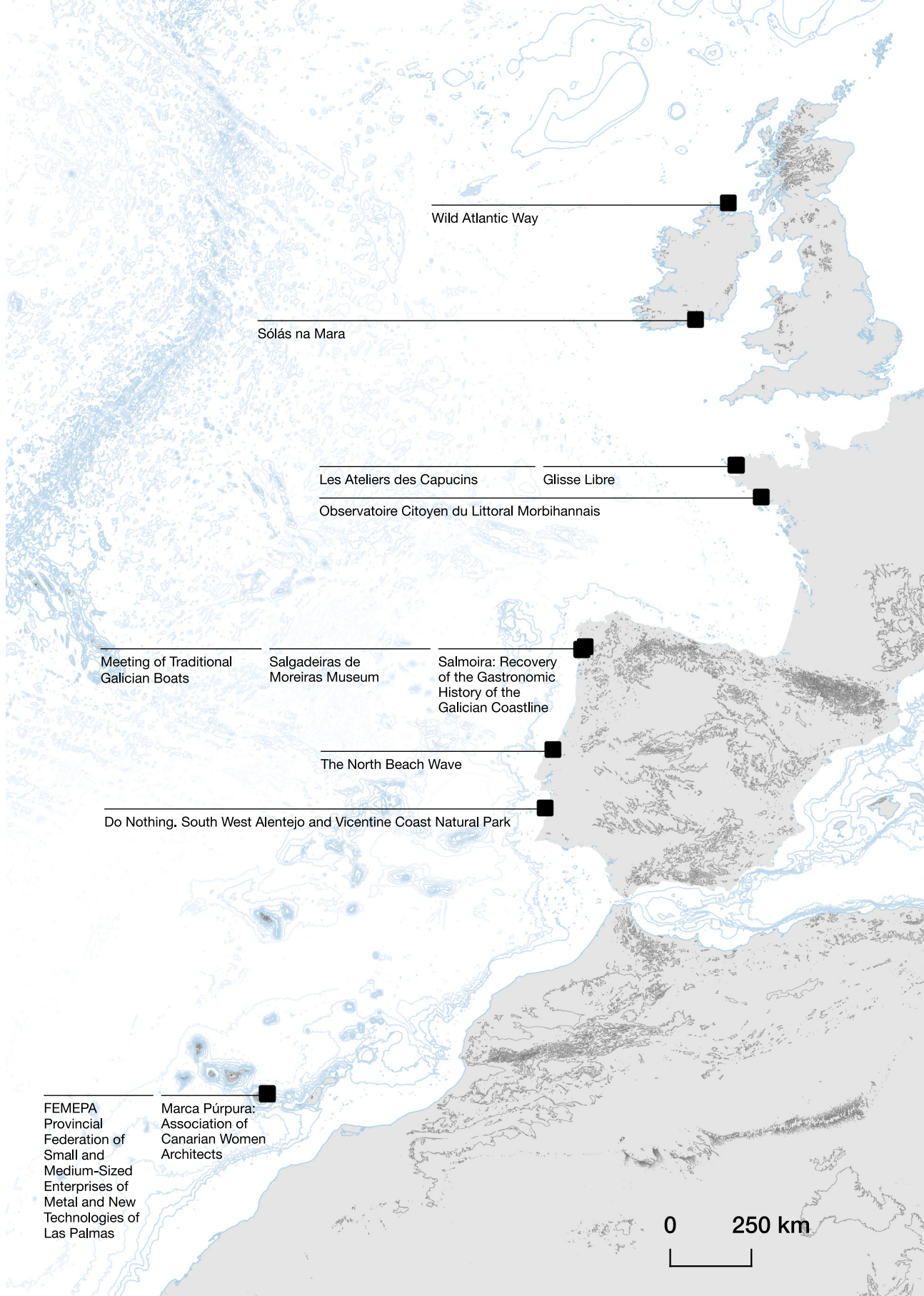
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Foreword

While oceans and water capture our attention, their use by humans implies increased pressure upon coastal landscapes and ecosystems. The concept of “blue tourism”, itself a branch of the “blue economy”, was coined to address the ocean’s potential to foster economic growth. As a contributor to local and regional dynamics, blue tourism can be a positive factor of transformation, but it can also endanger habitats, cultures and social equilibrium. This booklet is a companion to the Maritime Heritage Catalogue, both of which delve into the possibilities and challenges brought by blue tourism developments.

Coordinated by the University of Porto, this atlas presents the results of the *Compilation of Good Practices of Innovative Blue Tourism and Creative and Cultural Industry Projects*, developed within the project SEALabHaus — *Atlantic New Bauhaus Laboratory for Sustainable, Inclusive and Beautiful Blue Tourism, Heritage and Culture of the Sea*. SEALabHaus, funded by the Interreg Atlantic program and led by the Universidade da Coruña, brings together partners from Ireland, Brittany, Galicia, Portugal, and the Canary Islands, reflecting a shared commitment to exploring how sustainable, inclusive, and aesthetically grounded approaches can define tourism and heritage practices across Atlantic territories.

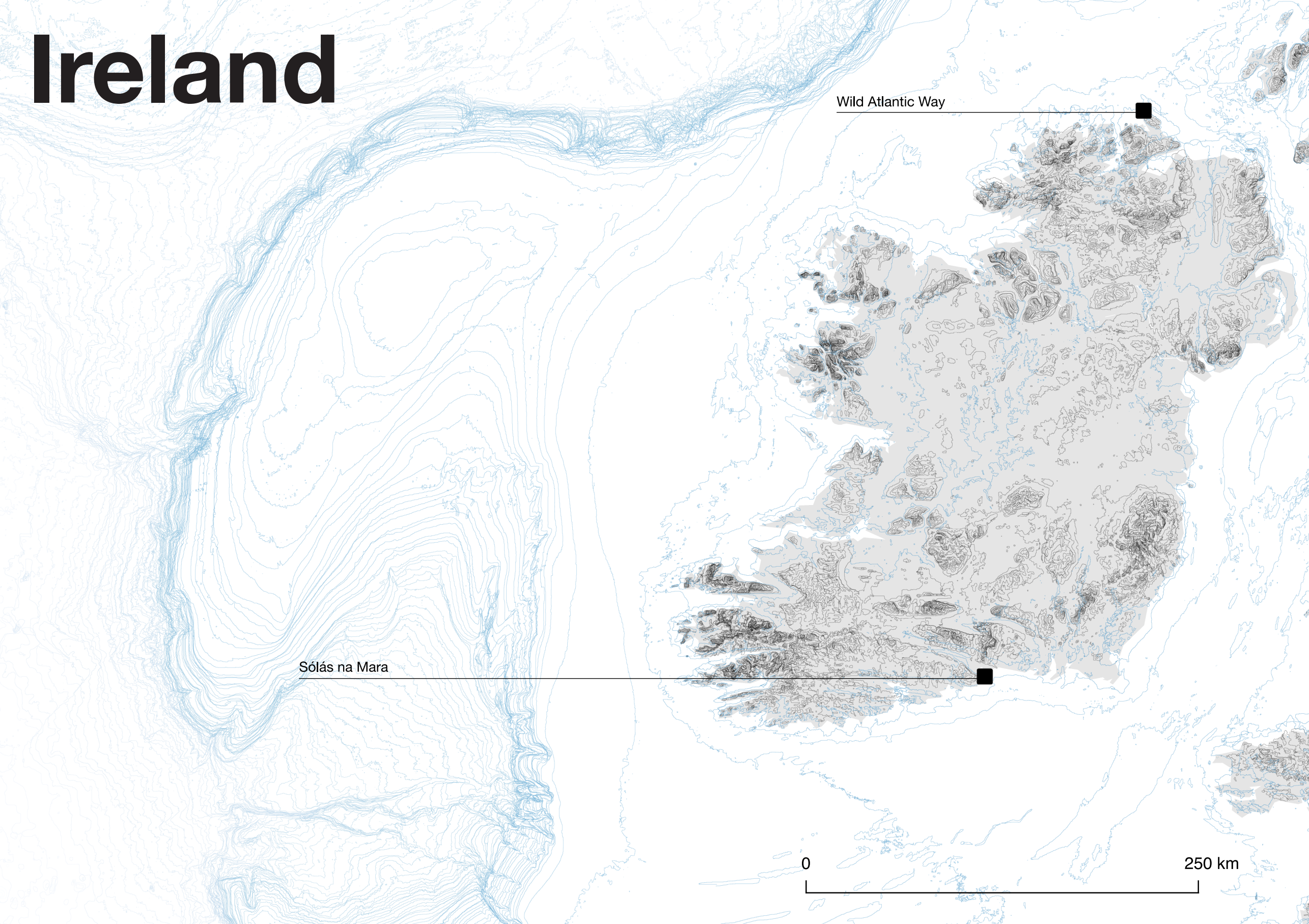
The featured practices were selected from suggestions by the project partners and Regional Action Groups, from among the broader set of initiatives documented in the SEALab interactive map, available on the project website. They include examples of the rehabilitation of existing buildings with historical ties to maritime cultures—such as warehouses, coastal facilities, and markets—repurposed as museums, leisure spaces, or cultural centres, while maintaining a strong connection to the ocean and its ecosystems. At the same time, the compilation also highlights initiatives aimed at preserving and valorising natural and immaterial heritage, encompassing coastal ecosystems, traditional knowledge, and community practices, often without direct intervention in built or natural environments. All selected practices are aligned with the principles of the New European Bauhaus, integrating ecological, social, and aesthetic considerations.

This diverse collection demonstrates the multiplicity of possible approaches to blue tourism and contributes to a critical reflection on this complex concept. By encompassing both architectural rehabilitation and broader environmental and cultural initiatives, the compilation highlights the varied ways in which coastal communities, organisations, and regional stakeholders engage with heritage, landscape, and marine resources to foster socially and environmentally responsible forms of tourism.

Through this publication, SEALabHaus offers a reference point for practitioners, researchers, and policymakers interested in the intersections of heritage, ecology, and tourism. The collected examples illustrate how integrating historical, ecological, and social dimensions in the planning and management of coastal spaces can generate meaningful, context-sensitive interventions, while also emphasising the value of cross-territorial collaboration in sharing knowledge and strategies for sustainable blue tourism.

Diego Inglez de Souza and André Tavares

Ireland



Wild Atlantic Way

Ireland, West Coast

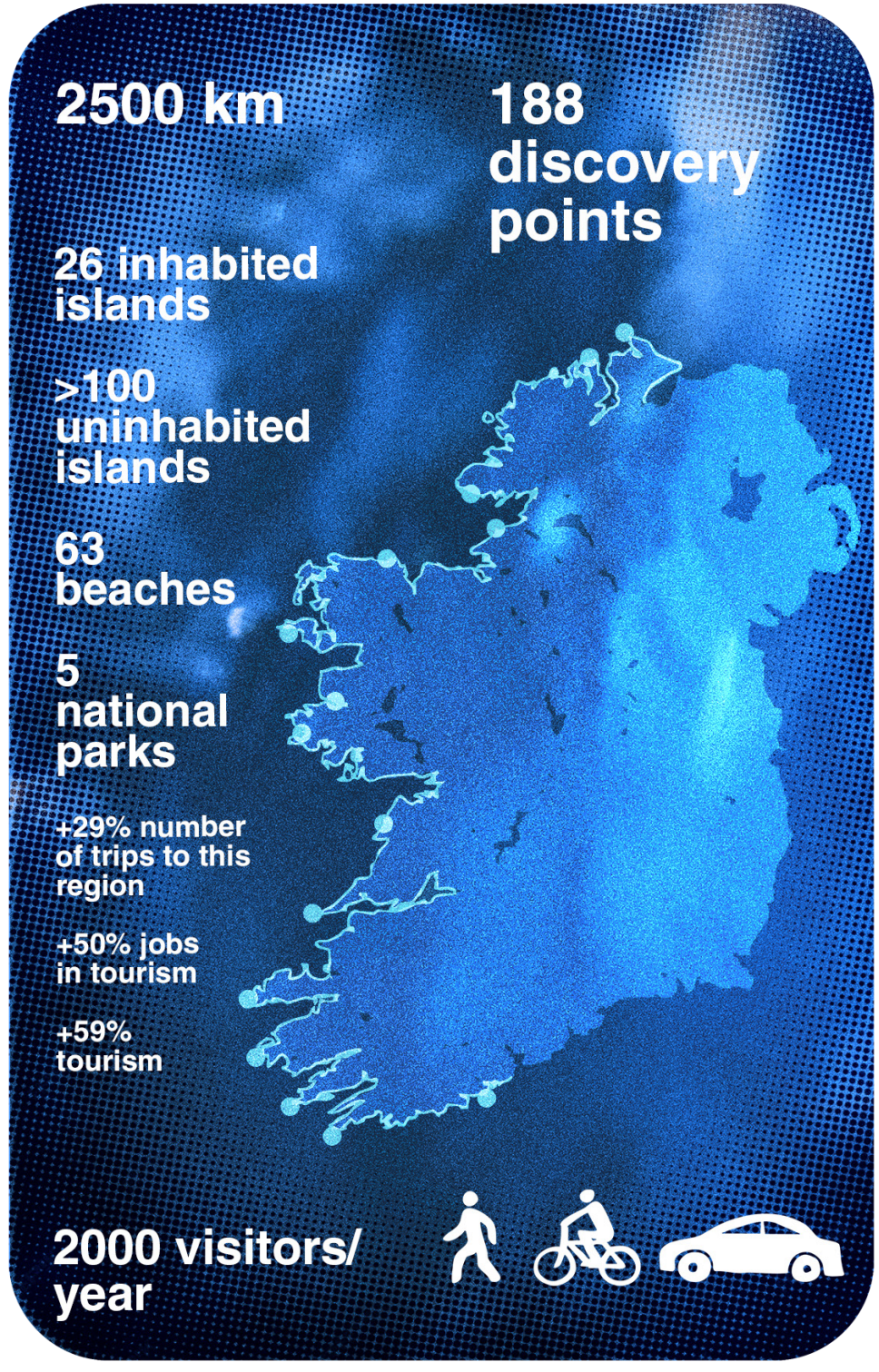
Categories

Natural features

To mitigate the lingering effects of the global financial crisis, which according to Miriam Kennedy, head of the Wild Atlantic Way, had “decimated” tourism in the west of Ireland, Fáilte Ireland (Ireland’s National Tourism Development Authority) devised a “brand” to promote the region and draw visitors to its existing attractions. The Wild Atlantic Way is a route over 2,500 kilometres long, featuring 188 discovery points. The project’s major investment was in road signage and promotion. Since its inception in 2014, tourism numbers to the west of Ireland have increased by more that two million visitors. The Wild Atlantic Way is now one of the biggest attractions on the island, with over half of all visitors to Ireland making at least one stop on any visit.

Weaving through nine coastal counties, the route takes in some of Ireland’s most spectacular landscapes, studded with sea sculpted coves and cliffs, caves and craggy rock formations. These landscapes have attracted the attention of some of the world’s top filmmakers and TV producers, providing locations for Ryan’s Daughter, Star Wars, The Banshees of Inisherin and Normal People.

The Wild Atlantic Way can be explored on foot, bike or by car, and on any timescale. It includes 63 beaches and five national parks, 26 inhabited and hundreds of uninhabited islands, world-renowned golf courses, two Dark Sky Reserves and the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Skellig Michael. The success of this seascape as a destination is also intrinsically linked to the famous hospitality of its people, and their millennial old cultural traditions—from traditional music sessions to the freshest seafood.



▲
The Beacon at Baltimore, County Cork, a navigational landmark along the Wild Atlantic Way, where maritime heritage, rural livelihoods, and coastal landscapes coexist along Ireland's Atlantic edge. Photo Stefan Schnebelt.

▼
Section of the Wild Atlantic Way on Ireland's south-west coast, showing the rugged coastline of County Kerry and the dispersed rural landscape overlooking the Atlantic. Photo Stefan Schnebelt.





Time span

The concept of the Wild Atlantic Way was first proposed in 2008 and launched in 2014. It is a brand and a route that is now synonymous with the West Coast of Ireland. It is a year-round destination, and is not time or season bound.

Risks and drawbacks

An over-reliance on a short summer season, however, has resulted in strains on local infrastructure and the risk of environmental degradation, which impacts the long-term sustainability of the region. These concerns are felt throughout the Wild Atlantic Way. Mitigation of these drawbacks needs to be addressed.

Public policies

The national government tourism body published an Operational Programme 2015-2019 setting out a strategic implementation framework. This was the first in a series of strategies designed to manage the installation of discovery points, trade and community engagement, environmental management, visitor management, sales and marketing efforts. The main stakeholders are Fáilte Ireland, local authorities, local tourism businesses and leader companies —a combination of central government and local initiatives.

Indicators

After ten years of the Wild Atlantic Way, 2014 to 2024, the Irish government tourist authority released the following statistics:
— 29% overall increase in number of trips to the region
— 59% increase in tourism spend
— 50% increase in number of jobs supported by tourism

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Sólás na Mara

Ireland, Waterford County, Dungarvan

Categories

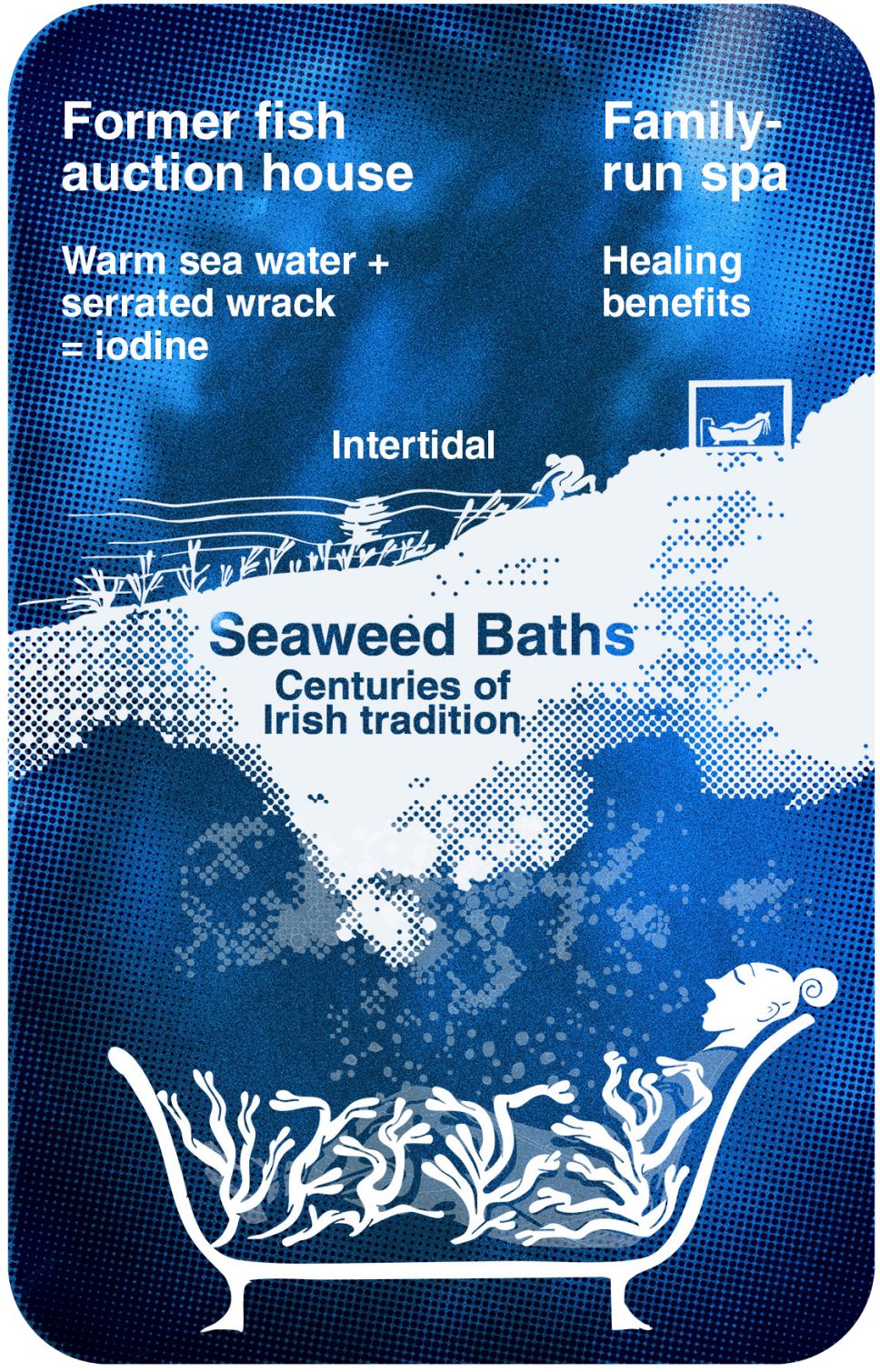
Maritime architectures

Material and immaterial cultures

Sólás na Mara (Irish for ‘solace of the sea’) is a former fish auction house reborn as an intimate, family-run spa. The bathhouse is located on a small working fishing pier in Helvick Harbour, in the middle of the Waterford Gaeltacht region (a Gaeltacht is an area of Ireland where Irish is recognised as the main spoken language of the community). The business takes full advantage of its maritime heritage, by using treatments that rely on a centuries-old Irish tradition of seaweed baths; a practice that has long brought visitors to this coast to ‘take the waters’, well recognised for their healing benefits.

Sustainability is a key feature of the operation, with native seaweeds such as serrated wrack harvested locally then tossed into great cast-iron tubs filled with warmed seawater, pumped in directly at high tide. This low-impact practice exploits the naturally occurring resources of the area and has proved popular with tourists looking for sustainable treatments and experiences in a natural environment.

This innovative blue tourism business has become a destination for tourists who are curious to experience the benefits of seaweed, celebrated as a therapy for many conditions, from arthritis to eczema. It has also helped to create a cultural symbiosis between the Waterford Gaeltacht district and its neighbouring town of Dungarvan. Gaeltacht areas traditionally face Zsocial and economic challenges. The addition of the bathhouse has helped to address this by attracting a clientele who are interested in low-impact tourism, and who stay to visit the local area’s pubs and restaurants, master craftsmen and artists in their seaside galleries.



▲
From fish auction house to seaweed bathhouse: a family-run spa linking Ireland's maritime heritage with sustainable wellness practices. Photo Joel Mahon — Dungarvan Camera Club, 2024.

▼
The seaweed is soaked in warmed seawater from the high tide, providing minerals such as iodine, potassium, and magnesium, which are used in therapeutic baths at Sólás na Mara. Photo Sólás na Mara.





Time span

Although Dungarvan was first established as a spa town in 1901, the Sólás na Mara seaweed bathhouse in the Waterford Gaeltacht opened more recently, in 2013, and continues to be operational. It is open year-round, six days a week.

Risks and drawbacks

A key strength of this enterprise is its unique location on a fishing pier in a remote harbour in a Gaeltacht area. However, this also means that the business receives no footfall or passing trade. As such, it is very much a 'destination' activity and must work constantly to entice visitors from elsewhere to make the journey.

Public policies

There are many public funding initiatives to support culture, arts and enterprise in Gaeltacht areas:
— Údarás na Gaeltachta recognises that economic development, cultural conservation, language enhancement and job creation are intertwined and central to the sustainable development of Gaeltacht communities. It offers a range of schemes that empower these communities to take an active role in the economic, social and cultural life of their region.
— Tuismitheoirí na Gaeltachta provides practical support to Gaeltacht families raising children in the Irish language.
— State agencies An Taibhdhearc and Amharclann Náisiúnta na Gaeilge implement a National Action Plan to develop, strengthen and promote Irish language-based arts across the Gaeltacht areas.

Indicators

— Population of the Waterford Gaeltacht is 1,816, equivalent to 1.8% of the entire Gaeltacht population in Ireland.
— 149 people are employed full time in client companies of Údarás na Gaeltachta.

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10 Best Seaweed Baths in Ireland to Try in 2024. 2024. Ireland Before You Die. https://www.irelandbeforeyoudie.com/top-10-best-seaweed-baths-in-ireland/.
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Brittany

Les Ateliers des Capucins

Glisse Libre

Observatoire Citoyen du Littoral Morbihannais

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250 km

Les Ateliers des Capucins

France, Brittany, Brest

Categories

Maritime architectures

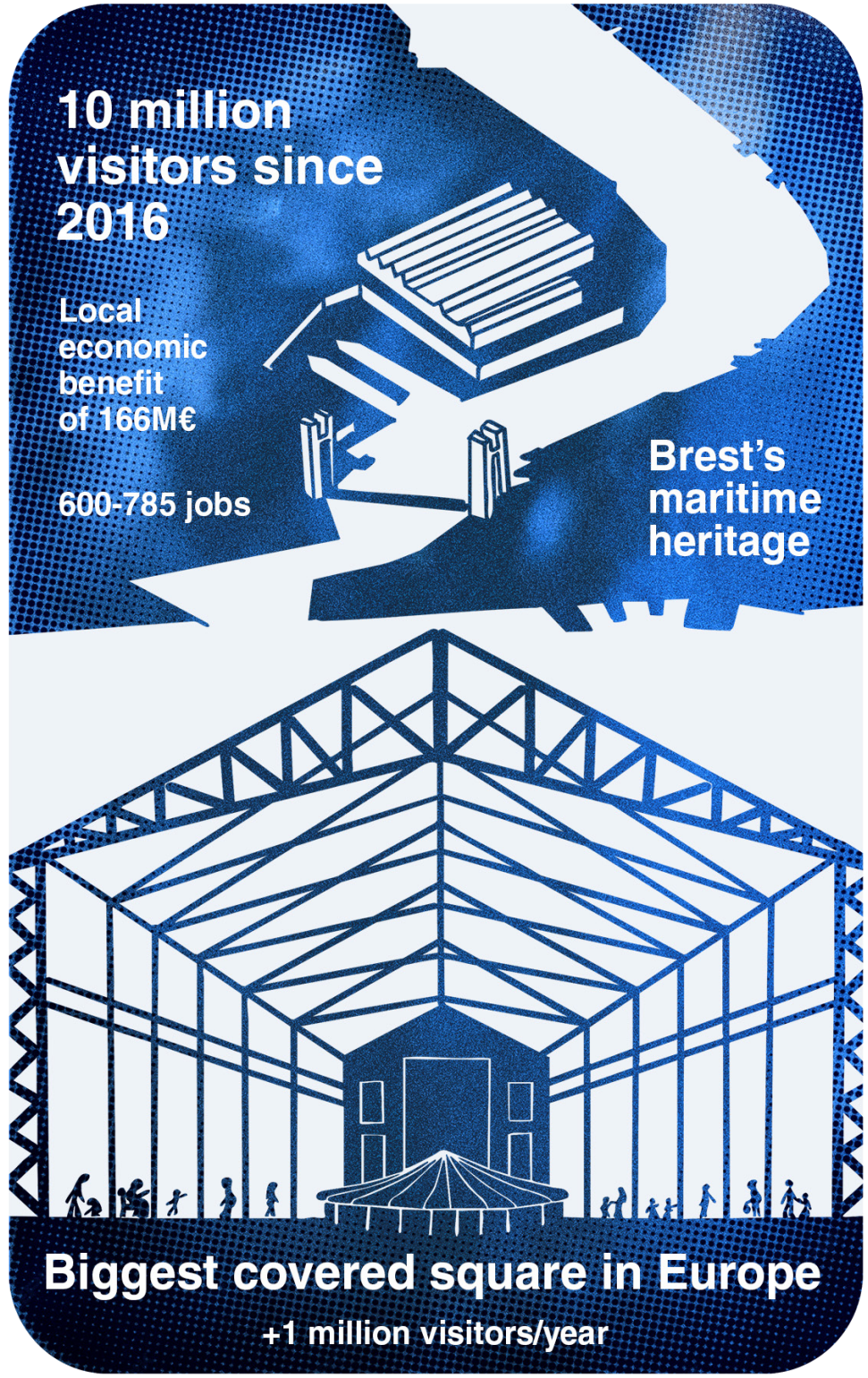
Material and immaterial cultures

Les Ateliers des Capucins are deeply tied to Brest's maritime heritage, having served as workshops for building and repairing French navy ships since the 18th century. At their peak, they employed nearly 1,800 workers. Partially destroyed in World War II, the workshops were subsequently rebuilt and continued industrial naval activity until 2004.

The rehabilitation project preserved or reproduced the workshops' original architecture, integrating former industrial machinery as exhibition pieces and creating spaces for businesses, cafes, offices, a cinema, and public amenities, including Europe's largest covered hall and 70.8, a museum dedicated to maritime research and scientific progress.

The project revitalised an abandoned industrial area, avoiding a potential urban brownfield while creating a modern, dynamic meeting space for locals and tourists. It exemplifies sustainable urban regeneration by combining heritage conservation, economic activity, and public access. Energy is partially supplied by solar panels, and the site is fully accessible via public transport.

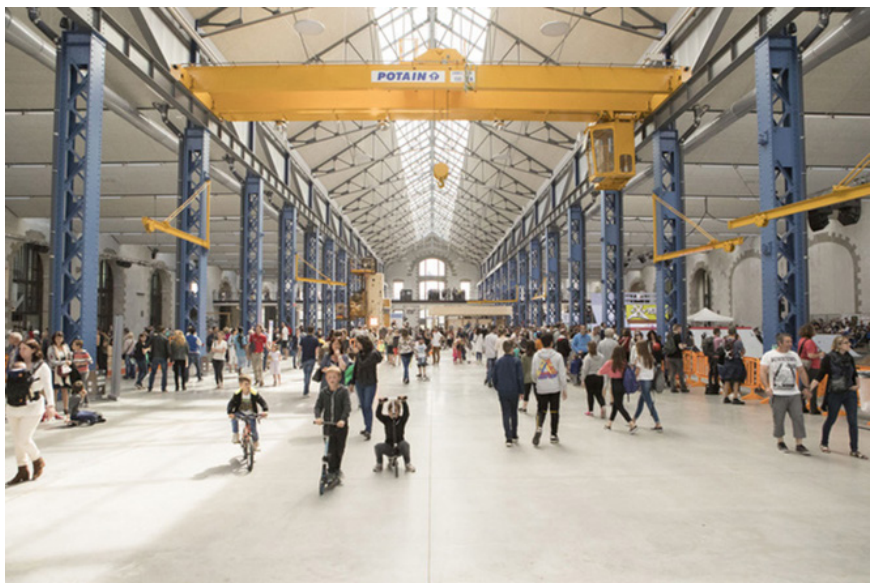
This initiative highlights Brest's industrial history and pays tribute to its naval workers. It demonstrates how former industrial sites can be transformed into multifunctional cultural spaces, inspiring similar regeneration projects elsewhere.



▲
The derelict shipyard interiors of Les Ateliers des Capucins shipyard, reflecting damage from World War II.
Photo Musée de Bretagne.



▼
Les Ateliers des Capucins after rehabilitation, showing preserved industrial structures and machinery now occupied by business, leisure and cultural facilities, combining heritage conservation with contemporary uses. Photo Benjamin Deroche, 2022.



Time span
The Ateliers des Capucins were an active shipyard until 2004. The rehabilitation project study began in 2005, construction started in 2012, and the site opened to the public in 2016. Since then, it hosts ongoing activities, accessible year-round.

Risks and drawbacks
Challenges included gaining public acceptance for the project during its planning and construction. Ongoing risks involve maintaining continuous usage, ensuring economic sustainability, and monitoring financial balance.

Public policies
The project was led by public authorities. The city of Brest continues to support similar regeneration projects—such as the renovation of the former Pontaniou prison—aiming to reconnect historical heritage with contemporary use.

Indicators
— Local economic benefit in 2022: €166M
— Jobs created: 600–785
— Visitors: over 1 million per year, 10 million since 2016
— 2022 visitor numbers: +25% compared to 2021

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Glisse Libre

France, Brittany coast and islands

Categories

Natural features

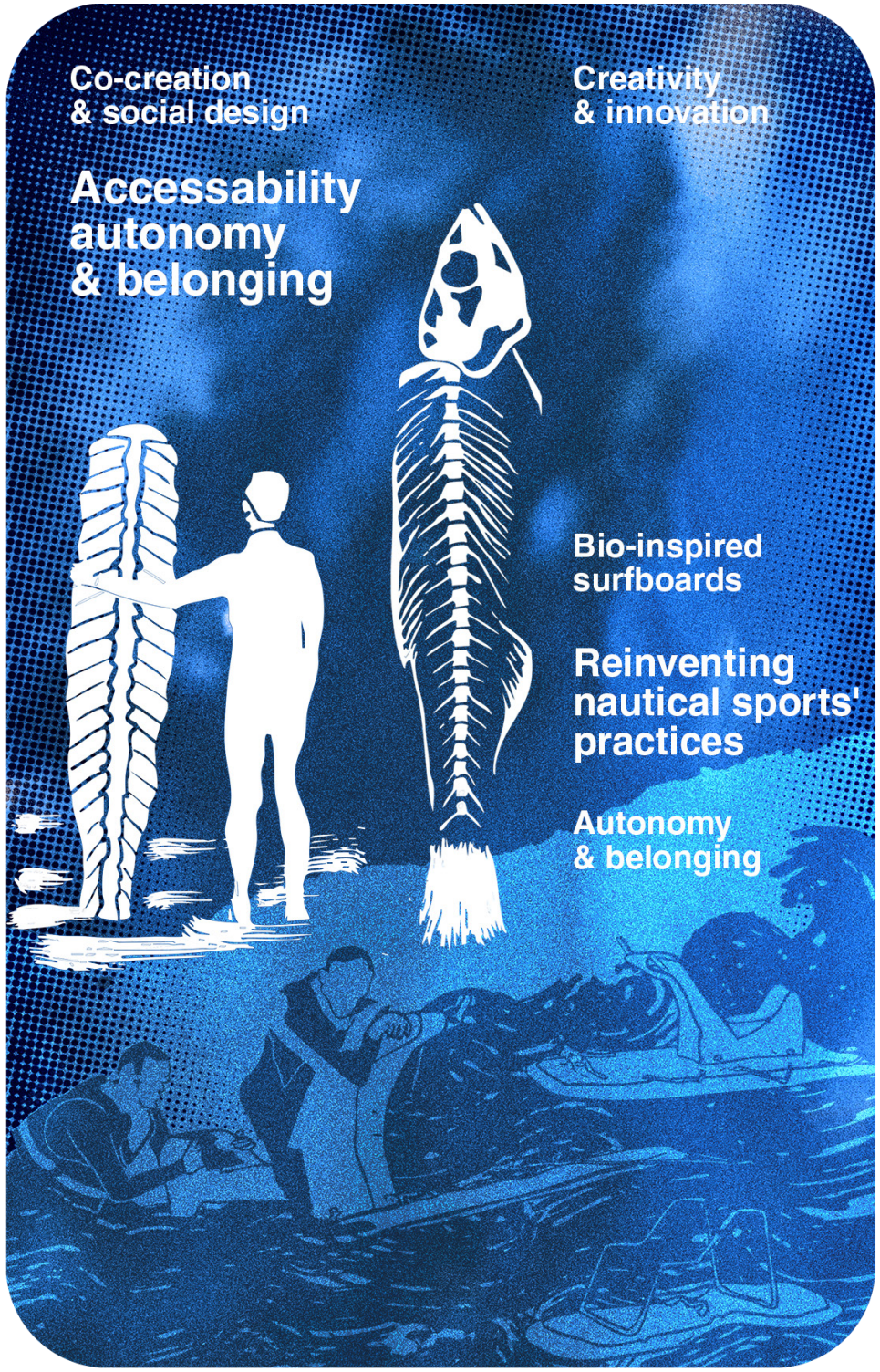
Material and immaterial cultures

Centred upon the production of boards for differently abled bodies, the project Glisse Libre, led by artist Edgar Flauw, combines art, technology, and inclusion to reinvent the practice of water sports. More than just a sporting initiative, this project is built on a strong artistic approach aimed at raising awareness among participants and spectators about the importance of accessibility, while challenging cultural norms around disability.

The artistic dimension of Glisse Libre is central. Each board designed as part of the project is unique, both a work of art and a functional tool, inspired by marine nature and elements that connect humans and the environment. Through exhibitions and public demonstrations, the artist seeks to provoke reflection on the role of people with disabilities in society. This approach raises awareness not only among locals but also tourists, highlighting the beauty and richness of inclusion and offering them a new perspective on how objects can serve both aesthetic and practical purposes.

Technically, the boards are the result of an innovative co-design process involving people with disabilities, engineers, and designers. The materials used are lightweight and durable, with modular stabilisers and ergonomic seats, allowing for flexible use depending on individual physical capabilities. Glisse Libre promotes autonomy and strengthens participants' sense of belonging. It shifts the perception of the participants themselves, as well as that of the spectators, showing that disability can be a driving force for creativity and innovation. Inclusive activities attract a more diverse clientele. The artistic aspect of the project intrigues and draws visitors, creating a bridge between leisure and societal reflection.

Edgar Flauw's artistic work is a powerful tool for regional enhancement and environmental awareness. His works, often inspired by nature, establish a strong connection between humans and the environment. His art, deeply rooted in the region, highlights local characteristics and strengthens regional identity, encouraging the discovery of often overlooked aspects from a cultural and ecological perspective.



▲
Inclusive surfing practice in Brittany, encouraging local participation in low-impact maritime leisure activities and promoting access to the sea for people of all abilities. Photo Edgar Flauw.



▼
Adapted surfboards and devices designed by Edgar Flauw for the Glisse Libre initiative, developed to improve accessibility and autonomy in maritime sports. Photo Edgar Flauw.



Time span

Edgar Flauw's Glisse Libre project began in March 2018 and continued with various phases of prototype creation and testing until July of the same year. Edgar Flauw is reactivating this research through exhibitions accompanied by co-creation and testing workshops.

Risks and drawbacks

Risks include dependency on weather conditions for water activities, potentially high costs related to manufacturing adapted equipment, and the need for specific training for disabled users to ensure the safety and effectiveness of inclusive practices.

Public policies

The project aligns with public policies supporting accessibility and inclusion for disabled people, as well as with coastal space and maritime heritage protection measures encouraged by regional Breton authorities.

Indicators

— Number of participants in workshops and demonstrations (several dozen, annually)
— Satisfaction rate of disabled users (evaluated through qualitative feedback)
— Visitors attracted by art exhibitions related to the project (several hundred, per event)
— Influence on local and tourist awareness of inclusion and nautical innovation (measured by surveys and media coverage)

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Observatoire Citoyen du Littoral Morbihannais

France, Brittany, Morbihan coastline

Categories

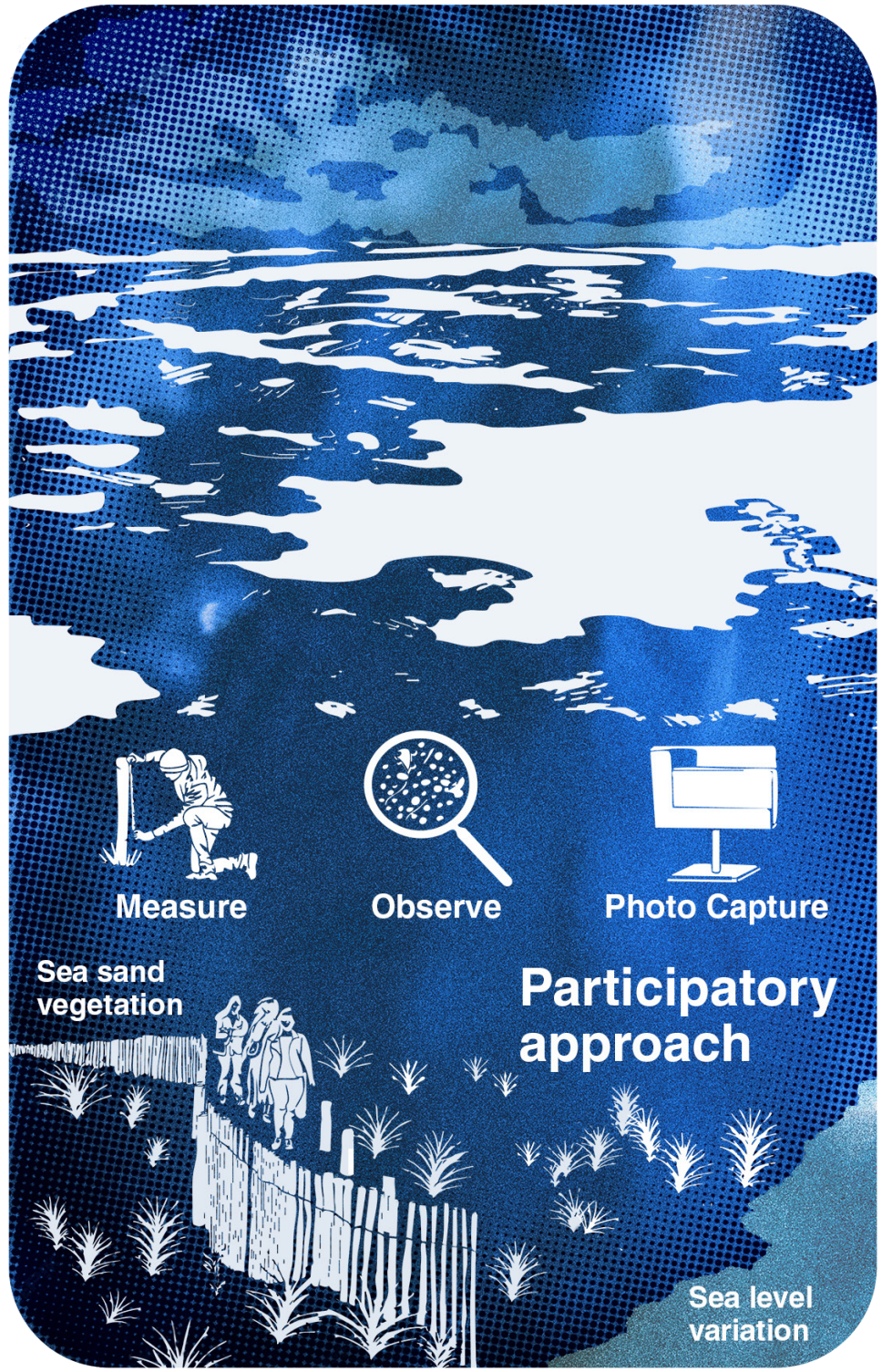
Flora & fauna

Natural features

The Observatoire Citoyen du Littoral Morbihannais (OCLM) directly connects coastal ecosystems and maritime heritage by focusing on the sustainable management and observation of Morbihan's coastline. Through its monitoring activities, OCLM helps in understanding and mitigating the impacts of natural processes like erosion and human-induced changes, to preserve coastal ecosystems. It also engages the community in safeguarding coastal landscapes, which form part of the region's cultural identity.

OCLM innovates by integrating citizens into the scientific value chain by democratising data collection, and creates a participatory layer within tourism through the contributions of visitors to research. Projects like CoastSnap use smartphones to track coastal changes, making data collection accessible and inclusive.

By involving locals and tourists, OCLM promotes an inclusive approach where diverse groups contribute to, and learn from, conservation efforts. Its educational activities—workshops, conferences, and publications—foster environmental awareness and encourage sustainable tourist behaviours. The initiative also aids in developing sustainable coastal management plans, minimising tourism's environmental impact. OCLM exemplifies innovative blue tourism by combining visitor experiences with ecological conservation, enriching tourism with education and active engagement. OCLM responds to local challenges such as coastal erosion and climate change, addressing issues where traditional solutions have been insufficient. The participatory model fosters community-driven resilience and local stewardship.



▲
Citizen scientists from the Observatoire Citoyen du Littoral Morbihannais conducting fieldwork to monitor dune vegetation, followingsimplified ecological protocols that contribute to long-term coastal ecosystem datasets. Photo Université Bretagne Sud - Vannes - Laboratoire Geo-Ocean.



▼
The CoastSnap monitoring station installed along the Morbihan coastline. This participatory science tool enables the collection of georeferenced photographs used to analyse coastal morphology and shoreline dynamics. Photo Université Bretagne Sud - Vannes - Laboratoire Geo-Ocean.



Time span

The OCLM began in 2016 and continues as an ongoing project. It conducts year-round coastal monitoring, with increased public engagement during summer. Regular measurements, citizen science projects like CoastSnap, and educational events are key activities, and adapt to seasons and events.

Risks and drawbacks

Citizen science can produce data of variable quality. The project has a dependence on local funding, and runs the risk of a potential decline in public interest, as well as challenges in expanding beyond Morbihan without additional resources or community engagement.

Public policies

Encouraged by Morbihan Departmental Council through Espaces Naturels Sensibles (ENS) funding, protected through the Réseau national des observatoires du trait de côte (RNOTC) membership, constrained by national laws (Loi sur l'eau, Grenelle II) and local planning regulations (PLU, SCoT) affecting coastal management and land use.

Indicators

— 9 locations monitored along the Morbihan coastline
— 100 volunteers engaged
— 9,000 photos collected via CoastSnap
— 8,000 measurements recorded
— 22,000 visitor participants
— 558 Facebook, 923 LinkedIn, 356 Instagram followers
— 12 operational CoastSnap stations
— 3 founders, 3 employees, 6 civic services for management
— Monthly newsletter about projects and findings
— Supported by Fondation de France

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Galicia

Meeting of Traditional Galician Boats

Salgadeiras de
Moreiras Museum

Salmoira: Recovery of the
Gastronomic History of
the Galician Coastline



Meeting of Traditional Galician Boats

Spain, Galicia

Categories

Material and immaterial cultures



The Encontro de Embarcacións Tradicionais de Galicia (Meeting of Traditional Galician Boats), organised by Culturmar, is a biennial event dedicated to preserving and promoting Galicia's maritime heritage through traditional boats, central to the region's fishing, commercial, and cultural identity. These vessels, built with local craftsmanship influenced by external maritime traditions, embody centuries of knowledge and practices.

The event offers visitors an immersive experience, fostering understanding of Galicia's maritime history and the daily life of its fishing communities. It also revives the building and maintenance of traditional ships, supporting local craftsmen and ensuring knowledge transmission to future generations.

Sustainability is a key component: these boats use natural materials with low environmental impact and are often wind-powered. Interactive activities raise awareness of responsible marine resource management, including traditional sustainable fishing practices such as *xeito*, a selective sardine fishing method.

The Encontro strengthens collective work through CulturMar and its member organisations, enhancing the visibility of maritime conservation across different coastal cities. Its itinerant nature broadens engagement and encourages international cooperation with maritime communities in Portugal, Brittany, Ireland, and the Mediterranean. Volunteerism, accessibility, and inclusivity are core principles. Specific actions support families, people with disabilities, and promote gender equality and non-discrimination, making the event a model of sustainable and innovative blue tourism.

▲
Landing of sardines at the port of Coruña, illustrating the enduring role of traditional fishing practices and their connection to Galicia's maritime heritage and collective memory. Vintage postcard (c.1920), Ediciones Enriqueta Comas S.C., private collection.

▼
Traditional Galician boats gathered during an edition of the *Encontro de Embarcacións Tradicionais de Galicia*, showcasing craftsmanship, sustainable sailing techniques, and the revival of local maritime culture. Photo CulturMar.





Time span

The Encontro de Embarcacións Tradicionais de Galicia has been held biennially since 1993. The 2025 edition took place in Ribeira from 17 to 20 July, maintaining continuity in the promotion of maritime heritage and sustainable tourism practices.

Risks and drawbacks

Challenges include a lack of formal training for new shipbuilders, risk of maritime heritage loss, absence of cultural policies protecting nautical traditions, difficulties in building wooden boats, and limited port space, which threaten the sustainability of traditional fleets.

Public policies

The Encontro de Embarcacións Tradicionais de Galicia is in line with public policies that promote the protection and active dissemination of maritime heritage. This is particularly relevant in light of Real Decreto 784/2021 of 7 September, which regulates historic ships and unique reproductions. Coordinated by CulturMar, the Galician Federation for Maritime and River Culture, the event is supported by a network of local administrations, regional cultural institutions, and community associations. CulturMar plays a pivotal role in integrating the Encontro within broader cultural policies that celebrate traditional shipbuilding, navigational expertise, and the transmission of knowledge across generations. The event's itinerant nature supports a decentralised cultural policy in Galicia, strengthening the presence of maritime culture along the Atlantic coast and raising awareness of traditional vessels as part of the region's living heritage.

Indicators

XVI Encontro (Sada, 2023):
— 106 boats, 500 crew members, 80 volunteers, 800 organisational staff.
— 11,000 visitors over 4 days; visitor distribution: Thursday 2,000; Friday 2,500; Saturday 3,500; Sunday 3,000.
— 50% of the budget spent locally on goods and services, generating a measurable economic impact on accommodation, catering, and local providers.
— Recognition as a Public Utility entity by Xunta de Galicia ensures documentation, economic accountability, and heritage preservation.

The following editions have been held: 1993, Ribeira / 1995, Coruxo (Vigo) / 1997, O Grove / 1999, Rianxo / 2001, Poio / 2003, Illa de Arousa / 2005, Cambados / 2007, Ferrol / 2009, Muros / 2011, Carril (Vilagarcía) / 2013, O Freixo (Outes) / 2015, Cabo da Cruz (Boiro), / 2017, Combarro (Poio) / 2019, A Guarda / 2021, Moaña / 2023, Sada / 2025, Ribeira.

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Salgadeiras de Moreiras Museum

Spain, Galicia, O Grove

Categories

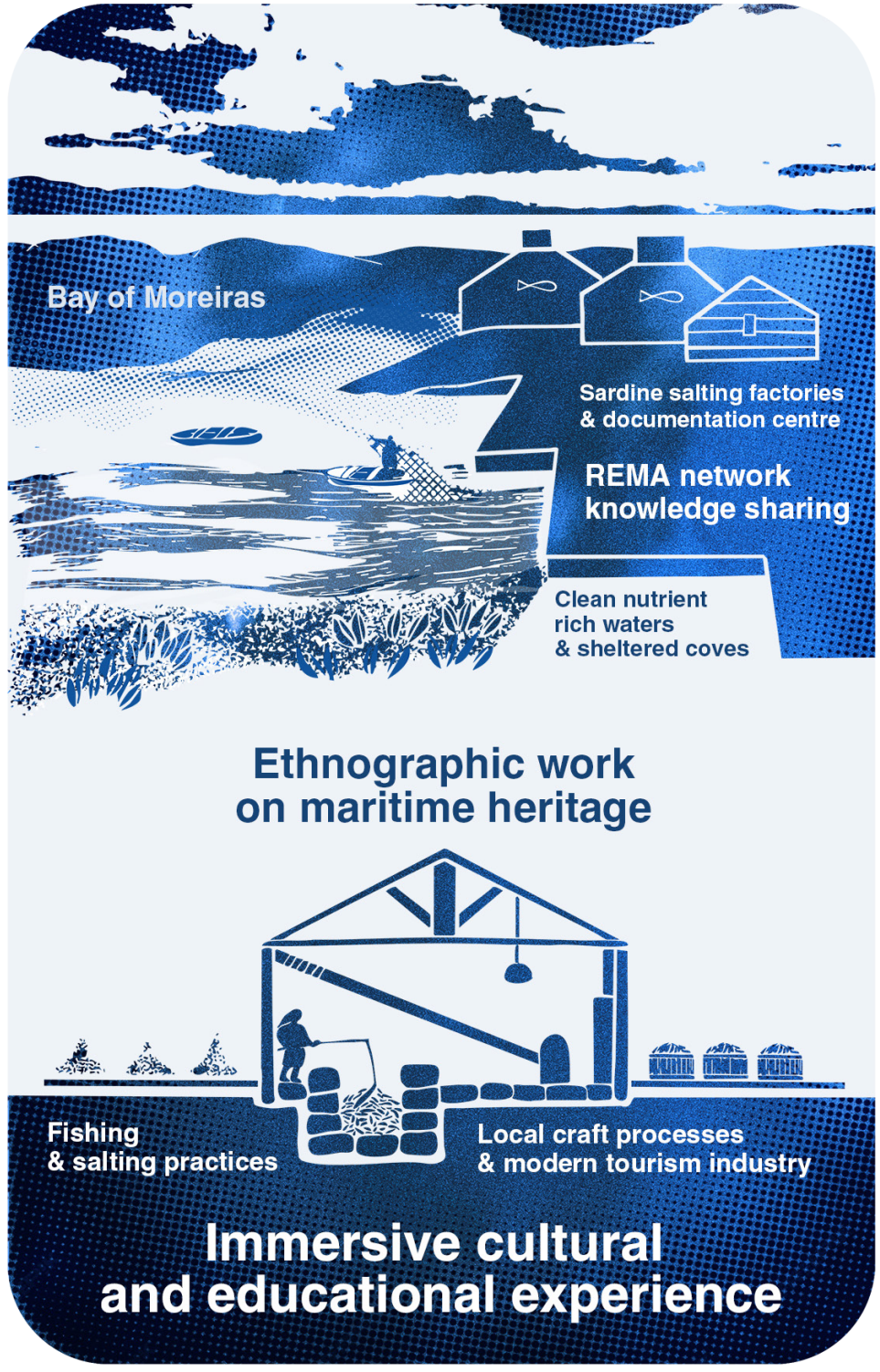
Maritime architectures

Material and immaterial cultures

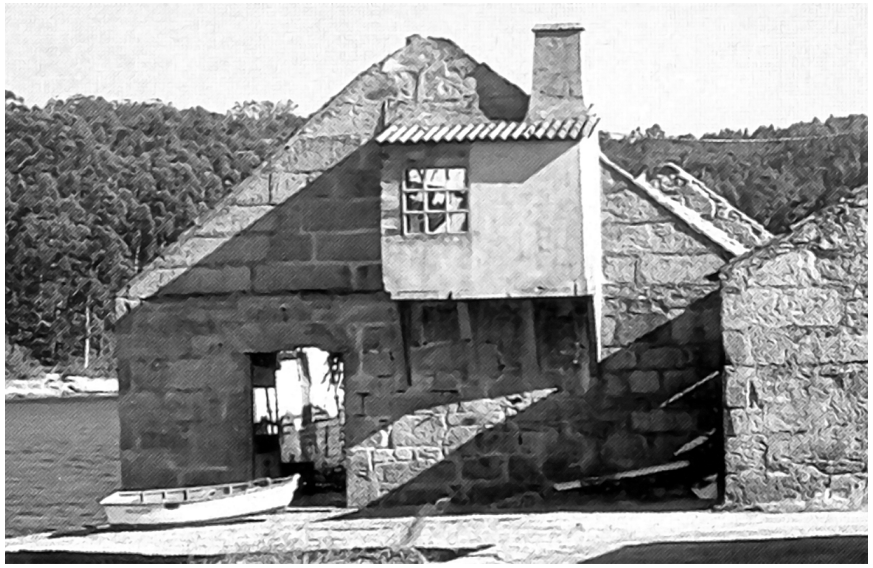
The Salgadeiras de Moreiras Museum preserves and showcases Galicia's maritime heritage through two restored sardine salting factories. Located in the bay of Moreiras — a historically strategic fishing and shellfish-harvesting site — the museum maintains the traditional environment while offering immersive experiences of early 20th-century salting practices.

One factory has been restored as an ethnographic space where visitors can observe historic salting processes, while the other serves as a museum supporting education, research, and museography. By integrating cultural heritage with sustainable tourism, the museum attracts visitors interested in the coastal community's history while preserving local craft techniques and practices.

The museum addresses both cultural and environmental issues: it documents the decline of traditional fishing practices, provides economic stimulus to the local community, and promotes awareness of marine conservation. By combining tangible and intangible maritime heritage, the initiative enhances visitor understanding of coastal ecosystems and the historical role of local communities in resource management.



▲
One of the former sardine salting factories at Moreiras, O Grove, during the period of abandonment prior to restoration, showing its inscription on the Ria de Arousa landscape. Photo Museo Salgadeiras de Moreiras.



▼
Aerial view of the Salgadeiras de Moreiras Museum, which integrates the restored former salting and canning factories within the coastal landscape and preserves the historical connection between architecture, fishing, and marine resources. Photo Museo Salgadeiras de Moreiras.



Time span

From the early twentieth century the site was used for salting facilities. A bivalve cooking plant remained active until the 1960s. From 1930 to 1950, the dock of these factories served as a base for the maritime transport of goods and passengers. Since 2007, following their restoration, these two former factories have been operating as a museum.

Risks and drawbacks

Seasonal closures, limited resources, and the potential replication of similar facilities along the coast may reduce the museum's uniqueness and visitor numbers.

Public policies

The Salgadeiras das Moreiras Museum project is part of several public initiatives and planning instruments that promote sustainable tourism, heritage conservation and cultural accessibility. The project aligns with the objectives of the Patronato para el Plan de Excelencia Turística O Grove y Sanxenxo and the Mancomunidad do Salnés, both of which encourage the integrated development of culture and tourism in the region. The Plan Estratégico de Turismo do Salnés 2024–2028 recognises heritage and gastronomy as important aspects of the region's identity, and the Ley 7/2021 de museos y otros centros museísticos de Galicia establishes the legal basis for the museum's establishment and management. Inclusion of the site in the Catálogo do Patrimonio Cultural of the Plan Básico Autonómico, and consistency with the Plan da Cultura Marítima de Galicia, emphasises the museum's importance as cultural and educational infrastructure dedicated to preserving and interpreting the salting industry as maritime heritage.

Indicators

— Annual tourist numbers in O Grove continue to rise.
— An increasing percentage of the local population are employed in tourism services.
— Inclusion in the REMA (Rede de Espazos Museísticos Atlánticos) network supports collaboration and heritage promotion.

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Salmoira

Recovery of the Gastronomic History of the Galician Coastline

Spain, Galicia, Pontevedra

Categories

Material and immaterial cultures

Salmoira is a food technology project consisting of three business lines: Salmoira Gourmet, Zero Waste, and Salmoira Gastro Experiences. Its aim is to recover and promote the gastronomic heritage of the Galician coast, with a focus on reviving traditional seafood and fish salting techniques.

The project studies historical methods for salting, smoking, and pickling species, applying highly sustainable conservation techniques to achieve gastronomic innovation grounded in the cultural roots of the sea. It integrates the recovery of heritage with contemporary innovation, giving rise to a new form of gastronomic tourism: “salt tourism”. Visitors can engage in gastronomic itineraries, immersive experiences, and tastings prepared according to historical methods, providing hands-on learning of traditional flavours and knowledge.

Sustainability is central, using natural materials and low carbon-footprint methods. The project addresses challenges such as the decline of artisanal salting due to industrialisation, ensuring continuity of these practices in contemporary contexts.

Salmoira’s R&D laboratory serves as a centre for innovation, production, and research, exploring traditional fish preservation techniques and valorising local products from the fishing sector. The project is co-funded by a FEMPA grant, managed by GALP Ría de Pontevedra and located in the Moureira neighbourhood (Pontevedra), within the San Telmo Fishermen’s Guild facilities. Its strategic location fosters close collaboration with local fishermen and artisans, strengthening the link between tradition and modern innovation.



▲
Workers from the Vigo canning factories during a rare moment of rest, while the busy harbour behind them brims with boats, reflecting the city's bustling industrial and maritime activity. Vintage postcard (c.1920), Hauser y Menet, Concello de Vigo.



▼
Locally sourced shellfish and crustaceans served on a bed of edible seaweeds, reflecting the region's coastal biodiversity and culinary heritage. The restaurant promotes sustainable gastronomy by integrating harvesting knowledge with contemporary cooking practices.



Time span

Salmoira began as a project in March 2022 and was established as a limited company in April 2023.

Risks and drawbacks

The artisanal and local nature of the project may bring some challenges in terms of scale and continuity. Ensuring that the growing interest in "salt tourism" supports, rather than commercialises, local heritage will be important for its sustainable future. Salmoira may find it difficult to increase production while maintaining the authenticity of its artisanal techniques. As a subsidised initiative, a loss of funding could jeopardise its viability. Dependence on local fishing resources and their seasonal availability could also affect production. Additionally, niche market appeal and limited consumer awareness could hinder broader adoption.

Indicators

Being a new project, impact has yet to be measured. The initiative has received public funding and awards:

— Project co-funded by Grupo de Acción Local do Sector Pesquero (GALP) Ría de Pontevedra
— Awarded by Pontevedra Provincial Council's Smartpeme programme

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Portugal

The North Beach Wave

Do Nothing. South West Alentejo and Vicentine Coast Natural Park

0

250 km

The North Beach Wave

Portugal, Central Region, Nazaré

Categories

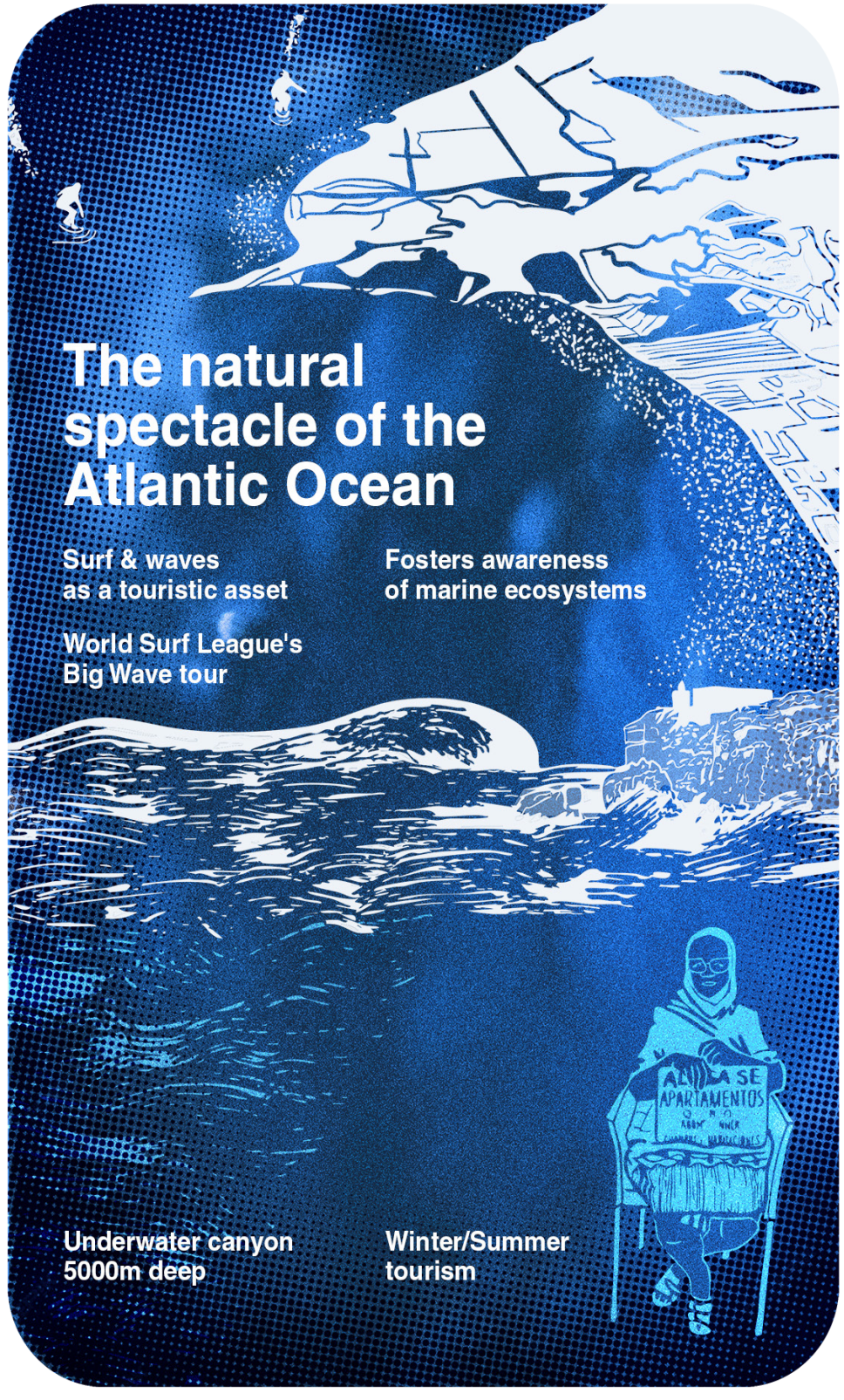
Natural features

Material and immaterial cultures

Nazaré's North Beach waves are a natural phenomenon resulting from the Nazaré Canyon, an underwater gorge more than 200 kilometres long, which plunges to depths of around 5,000 metres close to shore. The proximity of a such a deep canyon to the coast is rare. It channels and amplifies Atlantic swells, producing colossal waves that can exceed 30 metres in height. Initially avoided by fishermen, North Beach has been transformed into a year-round tourist destination thanks to big wave surfing, with the biggest waves typically occurring in winter.

The promotion of surfing has mitigated the seasonality of traditional summer tourism, stimulating local hotels, guesthouses, and rental properties, while surf-related businesses — schools, equipment rentals, and guided tours — have flourished. International competitions, such as the World Surf League Big Wave Tour, have attracted global attention and bolstered the economy of the region.

The practice exemplifies blue tourism by connecting visitors to the raw beauty and dynamics of the Atlantic Ocean, promoting awareness of coastal ecosystems, and fostering sustainable tourism. The initiative has shifted the perception of North Beach from a deserted stretch of coastline to a significant cultural and tourism asset, enhancing local identity and regional economic development.



▲
Early 20th-century photograph showing the dense urban fabric of the Praia dos Pescadores in Nazaré, built between the hillside and the Atlantic shore. The regular alignment of beach tents and ephemeral wooden structures illustrates the growing role of seasonal tourism alongside the town's fishing activities. Photo Estúdio Mário Novais / Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian.



▼
View from the Forte de São Miguel Arcanjo overlooking the giant swells generated by the Nazaré Canyon, during a big-wave surfing session at Praia do Norte, Nazaré. Photo Peter Walter Turansky, 2019.



Time span

Surfing began in Nazaré shortly after 1974, but local surfers started promoting the special qualities of North Beach internationally in 2002. Famed big wave rider Garrett McNamara first arrived to North Beach in 2010, and in 2011 broke the world record for the biggest wave ever surfed, attracting surfers and tourists every since. Since then, new records have been set, with current records held by Sebastian Steudtner (26.21m, October 2020) and Maya Gabeira (22.4m, February 2020).

Risks and drawbacks

Potential over-tourism and environmental degradation could threaten coastal ecosystems and the natural landscape if growth is unmanaged.

Public policies

The Municipality of Nazaré established an Office for Sustainable Tourism in 2024 and also created a brand to promote North Beach, organise surf events, and promote related merchandise. Nazaré's membership in the World Surf Cities Network and its partnership with the World Surf League have enhanced international visibility and generated significant revenues. In 2018, the Digital Wave campaign showcased Nazaré's colossal waves on a giant LED billboard in New York's Times Square for one month, in an initiative of Turismo de Portugal reflecting a collaborative effort between national and local authorities to boost Portugal's profile as a surf tourism destination. Additionally, partnerships with luxury and automotive brands have further elevated Nazaré's status, with high-end brands associating their image with the destination's unique surfing culture. Collaborations with universities and research centres have also supported studies of the canyon, coastal ecosystems, and surf-related cultural dynamics.

Indicators

While specific economic and visitor data are limited, the exponential increase in tickets to the São Miguel Arcanjo Fortress, a key vantage point for North Beach waves, serves as an indirect indicator of tourism growth and interest.

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Do Nothing

South West Alentejo and Vicentine Coast Natural Park

Portugal, Alentejo and Algarve

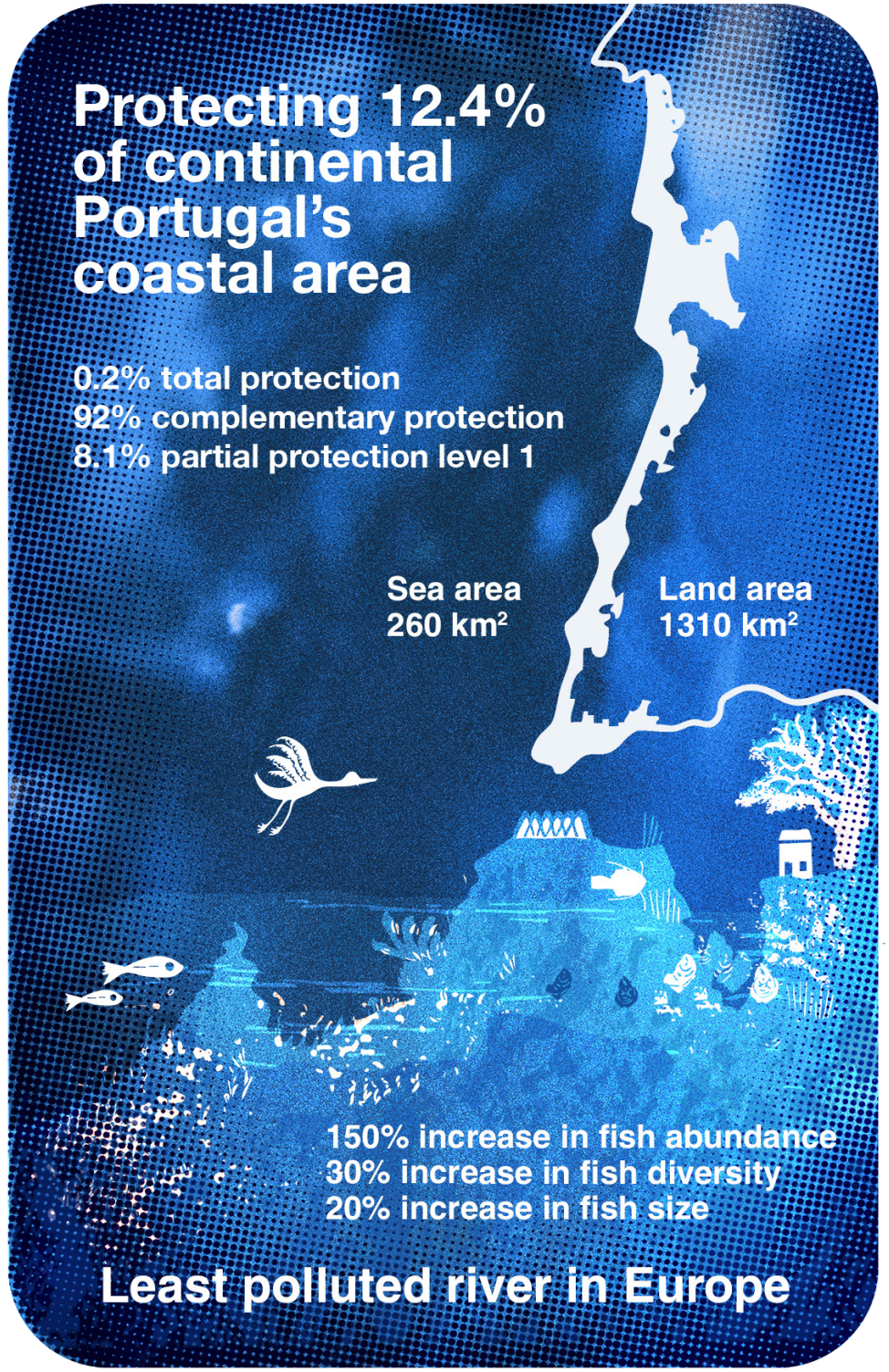
Categories

Flora & fauna Natural features

The “Do Nothing” approach refers to the deliberate minimal intervention in the coastal ecosystems of Alentejo and Algarve, a region characterised by steep cliffs, mild climate (~17.5°C annual average), and a rough, wild appearance. In this region, land use includes agriculture, fishing, and small dispersed settlements, while natural habitats such as heaths, tidal lagoons, and wetlands remain largely intact.

This practice seeks to preserve biodiversity, ecological connectivity, and landscape integrity by limiting human impact. Activities compatible with this approach are ecotourism, hiking, and other low-impact recreational activities, avoiding urban development, mass tourism, and industrialisation. Maintaining the natural state of the landscape ensures the functioning of its ecosystem and existent services, while allowing local communities to continue to benefit from its intrinsic ecological and recreational value. The focus here is on intangible measures such as legal protection, minimal infrastructure, and community engagement, rather than active intervention.

The approach aligns with global biodiversity objectives, including the Kunming-Montreal Agreement, which aims for at least 30% of the planet’s terrestrial, inland water, coastal and marine areas to be under effective restoration and protection by 2030.



▲
A section of the protected coastline along the Rota dos Pescadores, shaped by waves and wind, demonstrating minimal human intervention in line with the ‘Do Nothing’ strategy. Photo Nuno Cera, 2025.

▼
View from the sea towards Arrifana, with surfers enjoying the waves, highlighting how the ‘Do Nothing’ practice balances human recreation with the preservation of natural coastal dynamics. Photo Nuno Cera, 2025.





Time span

The practice started in 1988 with the creation of the “Area of Protected Landscape” and was formalised in 1995 with the establishment of the Natural Park of Southwest Alentejo and Vicentine Coast (PNSACV). Its legal framework has been adjusted over time to ensure continued protection.

Risks and drawbacks

The legal framework is fragile, and climate change, drought, and over-extraction of water threaten the region. Economic pressures may lead to illegal construction, intensive agriculture, or the exploitation of natural resources, challenging the long-term preservation of habitats and species.

Public policies

— Creation of the “Area of Protected Landscape” (1988) and the Natural Park (1995)
— Integration into the Natura 2000 network (1999) for Sites of Community Importance and Special Protection Areas for Birds
— Management plans that articulate coastal and environmental laws, municipal masterplans, and national directives on habitat and species conservation

Indicators

— The PNSACV covers a terrestrial area of 131,000 ha and a maritime area of 260 km^2
— Evidence of a 30% increase in fish abundance in some areas
— Increase in the size of some fish species by 20% within protected zones

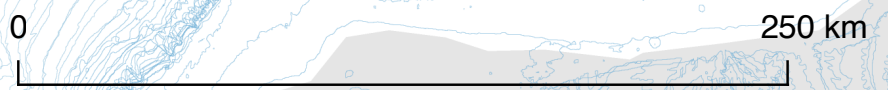
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Canary Islands

FEMEPA
Provincial Federation of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises of Metal and New Technologies of Las Palmas

Marca Púrpura: Association of Canarian Women Architects



FEMEPA

Provincial Federation of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises of Metal and New Technologies of Las Palmas

Spain, Canary Islands, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria

Categories

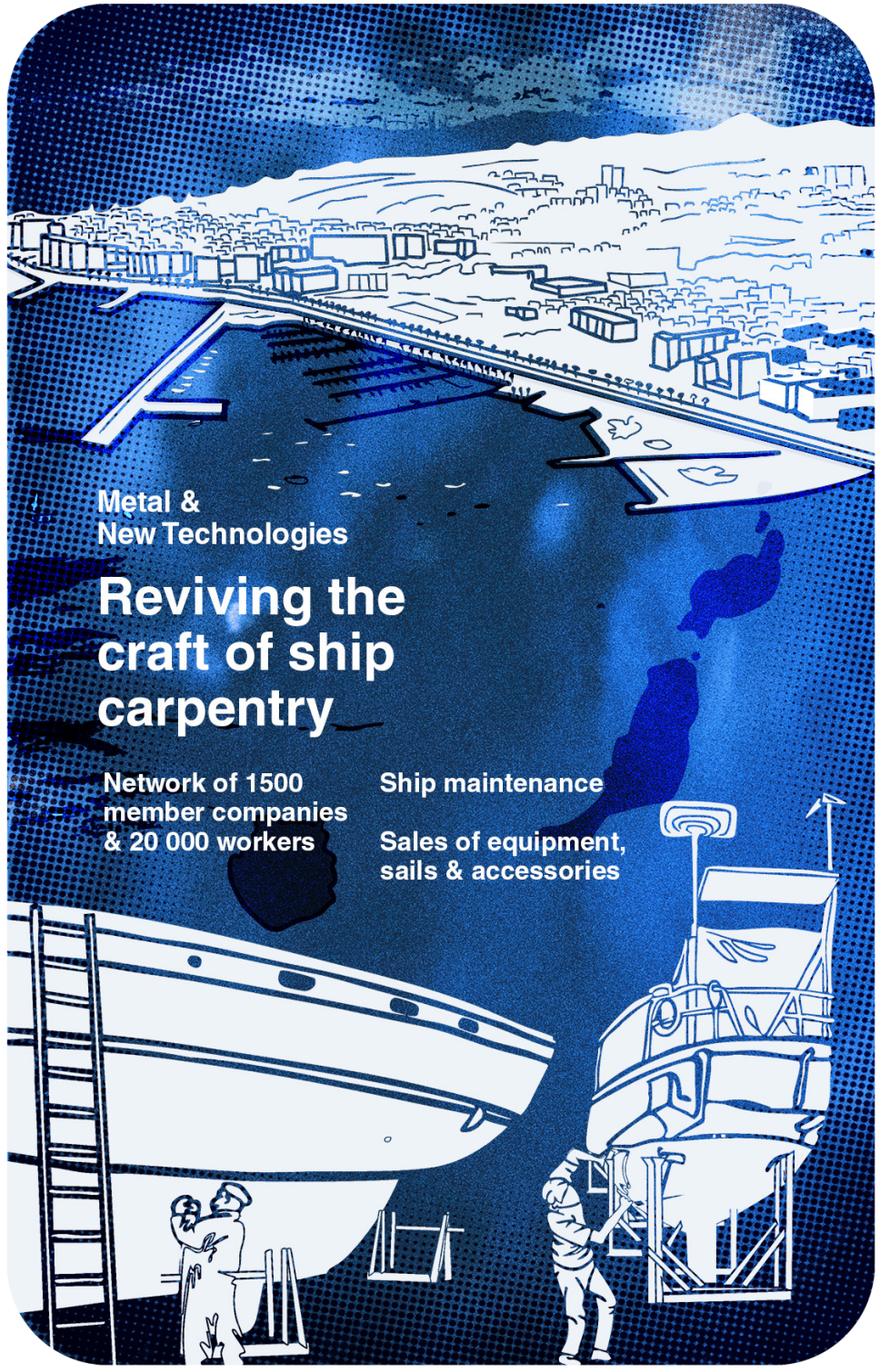
Material and immaterial cultures

The mission of FEMEPA (Provincial Federation of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises of Metal and New Technologies of Las Palmas) is to contribute to the improvement of the competitiveness and positioning of local companies within this sector by providing exclusive and innovative services, and by enhancing individuals' skills and professional opportunities in this field.

FEMEPA maintains a strong connection with the business ecosystem of the islands, where companies specialised in ship repairs and maintenance are located, including painting, carpentry, engine repair, and electrical systems. Within the Association of Nautical Entrepreneurs (AENAUTICA), which is part of FEMEPA, it additionally encompasses companies dedicated to the sale of equipment, sails, and accessories.

At the request of the entrepreneurs who comprise AENAUTICA, there is an ongoing demand to make the sector and knowledge of the recreational nautical world more visible to society and to the business community at large. The aim is to promote and raise awareness of the services and activities carried out in the recreational boating sector, while simultaneously fostering maritime culture.

As part of AENAUTICA's objective of internationalisation, FEMEPA has maintained ties with entrepreneurs in the nautical sector of the city of La Rochelle (France). In this French city, there is a long-standing tradition of shipbuilding related to the restoration and maintenance of vessels. Through this internationalisation process, one of FEMEPA's most significant actions has been to attempt to revive the craft of ship carpentry, a nearly extinct profession in the Canary Islands region, by providing professional training in La Rochelle.



▲
Under the hull of a vessel in the shipyard, visitors witness FEMEPA's work in sustaining shipbuilding skills, strengthened through connecting the Canary Islands' nautical sector with training programmes in La Rochelle.

▼
The city of Las Palmas and its marina, centre of FEMEPA's efforts to sustain and develop the Canary Islands' nautical economy. Photo Muelle Deportivo de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, 1980's.





Time span
1977 to present.

Risks and drawbacks
The development of this activity has revealed a series of issues common to all FEMEPA activities: a lack of efficient communication between the private sector and the administration (government). Greater openness and focused attention from the administration (local councils, regional ministries, etc.) towards the nautical business sector are needed.

Public policies
The Ciudad de Mar department of the City Council of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria maintains a collaboration agreement with FEMEPA. Among the actions planned in the educational sphere, this collaboration facilitates internship opportunities for foreign students—primarily from France, Portugal, and Ireland—in nautical training and ship repair workshops, as well as promoting the improvement of skills among students in the Canaries' capital, especially in intangible skills and techniques of repair and construction.

Indicators
FEMEPA is currently composed of 1,500 member companies, employing 20,000 workers in the province of Las Palmas. AENAUTICA is composed of more than 100 companies from the province.
FEMEPA received the International Award for Franco-Spanish Collaboration, granted by the Franco-Spanish Chamber of Commerce (Madrid, 2021), in recognition of the work of French and Spanish companies that contribute to fostering entrepreneurship, job creation, sustainability, and collaboration between the two countries.

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Marca Púrpura

Association of Canarian Women Architects

Spain, Canary Islands, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria

Categories

Material and immaterial cultures

In recent years, Marca Púrpura (MP) has led key initiatives that explore the intersection of gender, architecture, and urban space in the Canary Islands, fostering innovation, inclusion, and sustainability in architectural practice and urban design. Notably, it launched GAC (2019), the first meeting to be held in the Canarian context on gender, architecture, and the city. This initiative created a platform for critical dialogue, challenging conventional urban planning models and advocating for more inclusive and gender-responsive cities. MP also organised FMAC (2024), the Festival de Mujeres Arquitectas de Canarias, an innovative space dedicated to documenting and amplifying the contributions of women architects and urban planners in the region. A key focus of this festival is the creation of an open-access archive, ensuring the visibility of diverse voices and promoting a more equitable representation of women in architectural history. Furthermore, MP has participated in FOCCO, the Foro de las Ciudades Corresponsables, leading the Marcha Exploratoria, an initiative that rethinks urban mobility and accessibility through a gender-sensitive lens. This exploratory walk follows the transition from the port to Las Canteras beach, engaging with the waterfront while analysing the social, environmental, and spatial dynamics that shape public space. By integrating participatory methodologies, this initiative fosters a deeper understanding of how urban environments can be designed to enhance social cohesion and environmental resilience.

MP creates spaces for encounter and participatory reflection, presenting participants with the history of this port city and enabling an understanding of its evolution around the coastline and its isthmus, while simultaneously conveying values passed down from generation to generation and revaluing both tangible and intangible culture, as well as the identity of women and of citizens. The development of MP's activities strengthens the creation of a historical and cultural identity for the city of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, while enhancing the sense of belonging, promoting blue tourism and the local economy, and serving as a framework for sustainable development and inclusive environments.



▲
Participatory urban analysis in action: exploring the city, women architects from Marca Púrpura engage with inclusive urban design practices. Photo Marca Púrpura.

▼
A Marca Púrpura working group discusses strategies for inclusive architecture and urban design, advancing gender-responsive practices in the Canary Islands. Photo Marca Púrpura.





Time span

Marca Púrpura is a pioneering association of Canarian women architects, established in 2008 to address the growing need for a dedicated space where the local community can engage in meaningful discussions, share valuable information, and foster collaboration. It continues to operate to this day.

Risks and drawbacks

The associative and activist nature of a local context plays a crucial role in driving social, cultural, and political change, but sustaining momentum over time can be overwhelming. Broader support structures, collaboration, and resources are needed to ensure the sustainability of these movements.

Public policies

The Canary Islands have various public policies aimed at ensuring effective equality between women and men, promoted by the Government of the Canary Islands, the Cabildos, and the Town Councils, including the Canary Islands Equality Law (Ley 1/2010). Support for MP is also provided by the ULPGC, the School of Architecture, and the Canary Islands Arts Sectorial Table.

Indicators

— GAC I - Encuentro Internacional de Género, Arquitectura y Ciudad (2019): 500 attendees
— Charlas de Azotea, bimonthly gathering since 2016: 90 women participants per session
— FMAC - Festival of Women Architects of the Canary Islands (2024): 130 attendees per day

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Atlas of Good Practices
Innovative Blue Tourism, Creative and Cultural Projects

Edited by Diego Inglez de Souza & André Tavares

with chapters and good practices texts by Conor Patterson & Joe English (Ireland, pp. 8-11), Mary Clare Curran & Lorna Bailey (Ireland, pp. 12-15), Brest Métropole (Brittany, pp. 18-21), EESAB / Brest (Brittany, pp. 22-25) and Paul Caudan (Brittany, pp. 26-29), Carmen Fabregat Nodar & Óscar Fuertes Dopico (Galicia, pp. 32-43), Diego Inglez de Souza, Letícia Carmo & André Tavares (Portugal, pp. 46-53) and Lucía Martínez Quintana & Francisco Antonio García Pérez (Canary Islands, pp. 56-63).

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This *Atlas of Good Practices* presents exemplary initiatives in blue tourism and the creative and cultural industries identified across the Atlantic region of Europe — Ireland, Brittany, Galicia, Portugal, and the Canary Islands. Developed within *SEALabHaus – Atlantic New Bauhaus Laboratory for Sustainable, Inclusive and Beautiful Blue Tourism, Heritage and Culture of the Sea*, the volume highlights practices that integrate architecture, culture, and ecology, embodying the principles of the New European Bauhaus to foster sustainable, inclusive, and resilient coastal territories.

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