

INTERREG MONITORING COMMITTEE

23rd April – 10th May 2021

Written proceedings

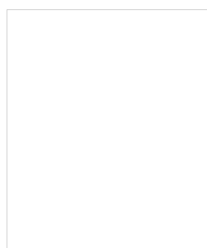
**Interreg V Indian Ocean cooperation
program 2014- 2020**

CCI 2014 TC16 RFTN009

IMPLEMENTATION REPORT FOR THE EUROPEAN TERRITORIAL COOPERATION OBJECTIVE (INTERREG)

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1. IDENTIFICATION OF THE ANNUAL REPORT

CCI	2014TC16RFTN009
Title	Indian Ocean
Version	2020.0
Date of approval of the report by the monitoring committee	

2. OVERVIEW OF COOPERATION PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

2020 was marked by the Covid-19 global pandemic. Reunion Island and the Indian Ocean countries experienced periods of lockdown and travel restrictions in and between their territories throughout the year. As a result, the implementation of certain operations had to be reviewed and adapted to a situation that endured over time.

This Annual Implementation Report (RAMO) should therefore be read in the light of this crisis context.

A - Programming and certification rhythm still little impacted by the health crisis

Despite the difficulties caused by the health crisis, the number of operations programmed was slightly higher than in 2019.

By 31 December 2020, 209 operations had been programmed, representing a total eligible cost of €62.5m and a programming rate of 84.12%. Co-financing provided by ERDF amounted to €52.7m.

In 2020, 46 operations were programmed, for a total cost of €18.3m, representing a total eligible cost of €15.8m. ERDF co-financing amounted to €13.4m.

Certification was on the increase. Total certified expenditure reached €22 million, i.e. 29.7% of the programme amount, representing an EU amount of €18.4 million. The 2020 automatic decommitment threshold (EU amount of €15.84 million) was therefore exceeded. These figures also show that the automatic decommitment threshold for 2021 (EU amount of €26.68m) has been reached somewhat ahead of schedule.

The programming and certification figures as at 31/12/2020 do not yet reflect the effects of the health crisis, as most of the projects programmed in 2020 were submitted before it. Those that were formulated during the health crisis were based on a resumption of trade in 2020, which did not happen in the end. Amounts certified in 2020 mainly relate to projects carried out before the health crisis.

The effects of the health crisis on the programming and certification process will be more marked in 2021, due to the significant impact of interrupted air services on projects planned in 2020 (postponement or cancellation of meetings, missions and exchanges, postponement of volunteer assignments, etc.).

Details of programming and certification for each programme line are presented in section 3.1 of this report. As a reminder, and to facilitate the reading of that part, each programme priority is divided into a cross-border (even numbers) and transnational (odd numbers) line.

In view of an ongoing audit procedure on indicators listed in section 3.2 of the report and depending on the findings, some data may be marginally modified.

B - Relations with programme partners

9 countries are involved in the projects supported by the INTERREG Indian Ocean programme: Madagascar, Mauritius, the Seychelles, Comoros, Mozambique, Australia, India, Tanzania and Kenya. Cooperation also involves the French territories of Reunion, Mayotte and French Southern and Antarctic Lands (TAAF).

The IOC countries **are the most heavily involved** in the INTERREG programme. Most of this cooperation is carried out through multilateral projects: Madagascar has taken part in 105 projects, Mauritius in 101, the Seychelles in 82 and the Comoros in 73 projects.

Those countries signed an INTERREG Framework Agreement with the Managing Authority. The agreement sets the INTERREG programme action framework and the procedures for project support by the Reunion Regional Council offices and for consultation with partner countries' authorities.

As regards the programme's English-speaking partner countries, Mozambique is involved in 41 projects, Tanzania in 26, Kenya in 22, Australia in 17, and India in 13.

As for Mayotte's participation in the programme:

- Mayotte partners are involved in 35 transnational-type projects (i.e. 35% of this type of projects).
- 4 projects are carried out by a Mayotte beneficiary.

Three projects supported by complementary EDF/ERDF funding were programmed in 2020:

- New Fisheries Monitoring Initiative, with actions complementary to the EcoFish project (11th EDF IOC). Expenditure provided by EDF is necessary for successful implementation of the project funded under the INTERREG programme.
- Grand Observatoire de l'Océan Indien [Indian Ocean Greater Research Institute] - G2OI will produce a dedicated database compiling environmental data acquired as part of the Biodiversity, Energy, Islands projects (10th EDF IOC). The INTERREG project will enhance completed EDF projects. Complementarity is therefore based on projects continuity over time.
- Epidemio-surveillance and Biocontrol in the Indian Ocean (EPIBIO), where tools will be developed for monitoring and controlling plant diseases and crop pests in the area. These tools will be used to set up healthy seed chains in Indian Ocean countries as part of the Food Sec project (11th EDF IOC).

C - Implementation of programme bodies

❖ *INTERREG Monitoring Committee (IMC)*

The Monitoring Committee was called upon 3 times in 2020 by written procedure:

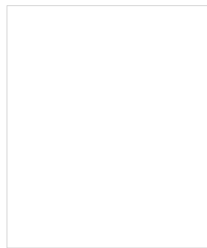
- from 22 January to 5 February 2020, regarding the Commission's guidance document on the Indian Ocean INTERREG programmes for 2021-2027 and the terms of reference for the 2014-2020 Indian Ocean INTERREG programme evaluations;
- from 25 June to 16 July 2020, regarding the 2019 Annual Implementation Report (RAMO);
- from 23 November to 15 December 2020, regarding the progress of the 2014-2020 Indian Ocean INTERREG programme and the evaluations, communication and content of the 2021-2027 Indian Ocean INTERREG programme.

Unlike in previous years, the last Monitoring Committee of the year could not be organised face to face due to the health situation. The written procedure organised within the framework of this committee made it possible to collect 12 opinions, including those of two English-speaking third countries (Kenya and the Maldives), Mauritius, the Seychelles, TAAF and Mayotte.

❖ *Steering Committee*

10 INTERREG steering committees were organised in 2020, more than what is set by procedure rules (which provide for a bi-monthly committee).

Due to the health crisis, the local monitoring committees of April, May and June 2020 were conducted by written procedure. However, the other steering committees (February, March, July, August, October, November and December) were organised face to face.



3. IMPLEMENTATION OF PRIORITY AXES

3.1 Overview of implementation by axis

Identifier	Priority axis	Key information on the implementation of priority axes with regard to main developments, significant problems and measures taken to remedy these problems.
01	Growing international potentials of research and technological innovation in the Indian Ocean Area / Cross border	<p>22 operations have been programmed under Line 1 since 2016 for a total eligible cost of €16.7m. They are co-financed by ERDF up to €14.2m. The programming rate is 78.37%.</p> <p>7 operations were programmed in 2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The University of Reunion Island’s ESPOIR project focusing on anticipating the onset of heavy rainfall periods. - GIP CYROI’s NANO SCAFFOLDS project, in partnership with CBBR in Mauritius, on tissue regeneration (bone, muscle, tendon, skin) after trauma or injury. - Reunion Island Volcano Observatory’s and Karthala Volcano Observatory’s HATARI project on volcanism and seismicity in the Comoros. - IRD’s [Institute for Development-Oriented Research] Grand Observatoire de l’Océan Indien (G2OI) project on the conservation and enhancement of data from projects financed by the 10th EDF IOC. - A project to develop geographic data infrastructures in Madagascar and the Comoros, and a regional network in the field of geographic information, supported by the Reunion Regional Council. <p><u>- 2 projects are sponsored by CIRAD:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * EPIBIO (phase 2) on agroecological protection of crops in the Indian Ocean. * QUAL’INNOV (phase 2), on agricultural and agri-food product quality.
02	Growing international potentials of research and technological innovation in the Indian Ocean Area / Transnational	<p>Since 2016, 10 operations have been programmed under Line 2, for a total eligible cost of €4.7m. They are co-financed by ERDF up to €1.4m. Programming rate is 72.29%.</p> <p>2 operations were programmed in 2020, contributing to two specific objectives:</p> <p>Specific Objective 1 (SO 1) aimed at “Increasing research, development and innovation activity on shared themes.” In this framework, the OMDIABRUN project, led by the Reunion Island University Hospital Centre (CHU), will help combat diabetes and pre-</p>

Identifier	Priority axis	Key information on the implementation of priority axes with regard to main developments, significant problems and measures taken to remedy these problems.
		<p>diabetes through a partnership with Australia.</p> <p>SO 2 is aimed at “Increasing the number of projects using research results, expertise and data from scientific and technical research centres for sustainable development.” For example, the PISSARO project led by the University of Reunion Island with Météo-France [French Weather Bureau] Inter-regional Directorate for the Indian Ocean and the Seychelles seeks to improve intra-seasonal rainfall forecasts in the south-west Indian Ocean.</p>
03	Supporting the development of economic exchanges in the area / Cross border	<p>Since the beginning of the programme, 38 operations have been programmed under Line 3, for a total eligible cost of €5.7 million. They are co-financed by ERDF up to €4.5m. Programming rate is 95.65%.</p> <p>9 operations were programmed in 2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Structuring of the Cap Business Océan Indien General Secretariat, supported by the Reunion Island Chamber of Commerce & Industry (CCIR). - Cooperation programme sponsored by Grand Port Maritime de La Réunion [Reunion Island Harbour Authority] with the Seychelles Port Authority. - 3 support operations for Reunion Island Regional Council’s offices in Madagascar, Mauritius and the Comoros in 2020 and 2021. - Due to the health crisis, the <u>2020 meetings of recurrent media operations</u> such as the Indian Ocean Music Market and the Indian Ocean Media Forum were postponed to 2021. - 2 economic exchange projects in the area, sponsored by Club Export in collaboration with Groupement des Entreprises de Madagascar [Madagascar Companies Group], the Franco-Malagasy CCI [Chamber of Commerce & Industry], the Franco-Malagasy CCI [Chamber of Commerce & Industry], France-Mauritius CCI, Business Mauritius and the Seychelles CCI. In the current context, Club Export promoted remote exchanges, through the organisation of webinars aimed at overcoming the crisis through regional economic cooperation.
04	Supporting the development of economic exchanges in the area / Transnational	35 operations have been programmed under Line 4 since 2016, for a total eligible cost of €7.6m; they are co-financed by ERDF up to €6.4m. Programming rate is 107.25%.

Identifier	Priority axis	Key information on the implementation of priority axes with regard to main developments, significant problems and measures taken to remedy these problems.
		<p>9 operations were programmed in 2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Vanilla Island Organisation (VIO)'s annual regional tourism cooperation project, which had to be adapted due to the Covid-19 health crisis (work on brand awareness through digital technology, market development, and improving the network of tourism stakeholders through translation of information into several languages). - Support programme to business exchanges in the creative and communication industries sector sponsored by Association des Agences Conseil en Communication Outremer [Association of Overseas Communication Consultant Agencies] (AACC OM) for IO 2020. - <u>The transnational facet of</u> Cap Business Indian Ocean <u>projects</u>, and the 2020 IOMMA event. - Cooperation programme sponsored by Grand Port Maritime de La Réunion with Mozambique's Cabo Delgado Port Authority. - 3 economic project structuring operations in the Club Export area. - Continuation of fisheries surveillance missions in the south-western Indian Ocean, carried out by TAAF, in addition to the Ecofish project funded by the 11th EDF. These missions also concern the Eastern Indian Ocean through a partnership with Australia.
05	Improving collective abilities of adaptation, prevention and risk management due to the climate change / Cross border	<p>Since the beginning of the programme, 6 operations have been programmed under Line 5, for a total eligible cost of €5.4m; they are co-financed by ERDF up to €4.6m. Programming rate is 106.09%.</p> <p>These projects contribute to the “reduction of the impact of disasters and climate change effects on South-West Indian Ocean populations” (Action 5-1), which are particularly vulnerable to natural risks.</p> <p>No new operations were programmed in this line in 2020.</p> <p>Nevertheless, actions programmed in 2019 continued in 2020, notably cooperation actions of the Red Cross's Indian Ocean Regional Response Platform (PIROI), which included training and awareness-raising on the health risk linked to Covid-19.</p> <p>In the context of the health crisis, new training methods in the form of e-learning were</p>

Identifier	Priority axis	Key information on the implementation of priority axes with regard to main developments, significant problems and measures taken to remedy these problems.
		implemented to ensure the continuity of the operation.
06	Improving collective abilities of adaptation, prevention and risk management due to the climate change / Transnational	<p>Since the beginning of the programme, 5 operations have been programmed under Line 6, for a total eligible cost of €2.2m; they are co-financed by ERDF up to €1.8m. Programming rate is 72.87%.</p> <p>The projects supported under this priority contribute to the “reduction of the impact of disasters and climate change effects on South-West Indian Ocean populations” at transnational level (Action 6-1) and the implementation of “cooperation actions on epidemic and infectious risks” (Action 6-2).</p> <p>No new operations were programmed on this line in 2020. As for cross-border, Red Cross’s PIROI cooperation actions programmed in 2019 also continued in 2020 at transnational level.</p> <p>As in cross-border, the health crisis context led to the introduction of new training methods in the form of e-learning to ensure continuity of transnational operations.</p>
07	Strengthening capacities of understanding, enhancement of the natural and cultural heritage of the Indian Ocean Area /Cross border	<p>9 operations have been programmed under Line 7 since 2016, for a total eligible cost of €2.7m; they are co-financed by ERDF up to €2.3m. Programming rate is 82.99%.</p> <p>An operation was programmed in 2020: the “Hawksbill Sea Turtles in the Indian Ocean” (TimOI) project, led by the Centre d’Etudes et Découverte des Tortues Marines [Sea Turtle Study & Discovery Centre], in collaboration with the Comoros National Parks and the Association pour le développement Socio-Economique d’Itsamia [Association for Itsamia’s Social & Economic Development], the Wildlife Conservation Society of Madagascar, and the Green Island Foundation of Seychelles.</p> <p>The aim is to centralise data on the connectivity of hawksbill turtle populations and their habitats in the area, so as to better understand the regional dispersion of this species’ populations, and work on the conservation issues for the species and its habitats, which are currently under threat.</p>
08	Strengthening capacities of understanding and enhancement of the cultural heritage of the Indian Ocean Area/Transnational	9 operations have been programmed under Line 8 since 2016, for a total eligible cost of €2.8m; they are co-financed by ERDF up to €2.4m. Programming rate is 96.79%.

Identifier	Priority axis	Key information on the implementation of priority axes with regard to main developments, significant problems and measures taken to remedy these problems.
		<p>5 operations were programmed in 2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The COMBAVA project, led by GLOBICE Association, on the frequentation and connectivity of humpback whale breeding sites in the Indian Ocean. - The University of Reunion Island's PaTRIM-OI project on heritage actions between several universities in the area. - A project on the dhow, an emblematic sailing boat of the Indian Ocean, supported by Mayotte Department Council. - The project on populations' ownership of the Indian Ocean iconographic heritage, supported by Reunion Island Department Council. - The Images Océan Indien project sponsored by SPL TERRITO'ARTS on the collection, preservation and analysis of the area's photographic heritage.
09	Upgrading collective skills through the support of educational and exchange actions / Cross border	<p>36 operations have been programmed under Line 9 since 2016, for a total eligible cost of €8m; they are co-financed by ERDF up to €6.7m. Programming rate is 80.70%.</p> <p>6 operations were programmed in 2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4 operations linked to France Volontaire's International Solidarity Volunteering programme (economic and non-economic posts co-financed by the Reunion Regional Council, non-economic posts co-financed by the Reunion Department Council and a post in the Seychelles co-financed by La Possession Municipality). This represents a total of 20 posts programmed in the Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius and the Seychelles. - 2020/2021 session of the agricultural vocational certificate training programme in Rodrigues, sponsored by the Saint-Joseph Agricultural High School. - Vocational training project in the field of health and medico-social care at Reunion Island University Hospital aimed at strengthening the training of health professionals from reference hospitals in IOC countries, focusing on several themes: emergency, child surgery (mother-child health), mental health, diabetes, cardiac surgery, forensic medicine, neonatology, anaesthesia and intensive care.
10	Upgrading collective skills through the support of educational and exchange actions / Transnational	<p>Since the beginning of the programme, 21 operations have been programmed under Line 10, for a total eligible cost of €1.8m; they are co-financed by ERDF up to €1.5m. Programming rate is 41.68%.</p>

Identifier	Priority axis	Key information on the implementation of priority axes with regard to main developments, significant problems and measures taken to remedy these problems.
		<p>3 operations were programmed in 2020.</p> <p>These operations are linked to the <u>transnational component</u> of France Volontaire’s International Solidarity Volunteering programme, carried out in partnership with Mozambique and Tanzania. 7 international mobility positions were financed.</p>
11	Technical assistance for the INTERREG programme 2014-2020 / Cross border	<p>Since 2016, 8 operations have been programmed under Line 11, for a total eligible cost of €2.9m; they are co-financed by ERDF up to €2.5m.</p> <p>The last actual operation (human resources mobilised for programme implementation) was programmed in 2020, for a total eligible cost of €526K, co-financed by ERDF up to €447K.</p> <p>Programming of this line was saturated as a result of flat-rate AT package commitment in the second half of the year.</p> <p>These files contribute to the “Strengthening cross-border programme’s management capacities” objective, meant to enable the relevant structures (Reunion Island Regional Council and AGILE) to respond to the Managing Authority’s own missions or the assignments entrusted to them.</p> <p>In pursuance of European Commission Delegated Regulation No. 2019/1867 on the simplification of European fund management, the Reunion Island Regional Council implemented flat rate financing for technical assistance as of 13 July 2020.</p> <p>Technical assistance will therefore no longer be subject to programming and certification of expenditure at actual cost, but will be calculated on the basis of a 6% flat rate of certified expenditure at programme level (excluding technical assistance).</p>
12	Technical assistance for the INTERREG programme 2014-2020 / Transnational	<p>10 operations have been programmed under Line 12 since 2016, for a total eligible cost of €1.5m; they are co-financed by ERDF up to €1.3m.</p> <p>The last actual operation (human resources mobilised for programme implementation) was programmed in 2020 for a total eligible cost of €271K, co-financed by ERDF up to €230K.</p>

Identifier	Priority axis	Key information on the implementation of priority axes with regard to main developments, significant problems and measures taken to remedy these problems.
		<p>Programming of this line was saturated as a result of flat-rate AT package commitment in the second half of the year.</p> <p>As for cross-border, the Reunion Island Regional Council implemented flat-rate funding for technical assistance as of 13 July 2020.</p>

3.2 Output indicators of the program

Axis	Identifying number	Indicator	Target value	Value programmed for 2018	Value completed for 2018	Value programmed for 2019	Value completed for 2019	Value programmed for 2020	Value completed for 2020
1 - Growing international potentials of research and technological innovation in the Indian Ocean Area / Cross border	CO24	Research and innovation : number of new researchers in supported entities	28	17	7,95	18	7,79	28	13,95
	CO25	Research and innovation : number of researchers working in improved research infrastructure facilities	20	15,7	0	15,70	0	15,70	0
	CO42	Productive investment : number of research entities engaged in cross-border, transnational or interregional research projects	8	6	6	6	6	7	6
	CO26	Research and innovation : number of enterprises cooperating with research institutions	16	0	0	5	0	0	5
2 - Growing international potentials of research and technological innovation in the Indian Ocean Area / Transnational	CO24	Research and innovation : number of new researchers in supported entities	9	6	3	6	3,59	9	5,09
	CO42	Productive investment : number of research entities engaged in cross-border, transnational or interregional	7	4	4	4	4	4	5

		research projects							
	CO26	Research and innovation : number of enterprises cooperating with research institutions	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
3 - Supporting the development of economic exchanges in the area / Cross border	IS03a	Number of actions facilitating the relations and trades between economic operators of the cooperation zone (congress, seminar, prospecting missions...)	100	70	51	81	63	138	90
4 - Supporting the development of economic exchanges in the area / Transnational	IS03b	Number of actions facilitating the relations and trades between economic operators of the cooperation zone	70	70	58	88	67	133	76
5 - Improving collective abilities of adaptation, prevention and risk management due to the climate change / Cross border	IS04a	Number of monitoring, information and prevention of natural risk adopted within COI	8	30	18	37	30	37	30
6 - Improving collective abilities of adaptation, prevention and risk management due to the climate change / Transnational	IS04b	Number of monitoring, information and prevention of natural and environmental (pollution), sanitary risks	2	6	3	9	9	9	9
7 - Strengthening capacities of understanding, preservation and enhancement of the natural and cultural heritage of the	IS06a	Number of collective project about natural heritage conservation and enhancement	10	6	4	10	6	11	8

Indian Ocean Area / Cross border									
8 - Strengthening capacities of understanding, preservation and enhancement of the natural and cultural heritage of the Indian Ocean Area / Transnational	IS06b	Number of collective project about natural heritage conservation and enhancement	8	4	4	4	4	9	4
9 - Upgrading collective skills through the support of educational and exchange actions / Cross border	CO46	Labour and training market : number of participants in joint education and training schemes to support youth employment, educational opportunities and higher and vocational education across borders	1052	1370	1093	1467	1289	1515	1289
	CO43	Labour and training market : number of participating in cross-border mobility initiatives	235	84	70	115	88	187	128
10 - Upgrading collective skills through the support of educational and exchange actions / Transnational	CO46	Labour and training market : number of participants in joint education and training schemes to support youth employment, educational opportunities and higher and vocational education across borders	364	208	126	282	130	171	131
	CO43	Labour and training market : number of participating in cross-border mobility initiatives	100	44	8	61	15	65	27

3.3 Performance framework

Priority axis	Type of indicator	Identifying number	Indicator	Unit of measure	Intermediate value for 2018 - Total	Target value (2023) - Total	2020	Observations
01	O	CO42	Productive investment : number of research entities engaged in cross-border, transnational or interregional research projects	Organisations	5	8,00	6	
01	F	IF01	Financial indicator axis 1	Euros	5 338 236,00	21 352 943,00	3842923,97	
02	O	CO42	Productive investment : number of research entities engaged in cross-border, transnational or interregional research projects	Organisations	5	7,00	5	
02	F	IF02	Financial indicator axis 2	Euros	1211765	6 558 825,00	1648461,65	
03	F	IF03	Financial indicator axis 3	Euros	597 647	5 976 473,00	2470248,39	
03	O	IS03a	Number of actions facilitating the relations and trades between economic operators of the cooperation zone (congress, seminar, prospecting missions...)/CB	actions	15	100,00	90	
04	F	IF04	Financial indicator axis 4	Euros	717 647	7 176 471,00	2104013,44	
04	O	IS03b	Number of actions facilitating the relations and trades between economic operators of the cooperation zone (congress, seminar, prospecting missions...)/TN	actions	11	70,00	76	
05	F	IF05	Financial indicator axis 5	Euros	1 104 706	5 182 353,00	2359077,34	
05	O	IS05a	Number of training sessions/CB	Training sessions	8	35,00	44	
06	F	IF06	Financial indicator axis 6	Euros	1 210 589	3 035 296,00	858060,14	
06	O	IS05b	Number of training sessions/TN	Training sessions	3	8,00	10	
07	F	IF07	Financial indicator axis 7	Euros	425 294	3 335 295,00	954214,14	
07	O	IS06a	Number of collective project about natural heritage conservation and enhancement/CB	Collaborative projects	1	10,00	8	
08	F	IF08	Financial indicator axis 8	Euros	218 824	2 958 824,00	650157,53	
08	O	IS06b	Number of collective project about natural heritage conservation and enhancement/TN	projects	1	8,00	4	
09	O	CO43	Labour and training market : number of participating in cross-border mobility initiatives	Persons	71	235,00	128	
09	F	IF09	Financial indicator axis 9	Euros	1 583 530	9 917 652,00	3616553,55	
10	O	CO46	Labour and training market : number of participants in joint education and training schemes to support youth employment, educational opportunities and higher and vocational education across borders	Persons	36	364,00	130	
10	F	IF10	Financial indicator axis 10	Euros	435 295	4 352 945,00	639325,99	

3.4. Financial data

Priority axis	Funds	Calculation basis	Total funding (€)	Co-funding rate(%)	Total eligible expenditure of selected operations (€)	Proportion of total funding covered by selected operations(%)	Total public eligible expenditure of selected operations (€)	Total of eligible expenditure reported by the beneficiaries to the monitoring authority (€)	Proportion of total funding covered by eligible expenditure incurred by beneficiaries (%)	Number of selected operations
01	ERDF	Public part	21 352 943,00	85,00	16 735 091,52	78,37%	16 735 091,52	4 324 087,13	20,25%	22
02	ERDF	Public part	6 558 825,00	85,00	4 741 557,75	72,29%	4 741 557,75	2 072 423,04	31,60%	10
03	ERDF	Public part	5 976 473,00	85,00	5 716 392,11	95,65%	5 368 268,20	3 236 504,33	54,15%	38
04	ERDF	Public part	7 176 471,00	85,00	7 696 630,95	107,25%	7 580 886,52	2 875 717,22	40,07%	35
05	ERDF	Public part	5 182 353,00	85,00	5 498 023,87	106,09%	5 490 023,87	2 768 259,83	53,42%	6
06	ERDF	Public part	3 035 296,00	85,00	2 211 765,18	72,87%	2 211 765,18	1 019 636,66	33,59%	5
07	ERDF	Public part	3 335 295,00	85,00	2 768 093,84	82,99%	2 768 093,84	1 063 722,03	31,89%	9
08	ERDF	Public part	2 958 824,00	85,00	2 863 859,81	96,79%	2 863 859,81	668 291,43	22,59%	9
09	ERDF	Public part	9 917 652,00	85,00	8 003 191,38	80,70%	8 003 191,38	3 914 350,13	39,47%	36
10	ERDF	Public part	4 352 945,00	85,00	1 814 108,00	41,68%	1 814 108,00	718 527,79	16,51%	21
11	ERDF	Public part	2 923 297,00	85,00	2 923 297,00	100,00%	2 923 297,00	2 089 668,64	71,48%	8
12	ERDF	Public part	1 532 454,00	85,00	1 532 453,00	100,00%	1 532 453,00	1 047 009,08	68,32%	10
Total	ERDF		74 302 828,00	85,00	62 504 464,41	84,12%	62 032 596,07	25 798 197,31	34,72%	209
Global total			74 302 828,00	85,00	62 504 464,41	84,12%	62 032 596,07	25 798 197,31	34,72%	209

4. SUMMARY OF EVALUATIONS

As per the timetable presented to the INTERREG Monitoring Committee in December 2019, the Managing Authority launched two evaluations of the INTERREG V Indian Ocean programme in 2020. The consultancy firm EY was selected to carry out this work, which began in August 2020.

- Evaluation of the implementation of the INTERREG V Indian Ocean programme (Batch 1)

This first study focused on:

- programme implementation **dynamics**;
- **relevance of operations** in meeting the programme's objectives and issues identified by the Regional Council diagnosis;
- **effectiveness** of the organisation and management procedures set up by the Managing Authority;
- **relevance and effectiveness of support provided** to project leaders and partners;
- **programme consistency with other policies implemented** in the programme area.

- Thematic evaluation

In the second evaluation the programme's five thematic priorities were analysed through the following criteria:

- **Effectiveness**: achievement of the objectives set by the programme through the assessment of completion and results;
- **Efficiency**: achieving results at best cost, effective implementation;
- **Impacts** of supported projects in order to measure the expected and unexpected effects of the programme;
- **Leverage effect / added value** of programme support;
- **Cross-influences** with other programmes and public policies in the Indian Ocean.

Presentation of evaluation findings

The interim reports were provided by the consultancy firm EY in December 2020. The first conclusions, to be refined through the analysis of the results of the surveys and interviews, are presented below:

Programming dynamics is slightly below the annual breakdown intended in the programme's financing plan, but certification levels have remained above the automatic decommitment thresholds since 2017. The dynamic is driven by a limited number of promoters. Eligibility rules, cash flow fund advance and structures' lack of engineering are obstacles for new promoters.

Support from Regional Council offices, instructional services and the coordination unit has, all the same, enabled the submission of applications by new structures and a reduction in the time required to prepare and examine applications.

In terms of **relevance**, partner countries did attest that the programme met their strategic objectives and plans.

The system for selecting operations ensures a high level of consistency between actions financed and cooperation objectives set out in the European regulations and INTERREG programme. However, it remains mainly based on the eligibility of actions for the programme, according to the strategy defined before the programming period, and it could take greater account, during the programming period, of facts observed or the evolution of the strategic orientations in the Indian Ocean region.

Concerning **coherence**, more projects could be financed by the EDF. EDF articulation actually remains complex due to the fact that the actors and management methods are too different, and the schedule is staggered.

Programme perception is better in project leaders than in partners. Even though the Managing Authority has made significant efforts to communicate about the programme to the general public in Reunion and in the IOC countries, knowledge of the programme among the general public could be improved.

The programme has had the **impact of** creating new bridges between regional RDI [Innovation Development Network] ecosystems, developing the tourism sector and raising the level of protection of populations against natural, climatic or health risks. Although training and exchange actions have benefited an increasingly large and varied public, exogenous constraints linked in particular to the health crisis are limiting the potential impact of projects on this issue.

The **leverage effect of** the INTERREG programme has been characterised on many occasions by the emergence of partnership relations directly triggered by this funding opportunity and which would not have been possible without the support of Structural Funds.

The evaluations draft final reports are currently being reviewed by the Managing Authority.

5. ISSUES AFFECTING THE PERFORMANCE OF THE PROGRAMME AND MEASURES TAKEN

Since March 2020, the INTERREG programme has been affected by the health crisis, both in terms of project programming and expenditure reporting and certification.

A - Impacts of the health crisis

After the lockdown period, imposed on all Indian Ocean countries in the second quarter of 2020, direct air links between Reunion Island and the other Indian Ocean countries were largely interrupted in the second half of 2020. The reopening of certain routes at the end of 2020 (Mauritius and Seychelles) went with mandatory isolation periods in hotels dedicated to that purpose, at the expense of travellers.

Since the beginning of 2021, departures from and arrivals in Reunion Island have only been possible for compelling reasons, with a mandatory isolation period.

In this context, all meetings and trips planned from February 2020 onwards were cancelled or postponed. Some of them were transformed into virtual events, with changes in project budgets and deadlines.

The pandemic had a significant impact on the Volunteers for International Solidarity (VSI) programme. Most VSI volunteers were maintained in their country of assignment by the France Volontaires association, with continuation of their missions through teleworking. Vulnerable volunteers and those at the end of their assignments returned to Reunion. Most of these volunteers could not be replaced. In December 2020, a dozen new volunteers were waiting to return to their country of assignment.

The crisis is therefore having a clear effect on the programming of new projects and the implementation of ongoing projects (increased project implementation times, cancellation or postponement of certain expenditures, including travel expenditure, etc.). This effect will be particularly significant in 2021 and 2022, with considerable drop rates to be expected in projects scheduled for 2019 and 2020. Things will also depend on possible travel recovery in 2021.

B - Measures taken in the health crisis context

To weather the crisis, the Managing Authority initially decided to postpone by two months the deadlines for the completion of projects that were to be completed during the lockdown period. In a second phase, amendments were signed at the request of project leaders to extend project completion deadlines.

Dematerialisation was strengthened, allowing files to be examined and paid for remotely during the lockdown period. The programming of files continued throughout the year, with steering committees organised by written procedure during lockdown, then by videoconference. Ten committees were organised in this way in 2020. However, as previously mentioned, the implementation of these projects remains dependent on travelling conditions between the Indian Ocean countries.

The Managing Authority carried out a fine-tuned forecasting exercise in early 2021 to evaluate the financial impact on all projects underway. As a result, a change in the programme's financing plan will be proposed to the Monitoring Committee by the end of 2021.

C - Other measures taken by the Managing Authority since the beginning of the programme

Various measures were taken by the Managing Authority as of 2017 to boost the programme:

- 2017 - Strengthening the facilitation and support system for project leaders

An INTERREG programme coordination unit has been operational since March 2017, within Reunion Island Regional Council, with three agents responsible for providing information and support to project

leaders. The Region's offices in Madagascar, the Comoros, Mauritius and the Seychelles are contributing to this support.

- 2018 - Introduction of simplified cost conditions

Simplified cost conditions were introduced in 2018 in most of the programme action sheets. 2 simplified cost conditions are open to project leaders: the use of the lump sum for projects with public expenditure of less than €100,000 and the lump-sum payment of indirect expenditure up to 15% of personnel costs. These conditions have been in force since 2019.

- 2018 and 2019 - Setting up a start-up facility for INTERREG projects with the Regional Council's own funding

This scheme was approved in September 2017 to support the preparation of INTERREG projects and prior exchanges with partners in the area. The aim is to open up the INTERREG programme to new project leaders. Two calls for projects were launched in 2018 and 2019 under this regional scheme, resulting in the funding of 16 projects. The packages approved in 2019 were all delayed by the Covid crisis. 5 of the 2018 packages resulted in the submission of an INTERREG package and 2 are being finalised.

- 2018 and 2019 - Programme change

To cope with the low level of programming on certain transnational lines, due in particular to the absence of participation from South Africa, the Managing Authority implemented a change in the programme's financing plan in July 2018. Adjustments were proposed while respecting the amounts allocated to cross-border and transnational programmes, leading to a change of value in some indicators. This was approved by the Monitoring Committee in November 2018, and the decision to change the programme was made by the European Commission on 20 February 2019.

- 2019 - Articulation with the INTERREG Mayotte / Comoros / Madagascar programme

When operation selection on the Mayotte cross-border INTERREG programme started, it was noted that the same project leaders were financed by this programme and by the Indian Ocean INTERREG programme, for operations with a different geographical coverage. Information-sharing arrangements between the Managing Authorities concerned were proposed in February 2019 and approved at the Mayotte INTERREG programme monitoring committee in July 2019. However, they have not yet been fully implemented.