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Memorandum of Understanding

Between

The Atlantic International Research Centre (AIR Centre)

and

**Group on Earth Observation Biodiversity Observation Network / Marine Biodiversity
Observation Network (GEO BON / MBON)**

and

Azores Regional Fund for Science and Technology (FRCT)

for mutual recognition, strategic alliance and intention to establish sustainable collaboration projects between participants in both networks.

The ATLANTIC INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH CENTRE, hereinafter also referred to as the "AIR Centre" and hereby represented by the Chair of its Executive Committee, António Sarmento,

and

Group on Earth Observation Biodiversity Observation Network / Marine Biodiversity Observation Network (GEO BON / MBON), hereinafter also referred to as the "MBON" and hereby represented by Frank Muller-Karger, Isabel Sousa-Pinto, and Mark Costello, the co-chairs of MBON.

and

Azores Regional Fund for Science and Technology, hereinafter also referred to as the "FRCT" and hereby represented by its President, Bruno Pacheco

The AIR Centre, MBON and FRCT shall be referred to herein as "the Signatories",

Considering the development of the scientific agenda of the AIR Centre, as referred in the "Praia Declaration", signed at the "3rd High-level Industry-Science-Government Dialogue on Atlantic Interactions", held in Praia, Cape Verde, May 7-8, 2018, together with the "Florianopolis

Declaration" the "2nd High-level Industry-Science-Government Dialogue on Atlantic Interactions", held in Florianopolis, Brazil, November 20-21, 2017;

Considering that both the AIR Centre and MBON have the objective to play a significant role in the implementation of the "Belem Statement on Atlantic Research and Innovation Cooperation";

Considering that both the AIR Centre and MBON have a common responsibility for playing their part in supporting the Atlantic countries to achieve the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Goals;

Have decided on the following:

Clause 1

The present Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aims at establishing a synergetic relationship between AIR Centre and MBON, with the objective to align activities wherever feasible, to optimize each organisation's relevance and value to society by collaboration, enhancing mutual use of resources and minimising potential overlaps or redundancy of actions.

Clause 2

In the context of the present MoU, the Signatories will take, among others, the following actions:

- a) To identify areas of mutual scientific and technological interests related to biodiversity in the Atlantic that address both regional priorities and global challenges, bringing together the Signatories competences, experiences and networks to jointly co-create innovative research and development projects, to explore new funding opportunities and to promote the preservation of the Atlantic Ocean and its coasts, biodiversity and ecosystems;
- b) To jointly discuss and analyze the feasibility of hosting MBON Secretariat in the Azores in support of the MBON Steering Group co-Chairs and to evolve a governance framework for MBON;
- c) To stimulate the organization of joint workshops and other dissemination and user engagement activities, as well as to encourage mutual representation at dissemination events organized by the Signatories;
- d) To jointly disseminate scientific knowledge to the general public, policy makers and media;
- e) To proactively engage citizens, coastal communities, policy makers and local businesses in the development of effective Earth observation services and products for decision making;
- f) Other forms of collaboration that contribute to the mission of AIR Centre and/or MBON.

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Clause 3

1. A Joint Commission for monitoring the implementation of the present MoU will be set up by mutual written agreement;
2. The Joint Commission will elaborate a more detailed action plan based on Clause 2, which shall be presented at the "4th High-level Industry-Science-Government Dialogue on Atlantic Interactions", to be held in Las Palmas, Canary Islands, November 2018, seeking approval of the decision bodies from both Signatories.
3. Once an action plan is defined and approved, the Joint Commission shall meet at least twice per year, per remote conference or at location to be mutually agreed.

Clause 4

Each Party is responsible for taking necessary action to secure adequate financial and human resources to perform the projects or activities developed in collaboration.

Clause 5

The Signatories will collaborate respecting the principles of reciprocity, mutual benefit and results sharing.

Clause 6

The present MoU can be modified at any time, under mutual written agreement of the Signatories.

Clause 7

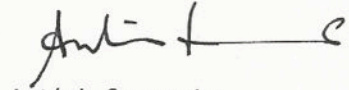
The content of this MoU does not generate any obligation in the context of International Public Law.

Clause 8

1. The present MoU shall come into effect on the date of its signature and will remain in force for a period of five (5) years. Thereafter, it will be renewable for further periods by mutual written consent of the Signatories.
2. The present MoU shall cease to have effect if one of the Signatories expresses this wish, notifying the other in written, and with a time span of 60 days before the cessation.

Signed in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, on November 26, 2018, in two originals, in English language.

SIGNED for and on behalf of the AIR Centre



António Sarmento
Chair of Executive Committee

SIGNED for and on behalf of MBON



Frank Muller-Karger, MBON co-chair



Isabel Sousa-Pinto, MBON Co-Chair



Mark Costello, MBON Co-Chair

SIGNED for and on behalf of FRCT



Bruno Pacheco, President