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ROMANIA

Date: January 22, 2026

## GAP ANALYSIS

### Mancora Ocean S.R.L.

#### 1. Introduction

This section of the GAP Analysis has been prepared in relation to the principles of the European Charter for Researchers (2023) and follows the working model commonly used in the HRS4R process. The analysis is based exclusively on the final documents available and on the clarifications confirmed by the organisation. For Mancora Ocean S.R.L., the focus is not on multiplying internal documents, but on consolidating existing practices through a limited number of broader internal instruments.

Accordingly, the proposed initiatives are designed in an integrated manner. Where several principles can be covered through the same document or internal mechanism, they are grouped together so that the future Action Plan remains realistic, proportionate and easy to implement over the next 3 years.

Principle	Implementation	GAP / implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken / new proposals
1. ETHICS AND RESEARCH INTEGRITY	<p>-/+ (partially implemented) – A high level of awareness of good research practice was identified among respondents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explicit responsibilities regarding confidentiality, compliance with methodologies, use of</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• There is not yet a distinct policy on ethics and research integrity.</li><li>• The reporting channel is functional, but informal and dependent on direct communication.</li><li>• Existing practices are not yet brought together in a single document that is easy to use</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Integrate this principle into a single broader document: an Internal Guide / Policy on ethics, research integrity, confidentiality, intellectual property and the reporting of sensitive situations.</li><li>• Explicitly mention, in onboarding, the contact person for ethical situations and the minimum reporting</li></ul>

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	<p>equipment and documentation of activities are already reflected in employment/project documents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sensitive situations can be reported directly to the administrator.</li> <li>• The organisation does not have an ethics committee.</li> </ul>	<p>in onboarding and monitoring.</p>	<p>route.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain training on professional responsibility and documentation of results.</li> </ul>
<p>2. FREEDOM OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH</p>	<p>+/- (substantially implemented) – Respondents assess freedom of research exclusively positively.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The organisation confirmed that there is maximum freedom of initiative and that no unjustified restrictions have been imposed on lines of work.</li> <li>• Awareness of the company's vision and strategic decisions is high.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Freedom of research is strongly present in practice, but it is not explicitly formulated in an internal document.</li> <li>• There is no written formulation of the legitimate limits of scientific freedom in relation to legal, budgetary, confidentiality or intellectual property obligations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cover this principle through the same Internal Guide / Policy on ethics, integrity and research autonomy, without issuing a separate document.</li> <li>• Introduce a short section on freedom of research as exercised within contractual obligations, confidentiality requirements and the protection of intangible assets.</li> <li>• Maintain the current climate of professional initiative.</li> </ul>
<p>3. OPEN SCIENCE</p>	<p>-/+ (partially implemented) – There is access to scientific publications, either directly or through collaborations with public institutions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The organisation publishes and disseminates results when this is useful and compatible with its legitimate interests.</li> <li>• There is relevant internal capacity for managing intangible</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are not yet written rules clearly distinguishing what is published, what is protected and what remains confidential.</li> <li>• There is no formalised approach to open science, open access, open data or result-sharing practices.</li> <li>• In the absence of a clear formulation, practice may remain dependent on ad hoc decisions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cover this principle in the same common document proposed for principles 1–3 and 16–17, in order to avoid document fragmentation.</li> <li>• Introduce simple internal rules on publication, dissemination, confidentiality, intangible assets and exploitation of results.</li> <li>• Maintain the selective approach: openness to publication, but without affecting trade secrets or competitive advantages.</li> </ul>

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	assets and industrial property.		
4. GENDER EQUALITY	<p>+/- (substantially implemented) – Gender equality is supported both in practice and through wording already included in the annexes to individual employment contracts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The team has a mixed gender structure and the administrator is a woman.</li> <li>• No situations of unequal treatment on grounds of sex have been reported.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is not yet a distinct policy or a single document on gender equality, separate from the contractual annexes.</li> <li>• Existing provisions may be less visible at institutional level if they are not brought together in a synthetic document.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrate gender equality into a single Internal Policy on equal opportunities, non-discrimination, diversity and accessibility.</li> <li>• Take over and systematise the provisions already existing in the employment contract annexes, without unnecessarily duplicating the content.</li> <li>• Maintain the obligation to inform employees from the recruitment stage onwards.</li> </ul>
5. EMBRACING DIVERSITY	<p>+/- (substantially implemented) – Contractual provisions already exist regarding non-discrimination, accessibility for persons with disabilities and the avoidance of differential treatment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organisational practice confirms acceptance of diversity in age, gender and professional profile.</li> <li>• No situations of discrimination have been reported.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is not yet a single, easily identifiable policy on diversity and inclusion.</li> <li>• Existing elements are dispersed across contractual documents and are not yet brought together in a coherent institutional instrument.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cover this principle in the same Internal Policy on equal opportunities, non-discrimination, diversity and accessibility, together with Principle 4.</li> <li>• Clarify, in a synthetic form, the company's commitment to inclusion, accessibility and mutual respect.</li> <li>• Use the employment contract annexes as the already existing formal basis for the future policy.</li> </ul>
6. THE RESEARCH PROFESSION	<p>+/- (substantially implemented) – The role of the researcher is recognised in practice, even if there is not yet a distinct document dedicated to the professional status of the researcher.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognition of the profession exists mainly in practice and is only partially expressed in an explicit internal framework.</li> <li>• In a small company, multiple roles and operational overlaps may blur the formal delineation of the researcher's</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrate this principle into an Internal Policy on research, professional development and human resources in research, including an explicit formulation of the researcher's role in the company.</li> <li>• Correlate job descriptions with responsibilities related to</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Job descriptions and clear responsibilities already exist for research and laboratory activities.</li> <li>• In ongoing projects, professional contributions are tracked and reported, which provides a functional framework for recognising the professional role.</li> </ul>	<p>professional identity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal perception is not fully uniform, suggesting the need for minimum clarification.</li> </ul>	<p>research, development, innovation and exploitation of results.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce a short reference, in onboarding documents or within the internal policy, to the professional status of staff involved in research.</li> </ul>
7. FREE CIRCULATION OF RESEARCHERS	<p>-/+ (partially implemented) – The company participates in conferences, working visits and collaborations when these are relevant.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is openness to partnerships and to new research projects.</li> <li>• Mobility is perceived by respondents as an important factor for professional development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is not yet a clear internal formulation regarding mobility, participation in scientific events or external collaborations.</li> <li>• Mobility opportunities still depend largely on projects, resources and specific contexts.</li> <li>• In the absence of a minimum formulation, the existing support may remain insufficiently visible at institutional level.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cover this principle in the same Internal Policy on research, professional development and human resources in research, through a section on mobility and professional collaboration.</li> <li>• Introduce a simple record of conferences, working visits and relevant collaborations.</li> <li>• Encourage the inclusion of a mobility and collaboration component in new projects wherever feasible.</li> </ul>
8. RESEARCH SUSTAINABILITY	<p>+/- (substantially implemented) – The company's technological profile is already compatible with a sustainable, green model oriented towards clean processes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The contractual annexes and internal commitments already include elements regarding environmental protection, biodiversity, efficient use of resources and adaptation to climate change.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research sustainability is strong in substance, but it has not yet been synthesised in a clear and unified internal formulation.</li> <li>• Existing elements are dispersed across different documents and are not yet presented as part of a coherent vision of sustainable research.</li> <li>• The company's competitive advantage may remain insufficiently capitalised upon if it is not expressed strategically.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrate this principle into an Internal Policy on responsible research, sustainability and exploitation of results, also covering ethics, confidentiality and the impact dimension.</li> <li>• Take over the elements already existing in the contractual annexes in a more synthetic and user-friendly form.</li> <li>• Use this policy also in projects, presentations and institutional reporting in order to make the company's sustainable profile more visible.</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsibility towards society and orientation towards products with practical applicability are already present in current activity.</li> </ul>		
9. ASSESSMENT OF RESEARCHERS	<p>-/+ (partially implemented) – Assessment is perceived positively and is mainly carried out within the structure of ongoing projects.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional contributions are appreciated through working documents, deliverables and results reported to the funding authorities.</li> <li>• The current model is functional and proportionate to the size of the company.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is not yet a general and distinct procedure for the assessment of research staff, applicable beyond project logic.</li> <li>• Assessment may be perceived more as an operational practice than as a coherent internal system.</li> <li>• In the absence of a minimum formulation, feedback and criteria may remain insufficiently explicit.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce a dedicated assessment section in the same Internal Policy on research, professional development and human resources in research.</li> <li>• Briefly define the assessment criteria: results, fulfilment of tasks, quality of deliverables, responsibility, collaboration, dissemination and contribution to projects.</li> <li>• Keep assessment anchored in concrete results, while complementing it with minimum periodic feedback.</li> </ul>
10. RECRUITMENT	<p>-/+ (partially implemented) – Recruitment is largely perceived as clear, open and transparent.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compliance with the applicable legislation is assessed unanimously positively.</li> <li>• The contractual annexes and organisational practice already include references to gender equality, non-discrimination and accessibility that are relevant to the recruitment process.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is not yet a distinct written recruitment procedure.</li> <li>• Some of the practices applied exist in fact, but they are not systematised in an internal document that is easy to follow.</li> <li>• In a small organisation, informality can work well, but it may become an obstacle in HRS4R reporting.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a single framework document on recruitment, selection, equal opportunities and organisational integration, in order to jointly cover principles 10 and 11, as well as part of principles 4 and 5.</li> <li>• Incorporate into this document the elements already existing in the contractual annexes and complement them with simple recruitment criteria, communication rules and explicit reference to merit, transparency and non-discrimination.</li> <li>• Use the document also as a reference point for future updates of recruitment forms and annexes.</li> </ul>

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<p>11. SELECTION</p>	<p>-/+ (partially implemented) – The selection process is perceived positively by respondents, including in terms of simplicity of procedures, clarity of criteria and non-discriminatory treatment. In practice, Mancora pursues selection based on professional criteria and compatibility with applied research activity. There are already contractual formulations and commitments regarding gender equality and non-discrimination in the annexes used at recruitment.</p>	<p>The selection process is not yet supported by a distinct, structured and reusable internal procedure explicitly describing the stages, responsibilities, evaluation criteria and the way the decision is documented. In the absence of such formalisation, existing fair practices may depend too much on context and on direct managerial experience.</p>	<p>Integrated proposal: develop a single document entitled “Internal Policy and Procedure on Recruitment and Selection”, covering principles 10–11 and including: process stages, selection criteria, non-discrimination rules, recognition of interdisciplinary experience and diverse professional pathways, a short candidate feedback model and minimum archiving of selection decisions.</p>
<p>12. CAREER PROGRESSION</p>	<p>-/+ (partially implemented) – The organisation allows professional progression, but this is naturally conditioned by the small size of the structure. The consultation shows a positive perception regarding the clarity of progression procedures and support for training. In practice, taking on new responsibilities and involvement in projects operate as real forms of professional progress.</p>	<p>There is not yet a synthesised internal framework on career progression, with explicit reference points adapted to a small private company where hierarchical pathways are limited. The risk is that progression may be perceived as informal rather than as part of an assumed and predictable organisational logic.</p>	<p>Integrated proposal: include a chapter on “professional evolution and progress” in a future framework document on researchers' careers, defining: gradual assumption of responsibilities, participation in projects, development of expertise, representation of the company in scientific contexts and recognition of newly acquired competences. A broad bureaucratic procedure is not necessary; a short and clear internal methodology is sufficient.</p>
<p>13. WORKING CONDITIONS, FUNDING AND SALARIES</p>	<p>+/- (substantially implemented) – Mancora already has a relevant formal basis in the annexes to</p>	<p>Although the practical framework is solid, not all components are brought together in a synthetic internal document that</p>	<p>Integrated proposal: prepare an “Internal Guide on Working Conditions and the Framework for Conducting Research Activities”, grouping</p>

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	<p>individual employment contracts and in the training documents on occupational safety and health / fire prevention, labour protection, workplace behaviour, hygiene, use of equipment and risk prevention. The clarifications provided also confirm the existence of clean, authorised and organised laboratory conditions, as well as respected work flows. The consultation indicates a favourable perception of the working environment and the conditions provided.</p>	<p>presents in a unified manner the working conditions relevant to personnel involved in research activities. The “funding and salaries” component does not appear to be documented in a distinct internal HR-type instrument, and some information may remain dispersed across contracts, training documents and current practices.</p>	<p>the information already existing on the work environment, OSH/fire prevention, rules for using infrastructure, professional conduct, elements of flexibility, responsibilities and essential labour protection rules. In parallel, a separate annex or internal note may briefly clarify the general principles regarding remuneration and contractual predictability, without unnecessarily over-formalising the system.</p>
<p>14. STABILITY OF EMPLOYMENT</p>	<p>-/+ (partially implemented) – The responses and clarifications indicate a good perception of job stability, in the sense of low staff turnover and reasonable continuity of employment relationships. For a small structure, this aspect is relevant and contributes to team cohesion and transfer of competences.</p>	<p>There is not yet an explicit internal formulation presenting in a coherent manner the commitment to stability, continuity and fair treatment across different types of employment or collaboration relationships. In the absence of such a formulation, stability remains more a result of practice than a clearly expressed internal principle.</p>	<p>Integrated proposal: include stability of employment in the same framework document on human resources for researchers, through simple wording on continuity, fair treatment, clarity of responsibilities and avoidance of unjustified precariousness. In this way, Principle 14 can be covered without issuing a separate document.</p>
<p>15. CONTRACTUAL AND LEGAL OBLIGATIONS</p>	<p>+/- (substantially implemented) – This principle is among the best formally supported. The documents provided show the existence of clear responsibilities, explicit</p>	<p>However, the contractual and legal requirements relevant to research activity are dispersed across several documents and annexes. There is not yet a short internal instrument, such as a compliance guide, helping</p>	<p>Integrated proposal: develop an “Internal Guide on Contractual and Legal Compliance for Research Activity”, with a synthetic structure and accessible language, centralising the obligations already existing in</p>

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	contractual commitments, labour protection rules, clauses and practices regarding confidentiality, as well as concern for GDPR compliance. Employees are informed of the essential obligations applicable to the activity carried out.	staff understand at a glance the set of key obligations: confidentiality, data protection, occupational safety and health, compliance with work flows, reporting and limits of professional responsibility.	contracts and annexes. It can simultaneously cover principles 13 and 15 and become a core document in the onboarding process.
16. DISSEMINATION AND EXPLOITATION OF RESULTS	+/- (substantially implemented) – Mancora already applies in practice a coherent dual logic: it disseminates results when this is useful for visibility, partnerships and scientific validation, but it protects as confidential the information that constitutes a trade secret or an exploitable intangible asset. Research results are commercially exploited through products and applied developments, which represents a strong point for a deep-tech company.	There is not yet a synthetic internal framework explicitly describing the decision rules regarding what is published, what is protected, who decides and how publication is correlated with commercial valorisation. In the absence of such clarification, existing good practices may depend excessively on direct management and on individual expertise in industrial property.	Integrated proposal: develop a framework document entitled “Guide on Dissemination, Confidentiality and Exploitation of Research Results”, simultaneously covering principles 3, 15 and 16. It may include: publication criteria, confidentiality preservation criteria, rules for recognition of contributions, correlation with intellectual property and the logic of commercial exploitation.
17. VALORISATION OF DIVERSE RESEARCH CAREERS	-/+ (partially implemented) – In its current activity, Mancora Ocean values different and complementary professional profiles, which are useful for a deep-tech company active in applied research, product development, specialised analysis,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is not yet a distinct internal document explicitly describing how the company values hybrid careers, interdisciplinary competences and non-linear contributions in research.</li> <li>• Recognition exists in practice, but it is not yet systematised within a clearer framework for professional development and valorisation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrate this principle into a framework document on career and professional development, including: valorisation of interdisciplinary competences, hybrid roles across research–analysis–regulation–product development and the diverse contributions to the final result.</li> <li>• In time, introduce a dedicated section on this</li> </ul>

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	<p>regulation and transfer to the market.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff contributions are integrated within a multidisciplinary logic, and different professional experiences are used in practice to obtain shared results.</li> </ul>		<p>aspect in job descriptions, project evaluations or internal HR guides.</p>
<p>18. CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND CAREER ADVICE</p>	<p>-/- (insufficiently implemented) – Career development is supported directly and flexibly through day-to-day interactions between the administrator and staff, through involvement in projects, through the assignment of responsibilities and through the freedom to participate in activities relevant to professional evolution.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In a small company, career support exists mainly in an informal form adapted to the context.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is not yet a written career development strategy or a formal career guidance mechanism.</li> <li>• The small size of the company limits possibilities for extensive formalisation, while the narrow hierarchical structure reduces the number of internal promotion pathways.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a single broad framework document on career development and professional orientation, including: general development objectives, examples of possible professional pathways, guidance for participation in projects, training, conferences and collaborations, as well as simple rules for periodic discussions on professional evolution.</li> <li>• Use this document also to cover principles 17, 18, 19 and partially 20, in order to avoid unnecessary multiplication of internal documents.</li> </ul>
<p>19. CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT</p>	<p>+/- (substantially implemented) – The company supports participation in workshops, online training, scientific events and other forms of learning relevant to current activity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuous professional development is perceived positively and is already present in practice, including</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is not yet a formal annual training plan or a single structured record of all professional development activities.</li> <li>• Support exists, but it is managed mainly opportunistically and flexibly, depending on projects, needs and opportunities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include continuous professional development in the same framework document on career and professional development.</li> <li>• Proposals: define general training directions, establish a minimum record of participation in training, include training in periodic activity discussions and use the future action plan to prioritise areas of strategic interest.</li> </ul>

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	through on-the-job learning and participation in external activities where useful.		
20. SUPERVISION AND MENTORING	<p>-/+ (partially implemented) – Within the company, there are direct working relationships and professional support, characteristic of a small organisation in which technical and organisational topics are discussed openly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Informal support exists for integration and day-to-day work, but it depends to a large extent on the concrete context of the activity and on the availability of the persons involved.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• There is not yet a clear and generalised internal mentoring framework, and respondents' perception is not uniformly positive in this respect.</li><li>• Mentoring exists more implicitly than explicitly, which may lead to variations in the integration and development experience of staff.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Integrate mentoring and supervision into a common guide on career development, professional integration and internal collaboration.</li><li>• Proposals: define a simple mechanism for designating a support person for integration or for new activities, clarify the role of professional guidance and include minimum feedback and support practices for new employees or collaborators involved in research activities.</li></ul>

## 2. General Approach

This GAP analysis was conducted in relation to the 20 principles of the European Charter for Researchers (2023), based on:

- the applicable national legislative framework;
- the final internal consultation report carried out within Mancora Ocean S.R.L.;
- the final internal analysis of the 20 principles;
- the existing contractual and organisational documents currently used within the company;
- the practical implementation already reflected in day-to-day research, development and innovation activities.

The analysis shows that, in the case of Mancora Ocean S.R.L., most principles are **partially implemented**. This means that a functional and credible practical framework already exists, but it is not yet sufficiently consolidated, centralised or explicitly structured in direct relation to the 2023 Charter. In several areas, the company already applies relevant principles through contractual annexes, project implementation practices, occupational safety arrangements, confidentiality obligations, data protection commitments, equal treatment provisions and environmentally responsible conduct, even where a distinct stand-alone policy has not yet been issued.

The strategic direction adopted for Mancora Ocean does not aim to generate an excessive number of new internal documents or to create disproportionate administrative burdens for a small private deep-tech company. Instead, the approach is based on the following priorities:

- consolidating and making visible the framework that already exists in practice;
- grouping related principles under broader and more coherent internal documents, where appropriate;
- clarifying the relationship between contractual practice, research activity, intellectual property protection and dissemination;
- strengthening transparency, traceability and institutional readability;

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- integrating proportionate monitoring into the HRS4R mechanism and into the future Action Plan.

This approach is considered the most appropriate for a small research-performing company operating in applied and commercially exploitable research, where flexibility, coherence and administrative realism are essential. The Charter itself expressly covers all types of research, including applied and commercially exploitable research.

### 3. Presentation of the Strategic Direction

#### i. Consolidation of the ethical, inclusion and sustainability framework in direct relation to the 2023 Charter

Principles covered: 1–8

The analysis shows that Mancora Ocean already applies a number of relevant elements in practice in relation to ethics, research freedom, gender equality, non-discrimination, inclusion, environmental responsibility, responsible use of resources and data protection. Some of these elements are already reflected in formal contractual annexes and onboarding documentation, including references to gender equality, non-discrimination, accessibility for persons with disabilities, environmental responsibility, biodiversity protection and GDPR-related compliance obligations. At the same time, internal consultation indicates a generally positive perception regarding research freedom, equal treatment and the overall organisational climate.

However, the main gaps identified are not primarily related to the total absence of practice, but rather to:

- the absence of a consolidated and explicit presentation of these principles in direct correlation with the 2023 Charter;
- the lack of a single internal reference framework covering ethics, research freedom, open science-related considerations, confidentiality, intellectual assets and sustainability;
- the fact that some practices remain embedded in contracts, project work or informal organisational culture, without a synthetic and visible institutional formulation.

The strategic direction therefore consists of:

- consolidating several related principles into a **single integrated internal framework** rather than creating multiple fragmented documents;
- grouping ethics, research integrity, research freedom, dissemination boundaries, confidentiality and intellectual asset awareness into one coherent guidance document;
- grouping gender equality, non-discrimination, diversity and accessibility into one proportionate internal policy or statement;
- making explicit, within HRS4R and internal documentation, the connection between existing practice and the 2023 Charter;
- introducing a light annual internal review of the practical application of these principles.

This approach allows:

- strengthening institutional coherence;
- avoiding unnecessary multiplication of internal rules;
- making already existing commitments more visible and auditable;
- ensuring a proportionate and credible alignment with the Charter.

#### ii. Recognition of the research profession, mobility, sustainability and balanced assessment

Principles covered: 6–10

Mancora Ocean already demonstrates several functional features relevant to this cluster: the professional role of research staff is recognised in practice; project-based work creates a real framework for evaluating contributions; mobility and participation in conferences or working visits are supported when relevant; sustainability is embedded in the company's research and production profile; and recruitment practices are perceived positively in internal consultation. The consultation also shows that researchers are familiar with the strategic direction of the company and with research-related objectives and funding opportunities.

The main gaps identified concern:

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- the lack of a synthetic presentation of the research profession and of the value of interdisciplinary or hybrid roles;
- the absence of a consolidated description of how mobility, project contributions and different professional profiles are recognised;
- the lack of a clearly formalised general evaluation framework outside project-driven assessment contexts;
- the absence of a simple written recruitment and selection framework explicitly correlated with merit, transparency and HRS4R principles.

The strategic directions include:

- clarifying, in a synthetic internal document, how the company recognises research roles, interdisciplinary contributions and project-based achievements;
- integrating recognition of mobility, collaboration and professional diversity into future evaluation and career-related documents;
- developing a short and proportionate internal reference on recruitment and selection principles, including merit, transparency, non-discrimination and traceability;
- maintaining project-based evaluation as a practical core mechanism, while gradually complementing it with clearer qualitative references.

No disproportionate restructuring is proposed. The aim is not to replace the company's flexible working logic, but to make it more explicit, more coherent and more legible in relation to the Charter.

### iii. Working conditions, contractual clarity, legal responsibilities and dissemination/exploitation of results

Principles covered: 11–16

The analysis shows that Mancora Ocean already has a meaningful practical framework regarding working conditions, occupational safety, contractual obligations, task allocation, project implementation discipline, confidentiality and GDPR-related awareness. Internal consultation also reflects a generally positive perception regarding the working environment, clarity of responsibilities and the overall quality of the employer. In addition, the company's activity model clearly includes the commercial exploitation of research results, through the development of products and applied outputs, while maintaining a selective and prudent approach to publication and dissemination. The Charter itself explicitly links contractual obligations with reporting of results and recognises dissemination and exploitation, including commercialisation.

The main gaps identified are:

- the absence of a consolidated presentation of the contractual and legal framework in direct correlation with the Charter;
- the fact that stability and working conditions are supported in practice, but not yet described in a synthetic HRS4R-oriented format;
- the lack of a unified internal framework linking dissemination, open access-related considerations, confidentiality and intellectual property/intangible assets;
- the absence of a simplified central presentation of legal rights and obligations relevant to research personnel.

The strategic directions aim to:

- consolidate the existing contractual and legal framework into a more readable internal reference document;
- clarify, in a single integrated guidance document, the relationship between dissemination, exploitation of results, confidentiality and protection of commercially sensitive information;
- preserve the company's current ability to disseminate selectively while protecting innovation and market positioning;
- strengthen the visibility of legal and contractual obligations already embedded in practice.

No complex additional mechanisms are proposed. Instead, the approach is to consolidate what already exists and make it more transparent, coherent and HRS4R-compatible.

### iv. Career development, professional diversity, continuous development and mentoring

Principles covered: 17–20

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The analysis shows that Mancora Ocean already supports professional growth through project participation, teamwork, conference participation, online training, scientific events and direct interpersonal collaboration. The company also values different professional profiles and benefits from a multidisciplinary working logic. At the same time, due to its small size, many career-support and mentoring elements remain informal, relational and project-dependent rather than formally systematised. Internal consultation also indicates that mentoring is not perceived uniformly and that career support could benefit from more explicit structuring.

The identified gaps include:

- the absence of a synthetic framework describing how diverse research careers are recognised within the company;
- the lack of a proportionate but explicit career development and career advice approach;
- the absence of a centralised presentation of training opportunities and development priorities;
- the lack of a formal and visible mentoring framework, even though informal support exists.

The strategic directions include:

- developing one broader internal framework covering career diversity, career development, continuous professional development and mentoring, rather than four separate stand-alone documents;
- integrating periodic discussions on professional development into existing managerial or project-related interactions;
- centralising information on relevant training opportunities and priority skills areas;
- clarifying how mentoring and integration support can function in a small-company environment, without over-formalisation.

The approach remains proportionate and administratively sustainable. It aims to preserve the flexibility and interpersonal strength of a small company while making support mechanisms more visible and more predictable.

#### v. Proportionate monitoring and integration within the HRS4R mechanism

All 20 principles should be monitored through:

- integration of relevant references into the future internal HRS4R reporting;
- use of the HRS4R mechanism as the main monitoring and structuring instrument;
- periodic review of the existence, updating and practical use of the relevant documents;
- avoidance of parallel reporting structures or redundant internal mechanisms.

Monitoring should focus primarily on:

- whether key framework documents have been adopted, updated and communicated;
- whether awareness, onboarding or information activities have taken place;
- whether Charter-related principles are visibly integrated into existing contractual, HR, project and research processes;
- whether the future Action Plan measures are implemented progressively and proportionately over the 36-month period.

The establishment of a complex additional indicator system is not proposed, except where indicators are already naturally generated through projects, training participation, recruitment records or contractual/organisational updates.

#### 4. Conclusion

The GAP analysis shows that Mancora Ocean S.R.L.:

- already has a functional practical framework in place across a significant number of Charter-related areas;
- applies in practice many of the 2023 Charter principles in a manner proportionate to its size and profile;
- combines research, development, applied innovation and commercial exploitation in a way that is compatible with the logic of the Charter and of HRS4R.

The main necessary actions concern:

- formal consolidation of existing practices;
- clarification and grouping of documentation;

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- increased visibility and transparency;
- integration of monitoring within the HRS4R mechanism;
- proportionate formalisation of those areas that are currently functional but mainly informal.

The adopted approach is:

- proportionate;
- realistic for a small private deep-tech company;
- sustainable over the medium term (36 months);
- aligned with European good practice;
- designed to avoid unnecessary bureaucratisation while still ensuring credible HRS4R implementation.