



Climate Pavilion of La Francophonie-Valuing Climate Action in French COP26, Glasgow, Scotland, October 26 to November 12, 2021

**Side Event:
How can regional cooperation accelerate the energy transition in the Mediterranean?**

6 November, 14h45 – 15h45

Press release



Glasgow, 06 November 2021 – In the context of the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) held in Glasgow on 31 October - 12 November 2021, the OME, with the support of the European Commission, organized a side event, hosted by the IFDD (*Institut de la francophonie pour le développement*) durable to discuss how regional cooperation can accelerate the energy transition in the Mediterranean. The event brought together representatives from the Mediterranean energy associations, MEDENER, MEDREG and Med-TSO, as well as from the private sector, Falck Renewables, with the participation of the Deputy Secretary General of the UfM, Grammenos

Mastrojeni, as moderator of the round table.

Chaher Boulakhras, Co-President of the OME, opened the meeting by emphasizing the importance of the challenges that the COP26 is facing and the contradictions that the Mediterranean region is confronted with, that may undermine its potential to become a leader in the energy transition: a strong growing demand in the South, a high fossil fuel mix and a growing energy dependency. Mr. Boulakhras then congratulated Houda Ben Jannet, OME General Director, and the OME team, for the excellent work recently published on the regional energy perspectives "MEPto2050".

Houda Ben Jannet then presented the main conclusions of the study MEPto2050 highlighting the different trajectories according to the scenarios from which the importance of energy efficiency and a massive deployment of renewable energies to achieve the objectives of decarbonization, and the

development of new clean technologies given that the use of some fossil fuels would still be needed in the medium term. Dr. Ben Jannet then stressed that it is not only climate change that is at stake, but also energy dependence and the constraints it already places on the region. The implementation of energy transition policies could make the region a net exporter through tapping the huge energy efficiency potential and the widespread deployment of renewable sources readily available in the South. Consequently, the region as a whole could become a net exporter of hydrocarbons by 2050 through substantial reductions in fossil fuel consumption.

The Round Table, moderated by Grammenos Mastrojeni, was attended by Roberta Boniotti (Secretary General MEDENER), Petrit Ahmeti (President MEDREG), Chaher Boulakhras (President Med-TSO and Co-President OME) and Toni Volpe (CEO Falck Renewables). The role of regional cooperation in the horizon 2030 and 2050 was discussed, as well as the action of the three UfM energy platforms. The importance of a solid and constructive Euro-Mediterranean partnership was underlined, in order to foster the development of renewable energies including green hydrogen, promote energy efficiency, strengthen electricity networks, build new interconnections, encourage technological innovation, and achieve the digitalization of energy systems. Participants reaffirmed their commitment to enhanced regional cooperation, essential to achieving the energy transition in the Mediterranean and to engage in a strengthened cooperation altogether.

Chaher Boulakhras stressed that regional cooperation is the main lever to accelerate national and regional initiatives for the development of renewable energies in order to achieve the climate objectives of reducing CO2 emissions and create a regional electricity market, without compromising the security of supply. The role of sectoral associations is essential to promote new clean technologies and their development in the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries, which have the largest potential in renewable resources worldwide.

According to Roberta Boniotti South and East Mediterranean area is crucial to the realization of EU climate policy, as expressed in the new agenda for the Mediterranean proposed in the communication of the European Commission of February 2021. The EU Med cooperation should be based on multilateralism, dialog, and common path towards a needed EU Mediterranean Green Deal. In this regard the UfM, the three energy platforms, the national governmental energy agencies, together with TSOs, national regulators and the OME are essential to ensure concrete steps to achieve carbon neutrality, and MEDENER strongly support the implementation of a Euro Mediterranean Green Deal, with a specific focus on energy efficiency which not only contributes to reducing CO2 emissions but also to improving energy security.

Petrit Ahmeti stressed how dialogue and information exchange are crucial to foster cooperation and achieve the integration in the Euro-Mediterranean energy markets, and how the EU ecological transition will not be fully efficient without the neighboring countries. Consumer protection, digitalization, greater coordination between TSOs and a harmonized regulatory framework on a regional scale are the other key factors emphasized to achieve the energy transition in the Mediterranean.

Toni Volpe pointed out the importance to enhance interdependence and energy exchanges between countries in the region, bearing in mind that political cooperation is fundamental and that all clean technologies, including green hydrogen, must be developed, investing in jobs, training, and research, to create local manufacturing supply chains. Particular attention has been paid to the floating wind off-shore for the incredible regional potential and the less invasive environmental impact.

Grammenos Mastrojeni recalled the importance of not having a too sectorial approach, but rather of promoting a more holistic vision that goes from energy to the economy, bearing in mind that the ecological transition must offer new opportunities in terms of job creation, education, research and innovation, not merely dispose and proscribe.

Watch the full event video here: <https://youtu.be/E7Xo3HTIpVQ>