UfM Gas Platform Newsletter

Issue #27 – March 2024

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UfM Gas Platform website online at https://www.ufmgasplatform.org/

Message from the UfM Gas Platform Secretariat

During the first quarter of 2024, the OMEC, as Secretariat of the UfM Gas Platform, (co-)organised several events to discuss issues related to energy transition, climate change and energy security in the Mediterranean region together with high level institutional representatives, international organizations and energy stakeholders from the whole Euro-Mediterranean area.

At the UfM Gas Platform annual conference in Paris, postponed from December 2023 to March 2024 due to the ongoing crisis in the Eastern Mediterranean, speakers stressed the urgent need to reestablish lasting stability in the region in order to achieve energy security and a just energy transition. They also reaffirmed their belief that the shift from fossil fuels to renewable energy will undoubtedly rely on natural gas as a transitional fuel. Over 100 delegates, online or in person, from institutions and the industry from more than 20 countries of the Euro-Mediterranean region contributed to the success of the event (see also below).

On 12 March 2024, in Rome, the OMEC jointly organized with WEC Italy (the Italian National Committee of the World Energy Council), a conference on "Transitioning Energy in the Mediterranean". The meeting was an important opportunity to present the main results of the OMEC Mediterranean Energy Perspectives 2023, and exchange on the trajectories and technologies to be deployed in the Mediterranean basin to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050.

In parallel, in line with its work programme, the Secretariat maintained a concrete and effective dissemination of the information about the UfM Gas Platform and its activities among the broader public through its dedicated website and participation in meetings. It also continued the distribution of various reports. Two reports (one on "repurposing the natural gas infrastructure to accommodate hydrogen" and the other on "natural gas trade among the South Mediterranean countries") were finalised in February and March respectively, incorporating all the comments received by the Gas Platform members. Moreover, the final version of the report on "the role and importance of South Med. gas in

The UfM Gas Platform is a concrete outcome of the will of the UfM members and major stakeholders to strengthen dialogue and cooperation between the EU and South and East Mediterranean countries.

More information available at: **ufmgasplatform.org**

The UfM Gas Platform Quarterly Newsletter was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.

European energy security" is about to be circulated soon among WG members.

Annual Conference of the UfM Gas Platform



On 5 March 2024, the UfM Gas Platform conference took place at the Park Hyatt Paris-Vendôme hotel. Organised by the Organisation Méditerranéenne de l'Énergie et du Climat (OMEC, formerly OME), as Secretariat of the Platform and with the support of the European Commission, the event examined both energy security and climate challenges through the lens of **the Role of Gas in the Mediterranean Energy Transition.**

Despite the unpredictability resulting from the various (geopolitical) crisis affecting the whole Euro-Mediterranean region, there was certainty and unity among speakers that natural gas will be among the best solutions for moving towards a net-zero future in the coming decades, while ensuring a reliable energy supply and also supporting the economic development and livelihood of people in the region. But, reduction of methane emissions is part of the energy transition process.

Doubts about the future of natural gas in the coming decades are unfounded as its role as a transitional fuel in the energy mix will be essential to 2050 and beyond. However, an ecological transition also necessitates a curbing of demand through significant energy savings and better energy efficiency. It is essential to see the demand for oil and coal to be drastically reduced, and for gas to decrease by half. Importantly, the paths to achieving net zero will be different for the Southern and Northern Mediterranean regions.

New resources and technologies will play an important role in the region's energy transition. Europe's burgeoning biomethane and biogas production has the potential to reduce CO2 emissions in an affordable and scalable way, and to reduce dependency on natural gas from third countries. Projecting further forward, hydrogen is expected to be an important element in the decarbonised energy mix of the future, representing an exciting opportunity for pioneering countries like Egypt and Morocco.

Regional cooperation was a recurring theme of the discussions. Net-zero targets can only be achieved through a holistic view of energy systems, and strategic and regulatory synergies across the Mediterranean.

Upcoming event

From 14 to 16 May 2024, the Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean will organise, in Istanbul, the UfM Green Week. Energy sessions are planned the last day to discuss the respective Work Program activities of the three UfM Energy Platforms (dealing with electricity markets, renewable energy, energy efficiency and natural gas in the Mediterranean region).

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