



Union pour la Méditerranée
Union for the Mediterranean
الإتحاد من أجل المتوسط

Study Guide

for

the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM)

Topic Area: Towards a Euro Mediterranean Green Deal – A road map to security and energy autonomy in the region

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1. Welcoming Message

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to Rhodes MRC 2022, the 11th edition of the conference! We are delighted to be part of this wonderful initiative, and we would certainly like to share our excitement with you.

This year Union for the Mediterranean is targeting a significant and well-known topic that has been burdening the world for quite some time now. We now call each one of you to search and present to the committee your solutions and your country's take on issues that several countries in the world have failed to properly address! A difficult, but noble cause, as stated below:

“Towards a Euro Mediterranean Green Deal – A road map to security and energy autonomy in the region”

In any case, we hope you enjoy the procedure and the journey as much as we did and engage well with the material, we have supplied in this Study Guide and be sure that we are here to help you through the entirety of the conference and answer any questions!

The Board Member of UfM,

Anna Kalamata (Co-President) & **Theodore Palaskas** (Co-President)

2. Introduction to the Committee

The Union for the Mediterranean was founded on July 13th, 2008, at the Paris Summit for the Mediterranean, opening a new era in the pre-existing Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, also known as the Barcelona Process. 43 Heads of State and Government from the Euro-Mediterranean region decided to launch the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean all committed to the idea that stability is to be achieved in the Mediterranean region, all member states need to actively contribute.¹ The Union for the Mediterranean, as an intergovernmental Euro-Mediterranean organization, focuses on 6 sectors of activity: Business Development & Employment, Higher Education & Research, Social & Civil Affairs, Energy & Climate Action, Transport & Urban Development, Water & Environment². Among these initiatives, UfM aims to fulfill three strategic objectives regarding the Mediterranean which are summarized in stability, human development, and integration. Achieving high coherence and cooperation between the contracting parties are ideals for which UfM works intensively. To achieve the positive results of political dialogue and the implementation of initiatives, young people play a key role.

The UfM provides a forum to strengthen regional cooperation and dialogue, as well as to implement specific projects and initiatives. The active presence of the organization and the contribution to the regional stability of the area can be seen through the actions and initiatives it undertakes, as the developmental nature of those is a crucial factor ensuring stability. In order to achieve two main pillars of action, fostering human development and the promotion of regional sustainable development, the projects and initiatives of the UfM, aiming either at regional stability and regional integration, such as the Med4Jobs program³, or at innovative urban development projects through the Urban Projects Finance Initiative (UPFI)⁴ are key features that highlight the spirit of cooperation between member states. The organization's emphasis on the security and development of the region is evidenced by the organization of more than fifty highlighted projects and more than 300 ministerial and expert fora since 2012.

¹ Union for the Mediterranean - UfM. 2022. *History of the Union for the Mediterranean* - <https://UfMsecretariat.org/who-we-are/history/> .

² "What We Do: The Work of The Union for The Mediterranean - UfM". Union For the Mediterranean - UfM, 2022. <https://UfMsecretariat.org/what-we-do/> .

³ "Mediterranean Initiative for Jobs (Med4jobs)". Union For the Mediterranean - UfM, 2022. <https://UfMsecretariat.org/project/mediterranean-initiative-for-jobs-med4jobs/>.

⁴ "Urban Projects Finance Initiative (UPFI-ERI)". Union For the Mediterranean - UfM, 2022. <https://UfMsecretariat.org/project/upfi-eri/>.

The first permanent structure dedicated to the intergovernmental Mediterranean partnership is the Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean⁵, based in Barcelona.⁶ Its main responsibility is the operational monitoring of the regional priorities that have been agreed, coordinating, and strengthening the cooperation of international actors, while at the same time promoting cooperation projects and initiatives to address the root causes of today's regional security and socio-economic challenges.

The Union for the Mediterranean operates as a unique platform aiming to facilitate and promote regional dialogue and cooperation, as well as specific projects and initiatives in the fields of Energy and Climate Action⁷. The platform aims to address the challenges that are consequences of climate change in the region, but also to highlight the need of developing safe and sustainable energy models. UfM Energy Platforms are the space for discussion and monitoring of the implementation of the initiatives that have been decided, to achieve the desired energy self-sufficiency in the future, based on reliable modern energy services, as well as on a new operating model of the gas market to promote security, transparency and predictability of both demand and supply.

3. Introduction to the Topic

The shift to a sustainable economy will necessitate nothing less than a comprehensive and fundamental revision of economic models on both the national and international levels. Because of the magnitude of the required changes, the rapidity of those changes, and the prominent level of uncertainty, bold commitments, cooperation, innovation, and experimentation are required across industries, stakeholders, and countries. This presents a formidable challenge for the entire world, one that extends far beyond the shores of the Mediterranean.⁸ Due to the social, economic, and political heterogeneity in the region, it is

⁵ "Who We Are - Union for The Mediterranean - UfM". Union For the Mediterranean - UfM, 2022. <https://UfMsecretariat.org/who-we-are/>.

⁶ *Union for Mediterranean - Neighborhood - European Commission*, https://ec.europa.eu/environment/enlarg/med/ufm_en.htm.

⁷ "Energy And Climate Action - Union for The Mediterranean - UfM". Union For the Mediterranean - UfM, 2022. <https://UfMsecretariat.org/what-we-do/energy-and-climate-action/>.

⁸ *A Euro-Mediterranean Green Deal? Towards A Green Economy ... - Econostrum*, https://www.econostrum.info/A-Euro-Mediterranean-Green-Deal-Towards-A-Green-Economy-In-The-Southern-Mediterranean_a27841.html.

obvious that a “one size fits all” solution is not suitable. Nonetheless, common findings and recommendations do emerge across the case studies.⁹

More particular, the Mediterranean region consumes almost three times the amount of natural resources that its ecosystems can give¹⁰. So far, no country in the Mediterranean region has met two critical basic requirements for global sustainable development: living within the planet's resource budget and providing adequate well-being for its citizens (Global Footprint 2021)¹¹.

Virtually all sub-regions of the Mediterranean Basin, on land and in the sea, are impacted by recent anthropogenic changes in the environment. The main drivers of change include climate, population increase, pollution, unsustainable land and sea use practices, and non-indigenous species¹².

Investing in zero waste programs and policies creates green jobs, reduces pollution, and improves community health¹³. The UfM Environment Agenda exists for that purpose, and it is called 2030 Greener Med Agenda. It advocates for more sustainable consumption, management, and production practices, as well as increased resource efficiency, the promotion of nature-based solutions, and the adoption of a circular economy. This is essential to address environmental degradation and climate change and shape a new future in harmony with nature.

As it pertains to the Mediterranean region's demand for energy security to support a sustainable environment, this issue is particularly important. The conflict in Ukraine has ignited Europe's need to be energy self-sufficient. However, for Europe to achieve its aims, it will require the help of allies with shared objectives. Despite the EastMed gas pipeline's abandonment for environmental grounds, Israel, Egypt, Cyprus, and Greece have showed some signs of hope. Moreover, the implications of climate change and the EU's response to it necessitate the use of more sustainable energy sources, making cooperation

⁹ "A EURO-MEDITERRANEAN GREEN DEAL? TOWARDS A GREEN ECONOMY IN THE SOUTHERN MEDITERRANEAN", *Euromesco.Net*, 2021, <https://www.euromesco.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/A-Euro-Mediterranean-Green-Deal-Towards-a-Green-Economy-in-the-Southern-Mediterranean-2.pdf>

¹⁰ "UfM Environment Agenda", Union for The Mediterranean - UfM, 2021, <https://UfMsecretariat.org/UfM-environment-agenda/>.

¹¹ *UfM Environment Agenda - Union for the Mediterranean*, <https://ufmsecretariat.org/ufm-environment-agenda/>.

¹² "Climate and Environmental Change in the Mediterranean Basin - Current Situation and Risks for the Future." n.d. *MedECC* (blog). Accessed September 15, 2022. <https://www.medecc.org/medecc-reports/climate-and-environmental-change-in-the-mediterranean-basin-current-situation-and-risks-for-the-future-1st-mediterranean-assessment-report/>.

¹³ Ribeiro-Broomhead, John, and Neil Tangri. 2021. "Zero Waste and Economic Recovery: The Job Creation Potential of Zero Waste Solutions." Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives. <https://doi.org/10.46556/GFWE6885>.

once again essential. A realistic approach to bolstering security, cooperation, and energy adequacy in the Mediterranean is important in a world that is ever changing.

4. Key Words and Definitions

- **Renewable Energy/Sources:** Renewable energy, often known as clean energy, is derived from naturally replenishing sources or processes. Renewable energy decreases greenhouse gas emissions and lessens our reliance on imported fossil fuels. Solar energy, wind energy, hydro energy, tidal energy, geothermal energy, and biomass energy are currently the most common renewable energy sources.
- **Sustainable Energy:** A form of energy that can be utilized repeatedly without putting a source in danger of getting depleted, expired, or vanished¹⁴.
- **energy efficiency:** Energy efficiency entails utilizing less energy to accomplish the same task, hence lowering energy costs and pollutants. Illustrations of energy efficiency LEDs, Insulation, and Smart Thermostats.
- **Climate Change:** Climate change refers to long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns. Scientists predict global temperature increases from human-made greenhouse gases will continue. Severe weather damage will also increase and intensify¹⁵.
- **Energy self-sufficiency:** The ability of a country or region to fulfil its own energy needs, without the need to supply additional energy from others.
- **Energy Markets:** a system enabling purchases, through bids to buy; sales, through offers to sell. Bids and offers use supply and demand principles to set the price. Electricity trading refers to the transaction between power generators, who produce electricity, and power suppliers, who sell it on to consumers.

¹⁴ *Sustainable Energy - an overview* | ScienceDirect Topics, <https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/engineering/sustainable-energy>.

¹⁵ *Which of the following is predicted to occur in the 21st century as a ...*, <https://de.frojeostern.com/post/which-of-the-following-is-predicted-to-occur-in-the-21st-century-as-a-result-of-climate-change>.

- **Carbon Neutral:** Carbon neutrality means having a balance between emitting carbon and absorbing carbon from the atmosphere in carbon sinks¹⁶. Carbon neutrality provides accountability for entities, organizations, and individuals. Efforts of reducing the carbon footprint include using clean energy sources & energy-efficient equipment.

5. Legal Framework

5.1. UfM Roadmap for Action 2017

- **Chapter 1: Enhancing political dialogue amongst the Member States¹⁷**

The need for a deeper and more substantial discussion as well as organizational action, led the member states in January 2017, on the second UfM Regional Forum gathering the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the 43 Member States, to adopt decisions, which will allow the strengthening of regional dialogue and cooperation between members and further facilitating the inter-institutional work. More specifically, Chapter 1 states "*The SOM agenda under political dialogue shall contribute to the global efforts aiming at addressing the root causes of the current challenges (such as terrorism, radicalization and irregular migration) and ensure that the discussions on thematic priorities are relevant to this overall objective*" wanting to emphasize the effort to properly address the challenges presented through fruitful discussions.

- **Chapter 4: Strengthening UfM capacity for action¹⁸**

In Chapter 4 of the UfM Roadmap for Action 2017, actions that need to be taken by the organization are foreseen, to increase the ability of the organization to intervene actively and more effectively in its fields of action through its collaborations either with other organizations or with

¹⁶ *Climate Change: Carbon is not the main problem* - SAFETY4SEA, <https://safety4sea.com/cm-climate-change-carbon-is-not-the-main-problem/>.

¹⁷ "UfM Roadmap for Action THE UNION FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN: AN ACTION-DRIVEN ORGANISATION WITH A COMMON AMBITION". UfMsecretariat.Org, 2022. <https://UfMsecretariat.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/UfM-Roadmap-for-action-2017.pdf>.

¹⁸ "UfM Roadmap for Action THE UNION FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN: AN ACTION-DRIVEN ORGANISATION WITH A COMMON AMBITION". UfMsecretariat.Org, 2022. <https://UfMsecretariat.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/UfM-Roadmap-for-action-2017.pdf>.

sub- regional frameworks. Also, the strengthening of the operational capacities of the Secretariat, variations in the financing of initiatives and the possibility of recommending an "ad hoc task force composed of interested Member States and the European Commission" are foreseen. More specifically, regarding financing, it is mentioned "*Ministers agree to reflect on the most efficient ways and means to ensure funding of the UfM soft projects through grants, including to explore the perspective of creating a specific financial mechanism allowing to pool funds from interested contributors.*"

5.2. Joint Declaration of the Paris Summit for the Mediterranean¹⁹

At the Paris Summit for the Mediterranean (13 July 2008), the 43 Heads of State and Government from the Euro-Mediterranean region decided to launch the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean. In this new phase of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership, new members entered the organization, while at the same time an improved institutional structure was decided, aiming to strengthen multilateral relations among member states. Critical points of emphasis were to put governance based on equality between member states and citizens, as well as to translate it into concrete, beneficial projects for the citizens and the region.

5.3. UfM Ministerial Declaration on Energy²⁰

On December 1, 2016, in Rome, the 'Ministerial Declaration on Energy' was adopted by the Ministers in charge of energy, aiming to strengthen the UfM platforms and their effectiveness. In this declaration, the ministers agreed that it is of utmost importance to find the appropriate ways on "*Facilitating the integration of renewable energies within the UfM region*", "*supporting capacity-building among UfM Members and relevant stakeholders, as well as public awareness and involvement*" but also "*promoting innovation and technology cooperation schemes and technical cooperation in all relevant aspects to identify ways to*

¹⁹ "Joint Declaration of The Paris Summit for The Mediterranean". UfMsecretariat.Org, 2022. https://UfMsecretariat.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/UfM_paris_declaration1.pdf.

²⁰ "UfM Ministerial Declaration on Energy". UfMsecretariat.Org, 2022. <https://UfMsecretariat.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/UfM-Ministerial-Declaration-on-Energy.pdf>.

progressively implement them at the sub regional and/or regional level".²¹ The above points, on which great emphasis was given, are the basis on which the organization's policy in the field of energy is drawn.

5.4. European Green Deal²²

The European Green Deal is a collection of policy initiatives with the ultimate objective of achieving climate neutrality by 2050. It promotes the transformation of the EU into a just and prosperous society with a competitive and modern economy.

It emphasizes the necessity for an all-encompassing, cross-sectoral strategy in which all relevant policy sectors contribute to the ultimate climate-related objective. The package contains measures pertaining to the climate, the environment, energy, transportation, industry, agriculture, and sustainable finance, all of which are tightly interconnected.

In the Green Deal the following initiatives are included:

- **Fit for 55²³**. The package is a set of proposals to revise climate-, energy- and transport-related legislation and put in place new legislative initiatives to align EU laws with the EU's climate goals. It includes, *inter alia*, a revision of the EU emissions trading system (EU ETS), a revision of the renewable energy directive, a carbon border adjustment mechanism, reducing methane emissions in the energy sector and a social climate fund.
- **European climate law**. The European climate law regulation turns the political ambition of reaching climate neutrality by 2050 into a legal obligation for the EU. By adopting it, the EU and its member states committed to cutting net greenhouse gas emissions in the EU by at least 55% by 2030, compared to 1990 levels. This target is legally binding and based on an impact assessment carried out by the Commission²⁴.

²¹ *UfM Ministerial Declaration on Energy - Union for the Mediterranean*, <https://ufmsecretariat.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/UfM-Ministerial-Declaration-on-Energy.pdf>.

²² PricewaterhouseCoopers. n.d. "The EU Green Deal." PwC. Accessed September 15, 2022. <https://www.pwc.com/gr/en/advisory/risk-assurance/sustainability-climate-change/eu-green-deal.html>.

²³ See more: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/infographics/fit-for-55-how-the-eu-will-turn-climate-goals-into-law/>

²⁴ "European Climate Law: Council and Parliament Reach Provisional Agreement." n.d. Accessed September 15, 2022. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2021/05/05/european-climate-law-council-and-parliament-reach-provisional-agreement/>.

6. Current situation

About three times as many natural resources are being used in the Mediterranean region as its ecosystems can produce. The two essential minimum requirements for global sustainable development—living within the planet's resource budget and ensuring the satisfaction of its citizens—have not yet been met by any country in the Mediterranean region. (Global Footprint 2021)²⁵. However, the history of steps and actions taken for a better future in the region is a long one.

In 2021, the EU made climate neutrality, the goal of zero net emissions by 2050, legally binding in the EU. It set an interim target of 55% emission reduction by 2030.²⁶

This goal of zero net emissions is enshrined in the climate law. The European Green deal is the roadmap for the EU to become, climate-neutral by 2050²⁷. The concrete legislation that will allow Europe to reach the Green Deal targets is laid down in the Fit for 55 package that the Commission presented in July 2021. It will include the revision of existing legislation on emissions reduction and energy, which are explained further below.

The EU is also working on achieving a circular economy by 2050, creating a sustainable food system and protecting biodiversity and pollinators²⁸.

The Sustainable Europe Investment Plan, which intends to attract at least €1 trillion of public and private investment over the next decade, was introduced by the European Commission in January 2020 as a means of funding the Green Deal.²⁹

Under the investment plan, the Just Transition Fund is designed to support regions and communities that are most affected by a green transition, for instance regions that are heavily dependent on coal.

²⁵ *UfM Environment Agenda - Union for the Mediterranean*, <https://ufmsecretariat.org/ufm-environment-agenda/>.

²⁶ "EU Responses To Climate Change | News | European Parliament", [Europarl.Europa.Eu](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/headlines/society/20180703STO07129/eu-responses-to-climate-change), 2022, <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/headlines/society/20180703STO07129/eu-responses-to-climate-change>.

²⁷ *EU responses to climate change* <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/headlines/society/20180703STO07129/eu-responses-to-climate-change>.

²⁸ *EU responses to climate change* <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/headlines/society/20180703STO07129/eu-responses-to-climate-change>.

²⁹ *Factsheet 3 CONFERENCE ON THE FUTURE OF EUROPE: CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE ...*, https://www.europarl.europa.eu/malta/resource/static/files/import/e_packs_on_the_conference_on_the_future_of_europe/1140_70-cd-european-parliament-in-malta-climate-change-and-environment-a4-fact-sheet-3-hrweb.pdf.

Greenhouse gas emissions in the EU by sector* in 2019

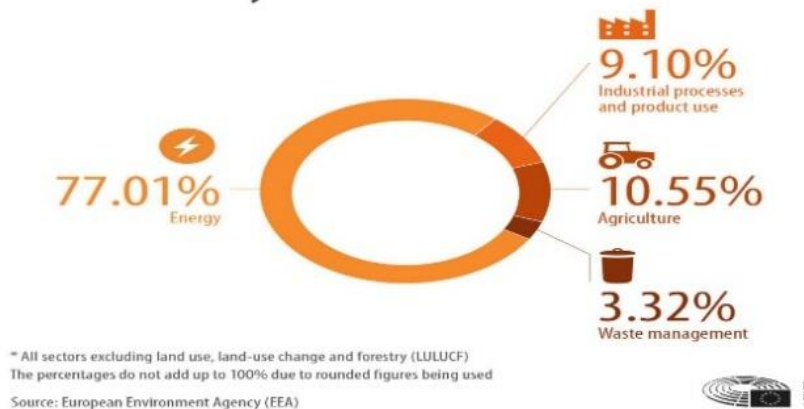


Figure 1 "Greenhouse Gas Emissions by Country and Sector." 2018. March 7, 2018.
<https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/headlines/society/20180301STO98928/greenhouse-gas-emissions-by-country-and-sector-infographic>.

The July 2021 package in support of the EU's climate targets is an integral part of our strategy to achieve this and will further seal the EU's reputation as a global climate leader. As part of these efforts, the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) is a climate measure that should prevent the risk of carbon leakage and support the EU's increased ambition on climate mitigation, while ensuring WTO compatibility.³⁰

Climate change is a global problem that needs global solutions. As we raise our own climate ambition and less stringent environmental and climate policies prevail in non-EU countries, there is a strong risk of so-called 'carbon leakage' – i.e., companies based in the EU could move carbon-intensive production abroad to take advantage of lax standards, or EU products could be replaced by more carbon-intensive imports. Such carbon leakage can shift emissions outside of Europe and therefore seriously undermine EU and global climate efforts. The CBAM will equalize the price of carbon between domestic products and imports and ensure that the EU's climate objectives are not undermined by production relocating to countries with less ambitious policies.

Designed in compliance with World Trade Organization (WTO) rules and other international obligations of the EU, the CBAM system will work as follows: EU importers will buy carbon certificates corresponding to the carbon price that would have been paid, had the goods been produced under the EU's carbon

³⁰ "Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism: Questions And Answers", European Commission, 2021, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/qanda_21_3661.

pricing rules. For the EU importer, the related expense can be fully subtracted provided a non-EU producer can demonstrate that they have previously paid a price for the carbon used in the manufacturing of the imported goods in a third nation. The CBAM will encourage producers in non-EU nations to green their production processes, lowering the danger of carbon leakage.³¹

The Russian invasion of Ukraine has been met with a decisive reaction from the West, including economic sanctions on a scale that few anticipated. Negotiations are also ongoing in a sphere that the major economic strike has so far omitted: imports of energy resources from Russia to the European Union.³²

Furthermore, Europe's new push for diversification from Russia's energy, due to the war in Ukraine, seems to have revived hopes about the EastMed Pipeline project aiming to transfer gas reserves between Cyprus, Israel, and Greece to the rest of south-east Europe.³³

This is what *Philenews* reported on May 6, also citing statements made by Cyprus President Nicos Anastasiades after talks on Thursday with visiting Luxembourg MP Xavier Bettel.

"The war in Ukraine highlighted the urgent need for Europe to move towards energy independence in this rapidly changing geopolitical environment," he said.

"Within this framework, the discovery of hydrocarbons in Cyprus can make a significant contribution to the enhancement of the Union's energy security by diversifying the sources and routes of our energy supply, with the prospect of a corridor from the Eastern Mediterranean region to Europe gaining momentum in recent months," he added.

Earlier this year, a State Department statement suggested that Washington was no longer supporting the construction of the EastMed gas pipeline project as US interest was now switching to renewable energy sources.

³¹ *Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism - Taxation and Customs Union*, https://taxation-customs.ec.europa.eu/green-taxation-0/carbon-border-adjustment-mechanism_en.

³² "How Europe Can Become Independent From Russian Energy", Notes From Poland, 2022, <https://notesfrompoland.com/2022/03/15/how-europe-can-become-independent-from-russian-energy/>.

³³ "War In Ukraine Revives Hopes About Eastmed Pipeline Project", In-Cyprus.Philenews.Com, 2022, <https://in-cyprus.philenews.com/news/local/war-in-ukraine-revives-hopes-about-eastmed-pipeline-project/>.

7. Main Discussion of the Topic

7.1. The strive for energy efficiency and autonomy

A key point of discussion is the enhancing of the implementation of the instruments and measures that allow the energy transition in the Mediterranean region at national, regional, and local level. Regional cooperation is a foundation upon which states can achieve their goals. Experts from national energy bodies and ministries whose main objective is to exchange best practices, train professionals and raise public awareness about sustainable energy options and investments³⁴, pave the collaborative path that needs to be followed. Collectively, this enhances the mutual exchange of energy expertise and helps boost regional cooperation.

Many areas can be powered by sustainable energy thanks to wind, solar and hydropower, combined with biofuels and geothermal sources. The use of renewable energy sources where the necessary infrastructure exists or where it is possible to utilize them should be promoted not only to produce electricity but also to produce heating, cooling, and utilization in transport needs³⁵.

Efforts to achieve energy autonomy in the region need innovative solutions. More specifically, the new EU-backed plan to exploit hydrogen areas, including fuel cells and hydrogen technologies is part of an effort to store energy³⁶. In fact, even water management facilities are equally important, emphasizing the area's resource management and wider economic sustainability.

All the technological examples serve a successful outcome of the transition of the Mediterranean states to clean energy, allowing the countries to be efficient and energy autonomous. The resources and a significant part of the necessary facilities are in place, giving the states the opportunity to achieve the goals they have set. However, their proper exploitation entails a coherent plan which must be developed and implemented consistently. That is why multilateral and regional cooperation is of utmost importance. There is potential to leverage sustainable energy strategies and to disseminate technological solutions through technical support, capacity building and community engagement.

³⁴ "Market Survey on Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Sources - Professional Training". UfMsecretariat.Org, 2022. https://UfMsecretariat.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/A21_MarketSurveyTraining-FINAL.pdf.

³⁵ "Sustainable Energy Solutions for Islands and Remote Areas". UfMsecretariat.Org, 2022. https://UfMsecretariat.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/06_7thMEDENER_Conference_FINAL.pdf.

³⁶ Sustainable Energy Solutions for Islands and Remote Areas". UfMsecretariat.Org, 2022. https://UfMsecretariat.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/06_7thMEDENER_Conference_FINAL.pdf

7.2. Capitalizing Renewable Energy Resources

The Mediterranean is rich in renewable energy sources, which therefore have the potential to drive a shift towards more sustainable, low-carbon energy systems. There is also potential to increase energy efficiency through the development of modern technologies that enable energy conservation and storage.

The Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), aims to capitalize on existing efforts, explore the possibility of improving them under different conditions, identifying the difficulties they face, reporting the results of regional policies.

The efficient use of renewable energy sources and the development of activities that provide a strong source of growth and jobs can still play a decisive role in the energy future of the region, if they are able to fully embrace the new technologies available, the new innovative business models and the shift from a global to a more local level of cooperation. Renewable marine energy sources, blue biotechnologies also as marine security, have the potential to evolve over time into a rich and diversified economy business ecosystem³⁷.

In pursuit of energy efficiency and renewable energy targets, there is a need to develop comprehensive long-term strategies. Those strategies may include improvements and adaptations in industry and business, in private household and capacity building to achieve an efficient exploitation of the renewable sources.

7.3. Independency from Russian energy resources War in Ukraine revives EastMed gas pipe

Since the beginning of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the EU has taken important initiatives for its energy independence from Russian energy sources, while at the same time, there is an ongoing effort of adopting renewable energy sources faster, as well as to save energy for the upcoming winter. As it pertains to the Mediterranean region's demand for energy security to support a sustainable environment, this issue is particularly important. The conflict in Ukraine has ignited Europe's need to be energy self-sufficient.

³⁷ "Towards A Sustainable Blue Economy in The Mediterranean Region". UfMsecretariat.Org, 2022. <https://UfMsecretariat.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/21.7.19-2021UfM.studydefEN-web.pdf>.

The European Commission has presented the REPowerEU Plan³⁸ as a response to Europe's attempt to become energy independent from Russia's sources, which is not an easy concept. The goal of this initiative is twofold: on the one hand, clearly the independence from Russian energy sources, on the other hand, the search for more environmentally friendly energy sources, to deal with the climate crisis. Energy savings, diversification of energy supplies, and accelerated roll-out of renewable energy to replace fossil fuels in homes, industry and power generation are pieces of a green transformation, which is translating as an economic growth and climate action.



In similar, the Mediterranean countries are forced to look for innovative solutions in the supply of the necessary fuels, replacing the Russian sources. The search for these solutions varies either in the spectrum of more efficient exploitation of

the region's natural resources, or in different initiatives that will upgrade the region as a new energy hub. A typical example is the construction of the EastMed gas pipeline³⁹. Despite its abandonment for environmental grounds, Israel, Egypt, Cyprus, and Greece have shown some signs of hope for its construction, in view of Europe's deepening dependency on Russian gas. The Eastern Mediterranean

³⁸ "RepowerEU: A Plan to Rapidly Reduce Dependence on Russian Fossil Fuels and Fast Forward the Green Transition". European Commission - European Commission, 2022. https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_22_3131.

³⁹ "Eastmed". IGI Poseidon, 2022. <https://web.archive.org/web/20161013145009/http://www.igi-poseidon.com/en/eastmed>.

pipeline, also known as EastMed, is a proposed offshore/onshore natural gas pipeline that would connect mainland Greece's energy resources in the Eastern Mediterranean directly through Cyprus and Crete.

The effort to de-dependency and the need to search for new supplies has upgraded the position of the Eastern Mediterranean states in the energy game. Predictably, there is a rising interest in how this region can exploit its resources, upgrading the existing infrastructure and supplying the rest of Europe with the necessary fuels.

7.4. The EuroAsia Interconnector an energy highway bridging Asia and Europe

Another recent catalytic factor in the region is the creation of the EuroAsia Interconnector. The EuroAsia Interconnector is the official EU project developer of the 2,000MW electricity interconnector between Israel, Cyprus, Greece, and Europe⁴⁰. The EuroAsia Interconnector is a leading European Project of Common Interest (PCI) labelled as an EU “electricity highway” connecting the national electricity grids of Israel, Cyprus, and Greece through a 1,208 km subsea HVDC cable.⁴¹

The European Commission, with the support of the Cyprus Government and in agreement with the Greek Government, has appointed EuroAsia Interconnector Limited as the owner Project Promoter of EuroAsia Interconnector⁴².

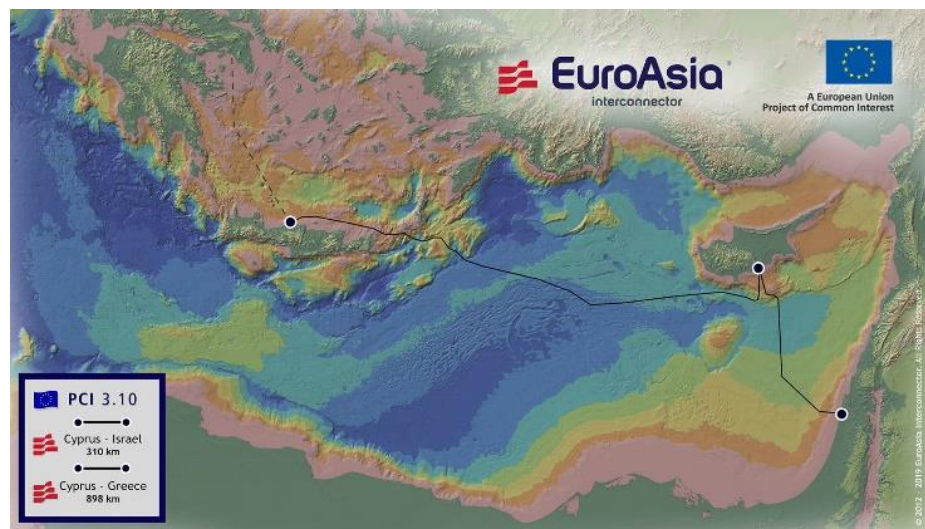


Figure 2 Naftemporiki. 2021. “Μοῦ Ἑλλάδας-Κύπρου-Ισραήλ για την ηλεκτρική διασύνδεση EuroAsia Interconnector.” March 8, 2021.

<https://www.naftemporiki.gr/story/1700556/mou-elladas-kyprou-israil-gia-tin-ilektriki-diasundes-euroasia-interconnector>.

⁴⁰ About us | EuroAsia Interconnector, <https://euroasia-interconnector.com/about-us/>.

⁴¹ "Euroasia At a Glance", Euroasia Interconnector, 2022, <https://euroasia-interconnector.com/at-glance/>.

⁴² A 1,208km EuroAsia Interconnector Subsea Power ... - Submarine Networks, <https://www.submarinenetworks.com/en/power-cable/a-1-208km-euraasia-interconnector-subsea-power-cable-costs-900-million>.

The EuroAsia Interconnector comprises the electricity interconnection between the grids of Israel, Cyprus, Greece through a subsea DC cable and with HVDC onshore converter stations at each connection point, with a total capacity of 2000MW⁴³. The project is an energy highway bridging Asia and Europe, with a total length of 1,208 km. It creates a reliable alternative route for the transfer of electric energy to and from Europe⁴⁴.

The EuroAsia Interconnector enjoys a high rating by the European Union, falls within the EU energy policy and contributes to the following energy targets:

Ends the Energy Isolation of Cyprus as an EU member state. Cyprus is the last member of the European Union which remains fully isolated without any electricity or gas interconnections. Ending the energy isolation is an important EU objective.

EuroAsia Interconnector creates an electricity highway from Israel-Cyprus, Greece (Europe) through which the European Union can securely be supplied with electricity produced by the gas reserves of Cyprus and Israel, as well as from the available Renewable Energy Sources (RES), contributing at the same time to the completion of the European Internal Market.

The EuroAsia Interconnector ensures the security of energy supply of the three involved countries and of the EU system altogether, through the integration of the isolated small systems of Cyprus and Crete with the Israeli and European networks and the uninterrupted – multidirectional flow of energy⁴⁵.

- Promotes the substantial development of the Renewable Energy Sources and contributes to the reduction of CO2 emissions.
- Offers significant economic and geopolitical benefits to the involved countries.
- Contributes to the target of the European Union for 10% of electricity interconnection between Member States.
- Provides significant socio-economic benefits in the range of 10 billion euros.

⁴³ A 1,208km EuroAsia Interconnector Subsea Power ... - Submarine Networks, <https://www.submarinenetworks.com/en/power-cable/a-1-208km-euraasia-interconnector-subsea-power-cable-costs-900-million>.

⁴⁴ Cyprus, Greece, Israel to finalise MoU for EuroAsia Interconnector, <https://cyprus-mail.com/2021/02/12/cyprus-greece-israel-to-finalise-mou-for-euroasia-interconnector/>.

⁴⁵ Selection preferred supplier EuroAsia Interconnector, <https://ocean-energyresources.com/2022/07/05/selection-preferred-supplier-euroasia-interconnector/>.

7.5. The effects of the European Green Deal's objectives to non-EU Mediterranean countries

Cooperation between UfM member States can promote and develop Mediterranean energy Autonomy. In this instance, UfM is trying to achieve a similar solidarity and organization as the initiative taken by the European Commission with the European Green Deal.

Climate change and environmental degradation threaten the very existence of Europe and the world. To address these challenges, the European Green Deal will transform the EU ⁴⁶into a modern, resource-efficient, and competitive economy by ensuring that:

- net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050
- economic growth decoupled from resource use
- no people and no regions are left behind

The European Green Deal is also our exit door from the COVID-19 pandemic. A third of the €1.8 trillion investment from the NextGenerationEU recovery plan, as well as the seven-year EU budget, will fund the European Green Deal.

The European Commission has adopted a series of proposals aimed at adapting the EU's climate, energy, transport, and taxation policies to reduce net greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030 compared to 1990. More information on the Implementation of the European Green Deal page.

At this point, the UfM is trying to endorse a so-called Euro Mediterranean Green Deal. Like their neighbors to the north, Southern Mediterranean Countries (SMC) are far from mainstreaming green and sustainable development principles into their economies, despite the progress made.⁴⁷ In terms of planning, almost all SMC have developed national strategies and priorities regarding green growth, driven both by their comparative advantage in certain sectors, such as renewable energy (RE) production, but also by resource scarcity that is already tangible, specifically water stress in most countries and high dependence on energy imports. Yet even those countries that have made the greatest strides in planning – Jordan, Morocco, and Tunisia – struggle acutely with implementation and evaluation, due to problems of

⁴⁶ "A European Green Deal", European Commission, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal_el.

⁴⁷ "A EURO-MEDITERRANEAN GREEN DEAL? TOWARDS A GREEN ECONOMY IN THE SOUTHERN MEDITERRANEAN", *Euromesco.Net*, 2021, <https://www.euromesco.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/A-Euro-Mediterranean-Green-Deal-Towards-a-Green-Economy-in-the-Southern-Mediterranean-2.pdf>

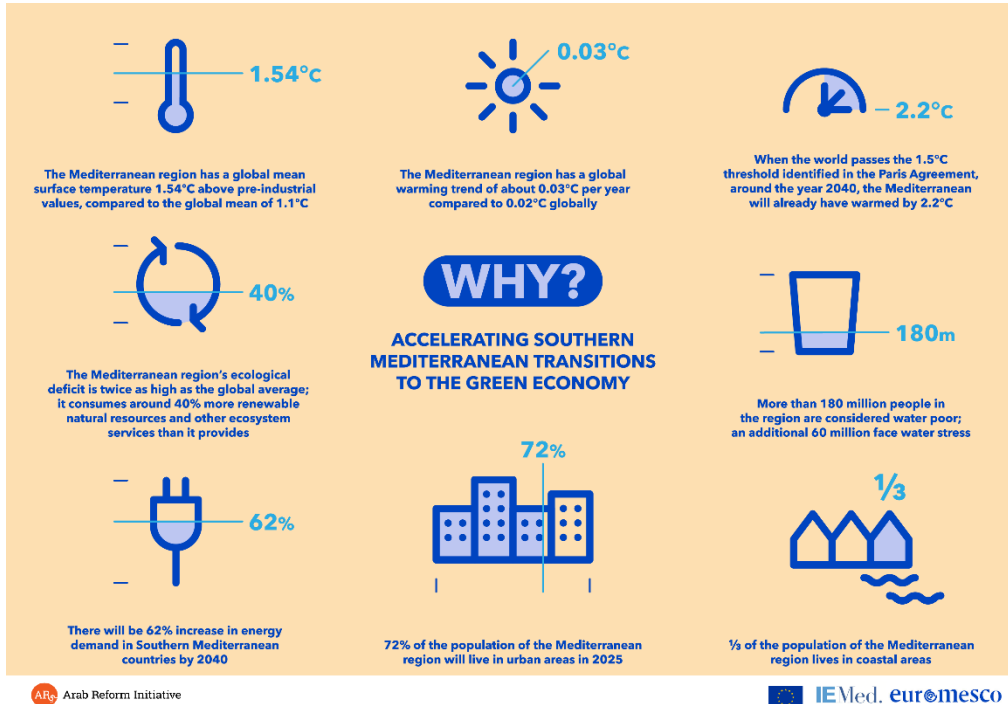
governance (lack of buy-in, coordination and communication among stakeholders), as well as more technical obstacles (such as underperforming quality infrastructure systems and underdeveloped skills in the labour market).

More critically, environmental policy remains siloed from core economic and social policy at the national, regional, and international levels. For too many in the region, the link between environmental protection and key social and economic goals – addressing high unemployment, reducing poverty and regional and social inequalities, and managing rapid urbanization – is not yet clear.

Given that most efforts towards greening the economy are led by foreign donors, such programs do not receive sufficient buy-in from the Southern Mediterranean partners to ensure continuity and scaling-up once international technical cooperation programs end⁴⁸. The weak regional integration and elevated level of policy fragmentation across the Southern Mediterranean region also hinders the transition to green economies as potential partners fail to identify synergies and co-benefits associated with greening. For the European Union (EU), the green economy as a new developmental paradigm has not been incorporated into its core economic and diplomatic relations across the Mediterranean, and the EU has not yet capitalized on the opportunities that the green economy provides to focus on collective and shared challenges and rethink key cooperation frameworks⁴⁹.

⁴⁸ A EURO-MEDITERRANEAN GREEN DEAL <https://www.euromesco.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/A-Euro-Mediterranean-Green-Deal-Towards-a-Green-Economy-in-the-Southern-Mediterranean-2.pdf>.

⁴⁹ A EURO-MEDITERRANEAN GREEN DEAL <https://www.euromesco.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/A-Euro-Mediterranean-Green-Deal-Towards-a-Green-Economy-in-the-Southern-Mediterranean-2.pdf>.



8. Conclusion

In conclusion, it becomes more than obvious that in this period of disruption in the field of energy, the UfM states need to enhance their energy efficiency and autonomy. This, in fact, can happen both through the strengthening of cooperation between states, the improvement of the logistical infrastructure and the search for new, innovative practices that will allow the completion of the objectives. It is imperative to establish a framework and consistently implement it to capitalize on its benefits. Undoubtedly, the energy autonomy of the Mediterranean cannot be achieved immediately, therefore it is necessary to lay the foundations of the debate on which the plan will be developed, including the more efficient use of renewable natural sources, as well as the promotion of an ecological agenda at international level. The time has come for the UfM states to make a substantial and practical commitment towards clean energy.

9. Points to be addressed

1. How can UfM states become energy autonomous?
2. What actions need to be taken by the states to effectively utilize renewable energy sources?
3. How can interregional cooperation in the energy sector be enhanced?
4. How can the EastMed gas pipeline be used properly, so that it becomes an essential solution in the supply of natural gas?
5. What actions can be taken to achieve a smooth independence from Russian energy sources?
6. What is the impact of the EuroAsia Interconnector an energy highway?
7. How can the UfM promote cooperation between UfM member States, so that they can promote and develop Mediterranean energy autonomy?
8. What are the effects of the European Green Deal's objectives to non-EU Mediterranean countries?
9. How can a Euro Mediterranean Green Deal be achieved?

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