

# Press Release

## Decarbonising the Mediterranean region for a more sustainable future



**Paris, 10 October 2024 — The maritime industry is crucial for the Mediterranean's economic prosperity but is also a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions and climate change, and must therefore explore sustainable pathways towards decarbonisation of its activities**

**On 8 October**, the Organisation Méditerranéenne de l'Énergie et du Climat (OMEC) and the East Mediterranean Gas Forum (EMGF) convened a joint conference to explore a more sustainable future for maritime activities in the Mediterranean. The event, held under the Union for the Mediterranean's working group on gas, emissions abatement, and hydrogen (formerly UfM Gas Platform), and with the support of the European Commission, brought together key stakeholders to present, discuss and develop feasible decarbonization strategies tailored to the unique challenges and opportunities of the Mediterranean maritime sector. Over 80 delegates, online or in person, from institutions and the industry from all the Euro-Mediterranean region contributed to the success of the event.

Participants addressed the urgent need to decarbonise the Mediterranean and enhance energy security. Net-zero targets can only be achieved through a holistic view of energy systems, and strategic and regulatory alignment across the Mediterranean.

A combined policy and technology approach emerged as essential, with discussions highlighting the implications of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) and EU's Maritime Regulations and

the EU's Emissions Trading System, as well as the future role of green shipping corridors. North African ports were identified as key players for refuelling and importing renewable and low-carbon fuels, and other innovative technologies—such as wind support, route optimization, and onboard carbon capture—were explored for their short- and long-term potential.

Insightful presentations and discussions indicated that while consumption of petroleum products will likely constitute majority of maritime fuel consumption, LNG seems the most viable option to decarbonise the shipping sector in the short to mid-term. The use of LNG will continue to grow but with the rising use of low/zero carbon alternative fuels, particularly biofuels, interest in making the LNG carbon neutral in the form of liquefied biogas will also increase. Afterwards, low/zero carbon fuels mainly driven by ammonia, methanol and other synthetic fuels will likely gain traction and dominate maritime energy use.

Nonetheless, significant challenges persist, including competition for alternative fuels among different transport modes and the need for substantial investment in infrastructure. In light of the region's geopolitical and environmental challenges, speakers reached a consensus on the necessity for collaboration and dialogue among all stakeholders.

Regional cooperation was a frequent theme of the discussions. The upcoming establishment of a dedicated Directorate-General for the Mediterranean at the European Commission will facilitate a trans-Mediterranean energy and green technology pact in this collaborative spirit.

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*Initiated in Malta in July 2014, confirmed in Rome in November 2014 and launched in June 2015, in Brussels, the objective of the UfM Gas Platform is to enhance the cooperation in the Euro-Med. region between all stakeholders of the gas chain, in a bottom-up approach to improve gas security by identifying barriers and opportunities. The "Organisation Méditerranéenne de l'Énergie et du Climat" (OMEC) runs the Platform's secretariat in close coordination with the UfM co-presidency.*

*The UfM Gas Platform is one of the three UfM Energy Platforms (the two others are on regional electricity market and on renewable energy and energy efficiency) established by EU Energy Ministers, Ministers of Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries, and the European Commission to further strengthen regional cooperation in the Mediterranean for ensuring secure, affordable and sustainable energy for the region and beyond.*

*More information about the UfM Gas Platform available at <https://www.ufmgasplatform.org/>*