FEDARENE recommendations on the post-2020
Clean Energy for EU Islands Initiative

5 November 2019

Introduction

In May 2017, 14 Member States (MS) and the European Commission (EC) signed the Malta Declaration, launching the Clean Energy for EU Islands (CE4EUI) Initiative with the aim to help islands reduce their dependency on energy imports by making better use of their own renewable energy sources and embracing more modern and innovative energy systems. A first step to deliver on the goals of the Initiative has been the establishment of the CE4EUI Secretariat, which will conclude its activities in 2020. For the moment, there is no provision for the continuation of the Initiative in the period post-2020.

Against this backdrop and with the Croatian Presidency of the Council approaching, FEDARENE Islands College¹ comes forward with a set of recommendations to contribute in the dialogue regarding the sustainability of the CE4EUI Initiative. These recommendations culminate in the establishment of a long-term Management Body (MB), tasked with realizing the objectives of the Initiative. The set-up and operation of this body needs to be underpinned by a legal framework, jointly agreed upon and binding for the EC and MS who choose to engage.

Considering their role and extensive experience in designing and delivering sustainable energy projects on islands, the members of the FEDARENE Islands College declare their readiness and commitment to support the set-up and operation of this body and its roll-out in the respective MS. The recommendations included in this memo focus on the structure, governance and thematic intervention of the MB.

Green Deal for islands

The European Green Deal becomes the new Commission’s hallmark, echoing its commitment to transform the Union into the world’s first climate-neutral continent. As already outlined in its 2050 long-term strategy, Europe is pursuing the systemic transformation of its energy system in order to become a prosperous, modern and competitive economy.

Islands have a real incentive to kick-start their clean energy transition now, reap the benefits that come with it and act as lighthouses of Europe’s climate-neutral future. What is more

¹ Presentation of the island organizations that are members of the College is included in the Annex.
important, decarbonisation should be seen as the backbone of islands’ smart and sustainable development, since it can unlock thematic interventions in other sectors like water, transport, waste, ensuring the creation of local sustainable growth, translated in a well-preserved natural environment, quality jobs and prosperity for islanders.

With this in mind, the CE4EUI Initiative should promote a transformative sustainable development agenda that makes the most out of islands’ competitive advantages, generates local growth and prosperity and contributes to EU policy goals in the fields of energy, climate, environment, circular economy, transport and mobility, blue growth, and the digital agenda.

➔ FEDARENE Islands College proposes that such an agenda, having the energy transition at its core, should have two priorities:

1. **Enhanced technical assistance and capacity building programmes** (such as ELENA and PDA), tailored to islands to help mature energy transition and sustainable development investments as well as develop suitable financial instruments to attract private capital and enable the deployment of innovative financing modes for citizen inclusive solutions.

2. **Targeted schemes of financing energy transition and integrated projects on islands** through the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF), InvestEU, or other sources (e.g. ESCOs, Public Private Partnerships), which should focus on helping islands deliver on the EU 2030 and 2050 goals by enabling necessary investments that are unattractive for the market due to constraints that islands face, such as lack of economies of scale.

### A long-term Management Body

The MB is proposed to be governed jointly by the EC and MS, with distinct roles foreseen for each side. Moreover, the MB should embody elements of multilevel and multilateral governance and multidisciplinary expertise, as presented in the table below.

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<th>EU Coordination Office</th>
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<td>Local / Regional Authorities</td>
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CE4EUI Management Body proposed structure
Joint Management structure
Reflecting the spirit of the Declaration, the new body should be a joint endeavour of MS and the EC. This translates into shared responsibility for financing and committing to achieving the objectives of the Initiative. However, there should be enough flexibility for MS who engage in the Initiative, to choose the level of support and resources they provide to it, depending on factors like number of islands, progress of decarbonisation, existing and planned energy infrastructure etc.

→ FEDARENE Islands College proposes the Management Body to operate both at EU and MS level.

Multilevel – Multilateral Governance & Multidisciplinary Support
Multilevel and multilateral governance as well as multidisciplinarity should be core principles informing the set-up of the new body. Years of experience promoting EU islands clean energy transition (e.g. ISLE-PACT, SMILEGOV, CE4EUI Secretariat) show that efficient collaboration among the different levels of administration (multilevel) and stakeholders (multilateral) at MS level coupled with a multidisciplinary approach are crucial for unlocking islands’ energy transition. Such a structure can help remove barriers related to bureaucracy, market operation, access to financing, etc. and accelerate the maturation of sustainable energy projects.

→ FEDARENE Islands College proposes to establish a Coordination Office at EU level along with National / Regional Offices and Advisory Groups at MS level.

The following indicative roles are proposed:

- **EU Coordination Office** should manage the EU funding to the MB, oversee the implementation of CE4EUI activities in each MS and ensure that national strategies are followed and targets are reached. The Office should also be in charge of planning and managing new EU-wide island related policies and initiatives. Knowledge exchange, capacity building, facilitation of cross-MS cooperation and securing funding for joint projects should also be part of the Office’s work.

- **National / Regional Offices** should be formed as new units within the public administration. Depending on the level of devolution and to ensure island policies and initiatives are designed and implemented in response to the specific geographical and administrative context, each MS should decide the role of national and regional level in the operation of the Office. The National / Regional Offices should be responsible to deliver a national plan for islands’ decarbonisation in collaboration with the Advisory Group, provide technical support to islands and monitor the implementation of their decarbonisation strategies. They should be sufficiently staffed with experts (public servants or independent consultants) who can cover the technological, financial and social aspects of islands’ energy transition addressing the intrinsic specific characteristics of the islands in each MS. In collaboration with the EU Coordination Office they shall enable and fuel cross-MS actions and deploy EU policies and initiatives at MS level.

- **Advisory Groups** should have a consultative role towards the National / Regional Offices, involving representatives from the different levels of governance (national, regional, local) and competent stakeholders (e.g. utilities, regulators, industry, academia, energy agencies and civic society).
Annex – FEDARENE Islands College Map

A description of each member organization can be found in the link: [www.fedarene.org/members](http://www.fedarene.org/members)