



# ETU Initiative Conference: **How can the ETU support your energy transition?**

Barcelona 16 – 17 March 2022

*“Taking concrete steps for wider replication through sharing of experience by flagship municipalities and high level stakeholder discussions on energy transition in the Euro-Mediterranean and Africa Region”*

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The ETU Initiative Conference took place in Barcelona on the 16th-17th March 2022, gathering local and regional decision-makers, energy experts, and researchers in the historic Sant Pau Art Nouveau Site. The Conference was organised and hosted by the Euro-Mediterranean Economists Association (EMEA) partner of the Interreg MED Renewable Energy project – was an opportunity to showcase the work done by the project and its nine Flagship Case municipalities, and to develop roadmaps for the renewable energy transition.

The Conference marked the Interreg MED Renewable Energy community's first in-person event since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. The two-day event focused on showing how the project's Ecosystemic Transition Unit (ETU) can support a variety of communities from across the Mediterranean to transition towards renewable energy. Through the work done over the past year by the ETU Initiative Flagship Cases in rural, urban and island areas, participants could grasp how that support can be mainstreamed, and the community's knowledge transferred. This report summarizes the background and content of the conference and the key finding remarks.

## Background

The energy transition requires the active participation of society, local authorities and associations, businesses, and innovation centres. This ecosystem of actors in the territory needs tools to identify, coordinate and establish strategic alliances to accelerate the transition in an inclusive and green way. The ETU Initiative has been created and promoted by Interreg MED Renewable Energy as a platform to foster the ecosystem approach to energy transition, capitalising on knowledge transfer and trans-national cooperation between the Mediterranean Region. The ETU Initiative involves local authorities and entities involved in energy transition

projects through their Regional Groups. Over the past months, we have worked with 9 flagship cases, integrating the ETU toolbox into their energy plans, renewable energy communities and energy efficiency projects. The ETU Initiative now calls on local public and private entities and civil society organisations to join the initiative and build a common contribution to a holistic approach to energy transition based on territorial equity, social innovation, green economy, and multi-level cooperation.

## Challenges as for Energy Transition Ecosystem

The decarbonisation of the energy model requires coordinated global action to reduce CO2 emissions and thus mitigate the accelerating pace of global warming and climate change. The European Commission has set the goal of carbon neutrality by 2050, which will require an enormous effort on the part of all the actors involved in the system, from the generation, distribution, and end use of energy. The transition towards a new model based mainly on renewable energies is also an opportunity to diversify energy sources and improve the management model. For example, by identifying the potential available in each territory, establishing energy efficiency measures and decentralised and participatory distribution. Each territory requires to identify its roadmap and be able to conduct their transition in a more adequate and effective way. Rural areas cover almost 80% of the territory in the world, climate policies should include their role in terms of resources provision and biodiversity preservation. Usually, rural areas lack of enough resources to enable their plans and could take a longer time its transition. To this end, it is necessary to make available to all the knowledge and tools necessary for modelling, planning and implementation to create a fairer, more inclusive, and environmentally responsible energy model.

## Upscaling into Sustainability Transition Ecosystem

According to the recent IPCC report on Climate Change 2022 Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability (February 2022) recognises the relevance of acquiring a holistic approach for climate change adaptation, considering the ecosystems as a whole including natural, ecological, social and economic trade-offs. The evidence that the Mediterranean and Africa will be more affected by rising surface temperatures and sea level rise, vulnerability to drought, and water scarcity has been highlighted several times by IPCC. As Africa tends towards accelerated urban growth, urbanisation processes need to be accompanied by sustainability criteria, resilience strategies, sustainable infrastructure, and targeted financing mechanisms to guide the development of cities and towns that is adapted to climate change and causes the least negative impact on the environment. The path towards a more sustainable future involves the sum of several transitions that together allow us to move forward in a coordinated manner. These transitions require adjustments to the energy model, the resource management model, the land use, and mobility model, and, the transition to an economic model consistent with the planet's



biocapacity. Defining the transformation process is key and requires a governance and cooperation approach from the local to the national and regional level. Europe and Africa re-establish a new stage of collaboration recently signed between the EU-AU partnership through which the different African regions will set a new course for the integration of environmental policies for adaptation to climate change and environmental protection in both continents.

The aim of the conference was to present the ETU Initiative as an evolving platform enabling knowledge transfer and transnational cooperation between European projects and initiatives committed to climate adaptation and welfare, fostering an open call to join us. To this end, the conference was structured on two levels, during day 1 establishing a dialogue between the ETU pillars with other EU initiatives and projects involved in the energy transition. During day 2, a second level of liaison by focusing on the Mediterranean and Africa and the dialogue of the ETU Initiative with initiatives in the Region. For this end, the conference counted with relevant organisations and key stakeholders to discuss how cooperation should be addressed in this new scenario and which should be the role of networks, public institutions and private sector strengthening capacity building and knowledge transferring in the Region.





## Summary of the event

During the first day of the conference, the aim was to first address the challenges posed by the energy transition in vulnerable territories such as islands, coastal areas, and rural areas from a global to European and Region perspective. The Conference began with a keynote panel on the challenges and opportunities for the energy transition in rural and island areas, moderated by Kostas Komninos – Director of the DAFNI Network – and set the ground for the following discussions on the project’s experiences, lessons learnt and useful resources.

The panel’s participants – Grammenos Mastrojeni (Union for the Mediterranean), Julije Domac (FEDARENE), Lisanne Raderschall (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development), Jesús Pulido (Spanish Ministry for the Ecological Transition) and Alberto Giaconia (ENEA), highlighted the importance of putting the renewable energy transition at the centre of local and regional planning, and supporting the institutions on the ground to implement new energy systems. Following this, Dr. Cynthia Echave, Project Coordinator & Senior Researcher, EMEA,

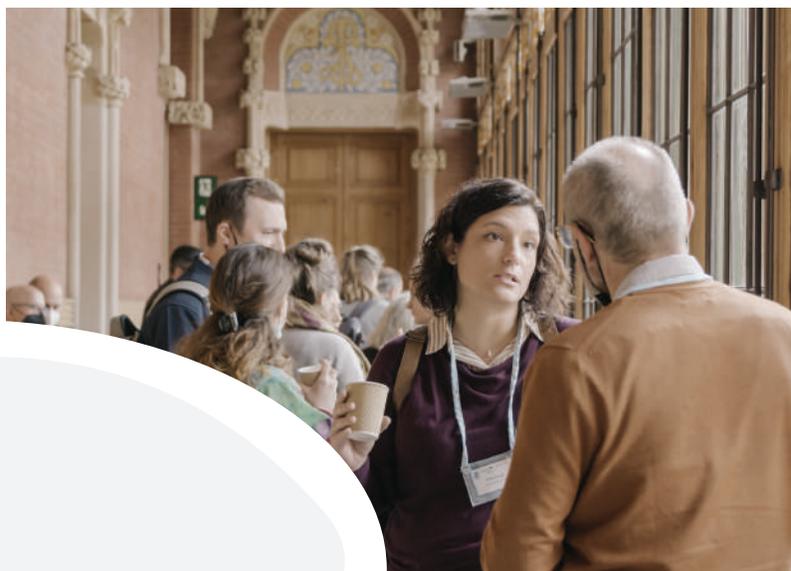
explained the ETU Initiative pillars and a panel moderated by Alexia Boulanger, Project Developer, Environment Park, discussed the “ETU Initiative Flagship Cases: Experiences and Lessons Learnt”. Representatives of the ETU Flagship Cases of Ragusa (Italy), Onda (Spain), Naxos (Greece) and Brdovec (Croatia) shared their experiences of integrating the ETU tools in their renewable energy planning.

The third expert panel on “Resilient Communities and Territories: Planning, Financing and Governance”count with speakers representatives from research, business and social clusters to discuss which are the needs for better collaboration among stakeholders and which are the key points for a clean, equal, and fairer transition. Speakers from EIT Climate-KIC, IREC, Som Energia and the European Crowdfunding Network shared key resources to advance towards involving more citizens and civil society in a more collaborative approach.

The 1st day ended with 4 ETU Pillars parallel sessions on Energy Planning, Energy Facilities, Energy Communities and Energy Governance & Financing. Each session represents one of the ETU Pillars with the aim of identifying complementarities among projects and initiatives for the upcoming decarbonisation challenges. The event was also an opportunity to create synergies across projects and initiatives to overcome these common challenges. Some of the key findings of the parallel sessions, were for example the specially related to renewable energy communities agreed on the need to do a transposition of the EU legislation on energy communities to provide the same legal framework across the EU. They highlighted as well that the recurrent lack of reliable data on energy consumption to do a proper needs assessment before implementing an energy community as well as missing guidance on the legal status these communities should take -especially in the case of Spain.

The full recording of day one can be followed here: <https://youtu.be/MOn9E3MVvek>

## ETU Initiative dialogue within sustainability transition ecosystem in the Mediterranean and Africa region





On the second day, the conference focused on the power of regional integration to overcome common challenges of the energy transition. Prof. Rym Ayadi, President of EMEA, opened the second day of the conference with a keynote speech on how to finance the green transition. She explained the TRIS model of development created by EMEA, which takes the two guiding principles of the Sustainable Development Goals – inclusiveness and sustainability – and adds two further principles: transparency and responsibility. She spoke about moving from a current paradigm that focuses on GDP and economic growth without sight of the intended and unintended consequences of our actions, towards a new paradigm that takes into account wellbeing and wider impacts; an extractive, acquisitive approach to production towards a circular model that uses clean and natural resources.

The following sessions kept the same focus with interventions from regional authorities and international organisations.

The first expert panel discussed “Governance and Cooperation in Mediterranean and Africa”, moderated by Prof. Rym Ayadi, taking as a starting point the emphasis placed in the recent IPCC report on the need for a holistic, integrated and ecosystemic approach to climate adaptation, considering the tradeoffs between natural, economic and social factors. The speakers were:

- Rosa Surinach, from UN-Habitat, who explained their work on urban resilience, city-to-city cooperation, and the importance of creating multi-stakeholder processes for decisions and implementation.
- Octavi Quintana, Director of the PRIMA Secretariat, who noted the importance of research and innovation cooperation as an effective tool to strengthen Mediterranean regional integration and build bridges across countries via so-called “science diplomacy”.
- Curzio Cervelli, Coordinator of the Interreg MED Programme Joint Secretariat, which is developing a roadmap to build new, innovative mechanisms to better cooperate across the region and implement more cross-cutting and horizontal governance projects.
- Moubarack Lô, Director General of the Bureau of Economic Prospective in Senegal, who described the work being done in Senegal on a national adaptation plan, sectoral plans, and cities’ local development plans to integrate climate change considerations.

The second expert panel discussed “Capacity building and knowledge transferring in Mediterranean and Africa”, moderated by Dr. Cynthia Echave, Project Coordinator & Senior Researcher, EMEA. The speakers were:

- Alessandro Miraglia, Networking and Communication Team Lead at SCP/RAC, who described the Switchers Support Programme, designed to promote sustainable business models based on the interdependence between the environment, society and economy, which deliver goods and services which create social and environmental value, applying eco-innovation, life cycle thinking and eco-design approaches. The support programme involves individual capacity building, plus networking to create opportunities to create and share knowledge.
- Josep Canals, Director of MedCities, who argued that cities are key to accelerating the transition, and are often more similar to each other than states are; if municipalities do not have adequate capacity and information to be effective actors, then change is not possible.
- Roger Albinyana, Managing Director of IEMed, who presented Morocco as an example of how institutions can create the right environment for investment and cooperation, and noted that an important dimension of foreign direct investment is how it can contribute not just to the construction of infrastructure such as the solar power plant in Morocco, but also to capacity building and knowledge sharing in order to ensure the continuity of the transition and maximise its ability to produce employment.
- Djiby Thiam, Professor of Economics at the University Cape Town, who spoke of the mismatch between the type of capacity building activities that have been introduced in Africa, and what was actually needed on the ground. He emphasized the need to put in place expertise that is sensitive to domestic realities.
- Sherif Dawoud, Deputy Head of the Egyptian Ministry of Planning and Economic Development, who advocated for a comprehensive approach that sees climate change not in isolation but as part of the bigger picture of achieving sustainable development through the implementation of the





The conference ended with a 2 parallel discussion sessions on “Green Transition”, moderated by Yara Saab, Coordinator of Operations, SCP/RAC and a special online session on “Sustainable Finance” took place, moderated by Prof, Rym Ayadi with the participation of:

- Chuckwumerije Okereke, Director of Center for Climate and Development at University Ndufu-Alike in Nigeria, who argued that Africa needs to engage with green transition discourse, as one of the continents most vulnerable to the effects of climate change and to the transition itself, as many countries are dependent on resource extraction. He also noted that the green transition could give Africa a competitive advantage thanks to its wealth of renewable energy sources.
- Ralph Chami, Co-Founder of Rebalance Earth, who explained that nature and nature-based services including carbon sequestration can be valued, and markets created around this value. These nature-based services can be sold as assets to those that seek to offset their carbon footprint, which benefits all parties including governments and local communities. This would mark a shift from an extractive view of nature to a regenerative view, taking into account the our impact on nature and nature’s impact on us. He stressed the need for political will to engage and the creation of a legal framework.
- Kwame Sarpong, KPMG in Ghana, who underlined the need for political will, understanding by key stakeholders, and clearly articulated value propositions.
- Nagla Bahr, Managing Director of the Credit Guarantee Company in Egypt and chairwoman of EMGN, who spoke about the need to deliver technical assistance along with finance, and how guarantee schemes can step in when there is a high level of uncertainty and encourage private sector investment, as well as new products including green bonds.
- John Kofi Adomakoh, GCB Bank Plc in Ghana, who discussed how commercial banks, whose main driving force is profitability, can move away from traditional risk management to discussions that encompass social, economic and environmental considerations while still achieving economic balance. He noted that sustainable and responsible business practices can help banks manage risk, build their reputation, and deploy capital to maintain their social license.

The full recording of day two can be followed here: <https://youtu.be/1DCJs4oG-dY>

# Agenda Day 1

8:45 – 9:00	<i>Registration</i>
9:00 – 9:30	<p><b>Institutional welcome</b></p> <p>Danilo Čeh – Project Manager BISTRA LP Interreg MED Renewable Energy  Rym Ayadi – President of EMEA Partner Interreg MED Renewable Energy  Nicolas Garnier –Project Officer at JS Interreg MED Programme</p>
9:30 – 11:00	<p><b>KEYNOTE PANEL</b></p> <p><b><i>Energy Transition in Rural and Island Areas: Challenges and Opportunities</i></b></p> <p><i>Moderator:</i> Kostas Komninou – Director DAFNI Network</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Grammenos Mastrojeni – Senior Deputy Secretary General - UfM</li> <li>2. Julije Domac – President - FEDARENE</li> <li>3. Lisanne Raderschall – Policy Analystist OECD</li> <li>4. Jesús Pulido – Head of DG Infrastructures Ministry Ecological Transition Spain</li> <li>5. Alberto Giaconia – Researcher and Project Coordinator at ENEA Italy</li> </ol>
11:00 – 11:15	<i>Coffee break</i>
11:15 – 12:45	<p><b>What it is about the ETU Initiative?</b></p> <p>Cynthia Echave – Project Coordinator at EMEA</p> <hr/> <p><b>ETU Initiative Flagship Cases: Experiences and lessons learnt</b></p> <p><i>Moderator:</i> Alexia Boulanger – Environment Park</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Carmelo Licitra - Technical Officer and Energy Manager of the Municipality of Ragusa, Italy</li> <li>2. Antonio Lecha – Head Climate Change Office Municipality of Onda, Spain</li> <li>3. Manos Kamilakis, AEGEA &amp; Katerina Margariti (TBC) – ETU Flagship Case Naxos, Greece</li> <li>4. Brahimir Greguric - Municipality of Brdovec, Croatia</li> </ol>
12:45 -14:00	<p><b>EXPERT PANEL 2</b></p> <p><b><i>Resilient communities and territories: planning, financing &amp; governance</i></b></p> <p><i>Moderator:</i> Kostas Komninou – Director DAFNI Network</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mrs Beatriz Camacho-Ávila - CLIMATE KIC - EIT</li> <li>2. Jordi Pascual - Physicist Ph.D. Engineering IREC</li> <li>3. Francesc Ribera Grau – Clúster de l'Energia Eficient de Catalunya</li> <li>4. Nuri Palmarada - Som Energia</li> <li>5. Mauricio O'Brien – EU Crowdfunding Network (EUCN)</li> </ol>
14:00 – 15:00	<i>Lunch break</i>
15:00 -16:30	<p><b>PARALLEL SESSIONS</b></p> <p><b>Panel Pillar 1: Energy Planning</b> - Moderator: Eleni - Danai Mavraki – AEGEA  Davide Astiaso Garcia - PRISMI PLUS; Miguel García - ETU Assessment Case Los Pedroches (Spain);  Tomislav Novosel – NetZeroCities; Alexia Boulanger - ENER.COM; Clemence Contant - EnerMaps (EU Horizon 2020 project)</p> <hr/> <p><b>Panel Pillar 2: Energy Facilities</b> - Moderator: Yolanda Lechon CIEMAT  Ivana Ostoic – PEGASUS; Barbara La Licata and Arnau Gonzalez – AURORAL; Davide Cozzella - GIFT Project;  Sergio Olivero - ETU Flagship Case Magliano Alpi (Italy)</p> <hr/> <p><b>Panel Pillar 3: Energy communities</b> - Moderator: Marta Castillo REVOLVE  Hrvoje Maras – SocialRES &amp; SHARes; Jose Miguel - ETU Flagship Case Monachil (Spain); Montse Mussons - KMO;  Remei Aldrich Tomàs - Enginyera Servei de Medi Ambient Diputació de Girona/ Lluís Amat - Vall d'en Bas (online); Ruth Borrego –Agencia Andaluza de la Energía POVERTEE (online)</p> <hr/> <p><b>Panel Pillar 4: Energy Governance and Financing</b> - Moderator: Mauricio O'Brien EUCN  Francesco Filippi - LOCAL4GREEN PLUS; Iva Tustanovski - H2020 REFINE &amp; SMAFIN projects; Brahimir Greguric - ETU Flagship Case Brdovec (Croatia); Carmelo Licitra - ETU Flagship Case Ragusa (Italy); Antonio Lecha - ETU Flagship Case Onda (Spain)</p>
16:30 – 17:30	<i>ETU Pillars Matching Workshop - Coffee service</i>

## Agenda Day 2

9:00 – 9:15	<b>Registration</b>
9:15 – 9:25	<p><b>Welcome</b></p> <p>Danilo Ceh – Project Manager BISTRA LP Interreg MED Renewable Energy</p> <p>Cynthia Echave – Project Coordinator of EMEA</p>
9:25 – 10:00	<p><b>Keynote speech</b></p> <p><b><i>Sustainable Transition Initiative and financing the transition</i></b></p> <p>Rym Ayadi – President EMEA</p>
10:00– 11:15	<p><b>Expert Panel</b></p> <p><b><i>Governance and cooperation in Mediterranean and Africa</i></b></p> <p>Moderator: Rym Ayadi – President EMEA</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Rosa Surinach – Partnerships, Advocacy and Outreach Coordinator, UN-Habitat</li> <li>2. Octavi Quintana - Director of PRIMA</li> <li>3. Curzio Cervelli – Coordinator JS Interreg MED Programme (online)</li> <li>4. Moubarack Lô - Director General of the Bureau of Economic Prospective, Senegal (online)</li> </ol>
11:15 – 12:30	<p><b>Expert Panel</b></p> <p><b><i>Capacity building and knowledge transferring in Mediterranean and Africa</i></b></p> <p>Moderator: Cynthia Echave – Project Coordinator EMEA</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sherif Dawoud - Deputy Head Sustainable Development Unit in Egypt (tbc)</li> <li>2. Roger Albinyana – Director of IEMed</li> <li>3. Josep Canals, Secretary General of MedCities</li> <li>4. Alessandro Miraglia – Networking and Communication Team Lead, (SCP/RAC)</li> <li>5. Djiby Thiam - Professor Economics at University Cape Town (online)</li> </ol>
12:30 – 12:45	<b>Coffee break</b>
12:45 – 14:00	<p><b>Online session: "Sustainable finance"</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Rym Ayadi – President EMEA</li> <li>2. Nagla Bahr – Credit Guarantee in Egypt</li> <li>3. John Kofi Adomakoh-GCB Bank Plc, Ghana</li> <li>4. Kwame Sarpong Barnieh – KPMG Ghana</li> <li>5. Ralph Chami - Co-Founder of Rebalance Earth in USA</li> <li>6. Chuckwumerije Okereke – Director of Center for Climate and Development, Nigeria</li> </ol> <hr/> <p><b>Working Session 1: Green and Blue Transition</b></p> <p><i>Moderation: Yara Saab - SCP/RAC</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Albert Palou Vilar - BETA Centre</li> <li>2. Flora Leroy, Policy and Project Officer at the CPMR Intermediterranean Commission</li> <li>3. EU Crowdfunding Network – Blue crowdfunding</li> </ol>
14:00 – 14:30	Closure of the conference
14:30 – 15:30	<b>Networking lunch</b>

Report compiled by EMEA and REVOLVE.