



**GREENING
THE ISLANDS**
foundation

in cooperation and in
the framework of



CIRCLE THE MED

THE
MEDITERRANEAN
FORUM

ISLANDS AS FRONTRUNNERS IN THE SUSTAINABLE TRANSITION OF THE MEDITERRANEAN AND BEYOND

DRAFT AGENDA

Greening the Island in
partnership with Circle the
Med Forum 7th edition



**ATHENS,
19TH JANUARY 2024**



**EUROPEAN PUBLIC LAW
ORGANIZATION (EPLO)**



Greek time (GMT +2)

09.15 Arrival of participants & registration

09.45 Welcome

- **George Kremlis** - Director of EC, member of the Board of the EPLO, President of its Circular Economy and Climate Change Institute, Hellenic Republic

Session 1

Mega projects to accelerate the energy transition of the Mediterranean, how islands can lead the way in the race to 100% RES in the region, main challenges and opportunities.

In this decade, deploying renewables and energy storage projects of all sizes will be key to accelerate energy transitions in the Mediterranean. The session will explore the strategic role of small islands in the region, as fundamental junctions for energy exchanges and laboratories for 100% renewables.

Islands are ideal proving grounds for the clean energy nexus with sectors such as water and transport, for the latest innovation in power grids, as well as new policies and business models, and therefore can showcase the technical and economic feasibility of fully renewable energy systems. Indeed, islands can lead the way in the race to 100% renewables, originating replicable models for the mainland and driving higher overall ambitions in the MED, and act as frontrunners in the establishment of fast-tracking processes due to their special need for clean energy.

To achieve the ambitious target of 100% renewable energy systems, islands require a diversified renewable energy mix, adequate power grids and storage systems to ensure flexibility and stability, as well as proper legislative and regulatory frameworks. This is viable through data-driven, multistakeholder efforts, boosting economic and energy security on islands, as well as their resilience to climate change.

Furthermore, islands play an important role in the development of power interconnectors for the exchange of energy in the region, as well as offshore mega-projects due to a propensity for broad electrification, including ports, and particularly in the case of archipelagos or proximity to the mainland. Such projects can deliver large-scale renewable capacity to meet the growing energy needs, create many jobs, stimulate economic growth and create economies of scale, while helping to address the global energy and climate crises at a regional level.

However, the development of mega-projects and major interconnectors faces a range of technical, economic, and regulatory challenges. Addressing these challenges will require close collaboration between governments, the private sector, and other stakeholders, as well as the

development of innovative financing models and risk-sharing mechanisms. The session will bring together policymakers, business and industry leaders, and other key island stakeholders to deep dive how the Mediterranean can leverage its many small islands to become a first mover globally.

09.50 Introduction & Moderation

- **Gianni Chianetta** - Chair, Greening the Islands Foundation

Keynote speeches

The GTI 100% RES Islands Initiative, case studies

- **Attilio Piattelli** - Energy Specialist, GTI Observatory, Greening the Islands Foundation/President “Coordinamento FREE”
- **Gonzalo Piernavieja** - Research & Innovation Director, Instituto Tecnológico de Canarias (ITC) – Technical Partner Greening the Islands Foundation

10.10 Round Table

- **Thodoros Skylakakis** - Minister of the Environment and Energy, Greece
- **Ditte Juul Jørgensen** - Director General for Energy, European Commission
- **Francesco Corvaro** - Special Envoy for Climate Change of Italy, Ministry Environment and Energy Security - Ministry of Foreign Affairs International Cooperation
- **Miriam Dalli** - Minister for Energy, Enterprise and Sustainable Development, Malta
- **George Papanastasiou** - Minister of Energy, Commerce and Industry, Republic of Cyprus
- **Grammenos Mastrojenni** - Senior Deputy Secretary General in charge of Energy & Climate Action, Union for the Mediterranean
- **Jauad El Kharraz** - Executive Director, Regional Center for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (RCREEE)

11.10 Coffee break

Session 2

The circular economy - sustainable tourism nexus in the Mediterranean, business models and monitoring starting from islands as frontrunners.

The Mediterranean countries can only plan a successful sustainable transition by weighting in the tourism sector, which is highly relevant across the region. The importance of tourism as a source of income is magnified on the region's minor islands, as well as its impacts and related challenges: concentrated mass tourist inflows in small, isolated systems elevate the complexity of water, energy, transport and waste management, inevitably adding to costs and pollutant emissions.

A paradigm shift is needed to create a more sustainable way of experiencing the islands, involving local communities, reducing consumption of key resources, and lowering the overall human footprint. Adopting a holistic approach to empower an effective circular economy on islands - particularly through renewables, water desalination and treatment, and composting - can improve energy and water security, decrease the amount of disposable waste, and provide significant social, environmental and economic benefits.

Islands can act as frontrunners through deploying innovative business models, policies and monitoring tools, participating in international programs (such as Dialogue4Tourism within the Interreg Euro-MED Programme), and catalysing broader multistakeholder cooperation.

The session will bring together policymakers, business and industry leaders, experts and key island stakeholders to discuss how enhanced political coordination and efforts to ramp up renewables, clean technologies, and enabling policy and regulatory frameworks on small islands can contribute to advancing the sustainable transition in the whole Mediterranean region.

11.30 Introduction & Moderation

- **Gianni Chianetta** - Chair, Greening the Islands Foundation

11.40 Round Table

- **Clayton Bartolo** - Minister for Tourism, Malta
- **Abigail Cutajar** - Advisor - Energy and Climate Change, Ministry for Environment Energy and Enterprise, Malta

- **Joseph Borg** - President of INSULEUR (Network of the Insular Chambers of Commerce and Industry of the European Union)
- **Claudia Guzzon** - Executive Secretary, Islands Commission Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR)
- **Iyad Kayali** - Sustainability strategist and trainer, Green Destinations Foundation
- **Evangelos Bekiaris** - Director, Hellenic Institute of Transport (HIT); Vice President, Centre for Research and Technology Hellas (CERTH)
- **Dimitris Ibrahim** - Senior Portfolio Manager - Greenpeace International

12.30 Wrap up & conclusions

- **George Kremlis** - Director of EC, member of the Board of the EPLO, President of its Circular Economy and Climate Change Institute, Hellenic Republic