



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

## 3<sup>rd</sup> UfM Energy and Climate Business Forum at the margins of MEDCOP Climate 22 June 2023, Tangier, Morocco



### CONCEPT NOTE

#### 1. Background

The Mediterranean basin is facing a significant threat from climate change, which is leading to sea level rise, extreme weather events, and droughts. The region has been identified by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) as a climate change hotspot. In addition, the Mediterranean Experts on Climate and Environmental Change (MedECC) highlighted in their **First Mediterranean Assessment Report (MAR1)** that the Mediterranean region is warming 20% faster than the global mean temperature.

The Mediterranean countries face today common challenges that require a high level of multilateral responses and collective actions. A reinforced cooperation in the energy and climate action fields is needed and represents an opportunity for both shores of the Mediterranean to achieve integration, social and economic development in the region.

**The Union for the Mediterranean (UfM)** acts as a unique platform to facilitate and promote regional dialogue and cooperation, as well as concrete projects and initiatives in order to address the energy and climate change challenges in the region, while advancing towards more secure and sustainable energy models. **The Strategic Objectives of the UfM for Energy and Climate Action** are:

- Promote a Mediterranean agenda for energy as well as for climate action linked to the global agenda and the international fora;
- Reinforce and animate a structured regional dialogue on energy and climate action among Member States, regional organisations, financial institutions, civil society, youth organizations, private sector and experts;
- Support the promotion of projects and initiatives as well as their implementation and replicability, in line with the priorities identified within the dialogue platforms.

As an intergovernmental institution bringing together 43 countries of the Mediterranean to promote dialogue and cooperation in the Euro-Mediterranean region, its actions are framed under the mandate given by its Member States through Ministerial Declarations.

In the declaration of the **UfM Ministerial Conference on Energy** held in Lisbon, on June 2021, Ministers expressed their willingness to *“enhance the regional cooperation on energy, in accordance with the International Law and the gradual integration of energy markets by expanding knowledge and best practices, reinforcing the energy exchange and interconnections*



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الإتحاد من أجل المتوسط

### 3<sup>rd</sup> UfM Energy and Climate Business Forum at the margins of MEDCOP Climate 22 June 2023, Tangier, Morocco



*and removing existing and potential barriers, for the common benefit of the Mediterranean citizens as well as on just transition and the socio-economic dimension of the energy transition". To do so, they established three UfM Energy Platforms (Gas, Regional Electricity Market, and Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency) aiming, inter alia, at promoting "private investment through the engagement of the private sector and financial institutions in demonstrating business models in variable national contexts."*

Ministers also emphasized the support to local authorities: *"for those countries where structures make it relevant and who are willing to, supporting the involvement of local authorities in the promotion, deployment, and scaling up of renewable energy and energy efficiency solutions that are compatible with securing a high quality of life for their citizens."*

In the **UfM Ministerial Meeting on Environment and Climate Action** held in Cairo on October 2021, Ministers from the 43 Member countries of the UfM agreed on a common agenda to strengthen efforts to urgently tackle the multiple climate and environmental challenges. This commitment reflects the highest possible ambition in accelerating transition towards sustainable, climate-neutral and green economies. The declaration also stressed the importance of mainstreaming environment and climate action across all sectoral policies, including energy, industry, agriculture and transport, while mobilizing and scaling up resources to support the green transition, investments and sustainable finance, as well as the need to step up action on adaptation, to progressively reduce the use of fossil fuels, ensuring a just transition.

The **Ministerial Declaration on Environment and Climate Action** also highlighted the significant risks posed by these challenges to ecosystems, human lives and societies, including cultural heritage and economies, thus becoming potential threat multipliers adding to pre-existing vulnerabilities of the Mediterranean region, significantly impacting security, development and peacebuilding. On the other hand, there are also economic benefits and opportunities, in terms of job-creation and social inclusion, associated with decisive, immediate and concerted efforts to transition to sustainable, climate-neutral, green, fair, circular and resilient economies, which will outweigh the cost of inaction.

Furthermore, within the framework of the **5<sup>th</sup> UfM Ministerial Declaration on Strengthening the Role of Women in Society**, Ministers agreed that concrete efforts are required to empower women in the region, especially in light of the various crises, including those related to change and more recently emerging needs (food, water, and energy security). They stressed the *"need to significantly increase gender-responsive investment in the framework of climate change and in environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes, through the mobilization of financial resources from all sources, including public, private, national and international resource mobilization and allocation"*.



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الإتحاد من أجل المتوسط

## 3<sup>rd</sup> UfM Energy and Climate Business Forum at the margins of MEDCOP Climate 22 June 2023, Tangier, Morocco



In addition, they recalled the need to involve women in decision-making, as it can help drive the adoption of climate change policies and strengthen mitigation and adaptation efforts by ensuring - at the same time - that women as well will benefit from it.

Within this context, the European Union (EU) plays a crucial role in the mandate of the UfM, as UfM Co-Presidency and main donor. It backs the Mediterranean region, through the UfM, with resources, platforms for dialogue and expertise aiming at fostering integration, cohesion, and a sustainable development of the region.

The **Confédération Générale des Entreprises du Maroc (CGEM)** has placed environmental and climate issues among its priorities since the 90s through many actions to support Moroccan private sector on its transition to a low carbon economy, led by the green economy commission.

CGEM was one of the official partners to the COP22 and has stepped up its commitment by launching a very dense events program. More than 20 events were organized or co-organized in Morocco and abroad (United Kingdom, Kenya, etc.) to highlight the Moroccan Private sector's position on different themes related to climate change.

Since COP22, CGEM has the observer status to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) within the BINGO category and participates actively to the different sessions and meetings. CGEM also was a partner in the organization of the MEDCOP in 2016 and held several side events.

The green economy commission is active on several sites. Its ambition is to develop the levers allowing the greening of existing companies and to promote investments in new niches of opportunities. It also acts by offering technical support to companies in this area through various projects deployed through partnerships developed with national or international organizations.

It works on different topics of which:

- **Green Energy:** Promote the rise of green energies in the national energy mix and the accelerated recourse by companies to renewable energies and the principles of energy efficiency.
- **Green industry:** Mobilize industry for a clean and circular economy and contribute to the emergence of green industrial ecosystems and a sector of green molecules.
- **Sustainable Mobility:** Accelerate the transition to a transport system promoting low-carbon solutions and aiming for a strong reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from the 2030 horizon. A study dealing with electric mobility was realized (**Final EV Roadmap Presentation**).



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

## 3<sup>rd</sup> UfM Energy and Climate Business Forum at the margins of MEDCOP Climate 22 June 2023, Tangier, Morocco



- **Water Efficiency:** Promote the principles of water efficiency, sustainable desalination and the reuse of industrial and urban wastewater.
- **Environment & Climate:** Fight for the reduction of all forms of pollution, deterioration of the natural environment and damage to biodiversity caused by economic activities and contribute to the country's climate objectives.

by acting on several areas:

- **Public policies:** Position of the CGEM as a partner of the State with a view to an ambitious national vision of ecological transition and for the definition of sector strategies (Energy, Power to X1, Mobility, etc.)
- **Regulatory framework:** Contribute to the adaptation and improvement of the legislative and regulatory framework (Renewable Energies, Self-production, Circular Economy, Sustainable Mobility, Water Efficiency, etc.).
- **Green taxation:** Work for the gradual establishment of a green tax system providing for incentives and environmental taxes. Fair and realistic taxation, compatible with the ambitions of the green economy and incorporating good international practices in this area.
- **R&D and Innovation:** Contribute to the establishment of a green innovation ecosystem in Morocco by 2023 and work to increase the share dedicated to domestic research expenditure in the GDP.
- **Support for companies:** Strengthen, the sensitivity of private actors to the challenges and opportunities of the green economy, as well as their capacity to contribute to the commitments to reduce GHG emissions made by Morocco within its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC). A guide for decarbonization of companies containing information relevant information and the leading process, was set up (decarbonation.cgem.ma).

The United Nations (UN), and more specifically the **United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)** is also a relevant player given that the Mediterranean region is threatened by desertification. Within the framework of this 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of the Business Forum, the UNCCD is invited to provide a session on regenerative agriculture, which can be applied on the field by the UfM Member States.



Union for the Mediterranean  
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الإتحاد من أجل المتوسط

## 3<sup>rd</sup> UfM Energy and Climate Business Forum at the margins of MEDCOP Climate 22 June 2023, Tangier, Morocco



### 2. Objectives of the 3<sup>rd</sup> UfM Energy and Climate Business Forum

The **Third UfM Energy and Climate Business Forum**, co-organized in **partnership with CGEM**, is a milestone in the promotion of the private sector role towards local authorities' efforts in the energy transition as well as in their climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies.

The objective of the Third UfM Energy and Climate Business Forum is two-fold:

1. to support and showcase local authorities efforts towards a sustainable energy transition, by providing a networking space and promoting innovative and tangible financing solutions, as well as private investment and public-private partnerships in the Euro-Mediterranean region.
2. to offer a high-level platform for solution developers from public and private sectors and academia dealing with local authorities' challenges in energy efficiency, renewable energy and climate change.

Furthermore, in the framework of the Energy and Climate Business Forum, available financing investments mechanisms for the region and stimulate collaboration between international financial institution, the private sector and local authorities will be also showcased.

The process is structured around three major reasons:

- i. The climatic reality highlighted in successive IPCC reports.
- ii. The efficiency of collective dynamics.
- iii. The opportunity for a stronger Mediterranean integration.

The Business Forum will take place at the margins of **MedCoP 2023**. The MedCoP was initiated in Marseille by the French Presidency in preparation for the COP21 (Paris). It was consolidated in the subsequent year by the Moroccan Presidency of the COP22 (Marrakesh) and took place in **Tangier (2016)**, led by the Tangier Tetouan Al Hoceima Region. The relaunch of the MedCoP process is a major lever for structuring the cooperation framework between the countries of the two shores and an occasion to facilitate a regional stock take exercise ahead of CoP28 in Dubai.

This time, the Business Forum will gather the private sector from the energy business, alongside woman-led and youth-led green business. The event will bring together high-level government representatives, stakeholders, private sector investors, international financial institutions and successful investment cases, with the aim of identifying business and networking opportunities and enhancing exchanges on regional best practices.





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Union pour la Méditerranée  
الإتحاد من أجل المتوسط

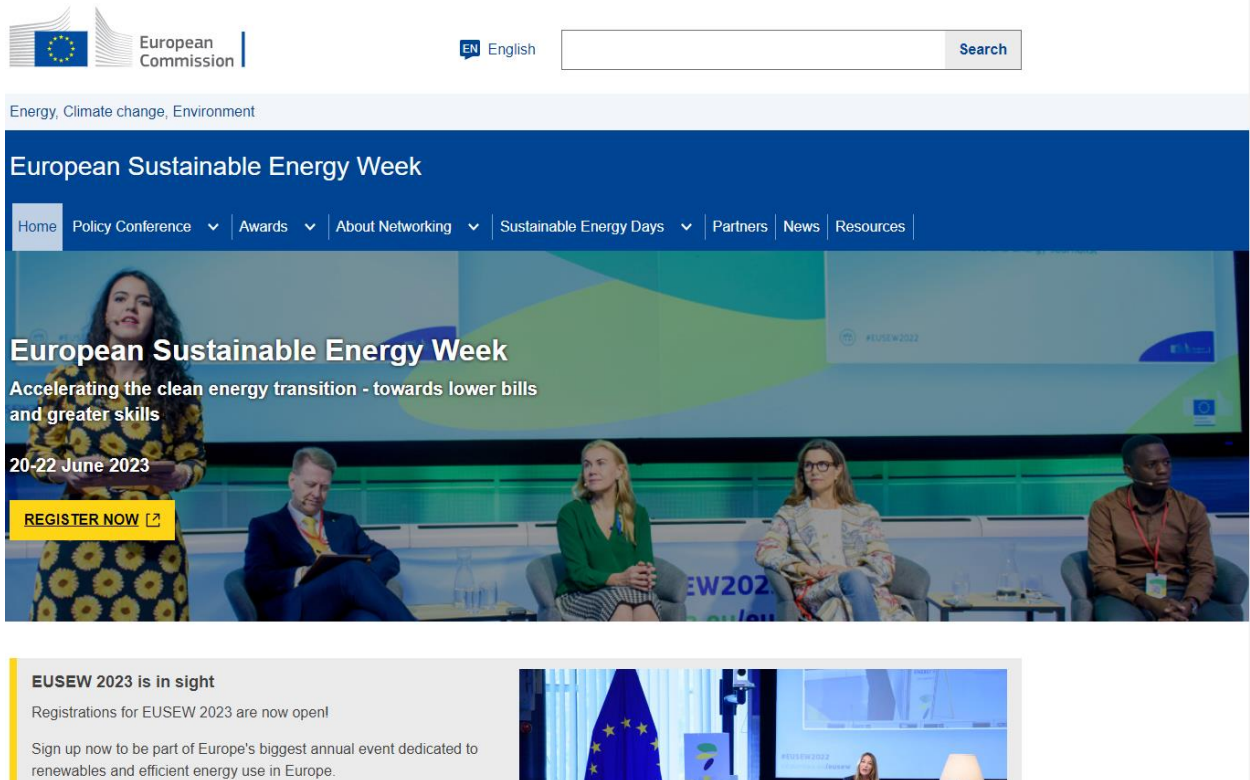
# 3<sup>rd</sup> UfM Energy and Climate Business Forum

at the margins of MEDCOP Climate  
22 June 2023, Tangier, Morocco



The 2023 Business Forum will also encourage the participation of young entrepreneurs from the southern Mediterranean shore, who are trying to make a difference in the sector by their engagement and vision.

Moreover, the Business Forum will be connected to the **European Union Sustainable Energy Week (EUSEW)**, taking place in Brussels on 20-22 June 2023. The **EUSEW Policy Conference** is the biggest conference dedicated to renewables and efficient energy use in Europe.



The UfM has secured the webstreaming through the EUSEW platform of one of the Business Forum sessions, showcasing the importance of Accelerating Energy Transition in the Mediterranean Region.

The Business Forum is organised by the UfM, in cooperation with CGEM, the Mediterranean Climate House and the Tanger-Tétouan-Al Hoceima region, several UfMS stakeholders, and with the financial support of the EU and Sweden.

### 3. Date and Venue

22<sup>nd</sup> of June 2023





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

**3<sup>rd</sup> UfM Energy and Climate  
Business Forum**  
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Hotel: Hilton Houara, Tangier.



#### 4. Agenda

“No woman, no panel” campaign.

UfM adheres to a strict “**No Woman, No Panel**” by which all events and activities must feature at least one woman in a panel. This policy is directed at mainstreaming gender balance in its activities.

Time		Segment	Agenda Items
Tangier local time (UTC+1)	CEST Time Zone (UTC+2)		
11.00 - 12.00	12.00 - 13.00	Welcome and Opening Remarks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mr. Grammenos Mastrojeni - UfM SDSG</li> <li>High level representative of CGEM (TBC)</li> </ul>
		Session 1 – Setting the scene: Regional Framework	Panel discussion with private sector representatives, moderated by UfM (TBC): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>President of the Green Economy Commission - (CGEM) (TBC)</li> <li>IFIs (EIB, EBRD, AFD, IsDB) and international climate funds (TBC)</li> </ul>
12.00 - 12.45	13.00 - 13.45	<b>LUNCH: LIGHT STANDING COCKTAIL</b>	



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

### 3<sup>rd</sup> UfM Energy and Climate Business Forum at the margins of MEDCOP Climate 22 June 2023, Tangier, Morocco



12.45 - 13.45	13.45 - 14.45	Session 2 – Women-led start-up for energy transition	<p>Panel discussion moderated by UfM (TBC):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ms Hiba Abu-Libdeh - Executive Director at Sunenergy (Palestine)</li> <li>Ms Myriam Fournier Kacimi - CEO at Sungy Company (Algeria)</li> <li>Ms Guadaluna Chaer - Co-founder of LUXEED Robotics (Lebanon)</li> <li>Representative of EBRD (TBC)</li> <li>Ms Fatima Zahra El Khalifa - Director General at Cluster Renewable Energies (Morocco) (TBC)</li> </ul>
13.45 - 14.45	14.45 - 15.45	Session 3 – Youth Entrepreneurs	<p>Panel discussion moderated by UfM (TBC):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mr Malek Abualfailat - CEO &amp; founder at Tahaluf Consulting (Palestine)</li> <li>Mr Iheb Haouech - Sotunec (Tunisia)</li> <li>Mr Omar Raafat - SG of Mediterranean Youth Foundation (Egypt)</li> <li>Mr Hamza Rkha Chaham, co-founder of SOWIT (Morocco) (TBC)</li> <li>Change Now representative (TBC)</li> <li>Global Shapers representative (TBC)</li> </ul>
14.45 - 15.00	15.45 - 16.00	<b>COFFEE BREAK</b>	
15.00 - 16.00	16.00 - 17.00	<p>Session 4 – European Union Sustainable Energy Week: Accelerating Energy Transition in the Mediterranean Region</p> <p><i>(LiveStreamed, hybrid format)</i></p>	<p>Panel discussion moderated by UfM (TBC):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mr Nasser Kamel - UfM SG (on remote/pre-recorded message)</li> <li>Ms Nouzha Bouchareb - Former Minister of National Planning, Urban Planning, Housing and Urban Policy of Morocco</li> <li>Mr Anisse Terai - Managing Director of Tell Group (online)</li> <li>DG ENER (TBC)</li> <li>Ms Milou Beerepoot - Project Manager Energy at the EC - DG NEAR</li> <li>Ms Abir Lemseffer – CGEM’s and European Institutions Principal Coordinator (TBC)</li> </ul>
16.00 - 16.20	17.00 - 17.20	Session 5 – Regenerative Agriculture	<p>Panel discussion moderated by the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RES4MED representative (TBC)</li> </ul>





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

## 3<sup>rd</sup> UfM Energy and Climate Business Forum at the margins of MEDCOP Climate 22 June 2023, Tangier, Morocco



16.20 - 16.30	17.20 - 17.30	Wrap up and Closure of the Event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mr Grammenos Mastrojeni - UfM SDSG</li> <li>CGEM President / Vice-President (TBC)</li> </ul>
16.30 - 16.50	17.30 - 17.50	<b>COFFEE BREAK</b>	
17.00 - 19.30	18.00 - 20.30	<b>MEDCOP OPENING CEREMONY</b>	

### 5. Description of the sessions

#### Session 1 - Setting the scene: Regional Framework (TBD)

#### Session 2 – Women-led start-up for energy transition

The strong and compelling nexus between Climate Action and Energy has been acknowledged by all the actors in the last decades and even more after the war in Ukraine which has placed energy at the core of Euro-Mediterranean relations. The effects of climate change can alter our energy generation potential and energy needs, as – for instance - warmer temperatures increase the energy demand for cooling in the summer. The call for action for effective mitigation and adaptation strategy must target the energy policies as well.

The impacts of climate change and energy issues, however, are not gender-neutral, as women suffer also from previous economic vulnerabilities. In order to give a better response to this current challenge, it is essential to start with a better recognition of the gender-climate nexus and to implement Gender-just climate finance initiatives.

A climate and energy-just transition must take into consideration the barriers that women face in accessing the formal labour market: women only comprising **32% of the global clean energy workforce**. Within this context, financial institutions have an increasingly vital role to play in incorporating just transition principles into their business operations. They can also take an active role in making access to finance more inclusive and supporting women-led business opportunities in relevant sectors such as the renewable energy sector.

While the recent integration of gender considerations into key multilateral climate finance mechanisms, including the Green Climate Fund, are steps in the right direction, gender considerations have yet to be effectively mainstreamed in ongoing climate change programmes and activities as well as national planning. Recent progress in multilateral finance mechanisms, in terms of gender policy, needs to be supported and expanded to cover the private sector as



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

## 3<sup>rd</sup> UfM Energy and Climate Business Forum at the margins of MEDCOP Climate 22 June 2023, Tangier, Morocco



well as market and non-market finance mechanisms at national and global levels. The need to significantly increase gender-responsive investments in the framework of climate change policies and programmes, is among the key pillars of the Ministerial Declaration on Strengthening the role of Women in Society 2022. The case for steering climate finance towards gender equality is clear but needs to be more widely known and understood.

Within this panel, women entrepreneurs in the energy and climate sectors and financial Institutions will present good practices to impulse the gender just-transition. Among those, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) will present the Gender Equality in Climate Action Accelerator (GECA), which is a joint initiative between EBRD, the French Development Agency (AFD) and the African Development Bank (AfDB) to move the gender agenda forward. GECA aims at helping private and public entities assess how gender-sensitive their climate actions are. This represents one of the good practices within this context, as a right instrument for a true commitment from both private and public sector towards an inclusive climate and energy action.

### Session 3 - Youth Entrepreneurs

Youth entrepreneurship in the Euro-Mediterranean region can play a significant role in addressing climate change and promoting clean energy solutions. The region faces unique challenges related to climate change, including rising temperatures, water scarcity, and increased frequency of extreme weather events. At the same time, there is a growing need for sustainable energy solutions to meet the energy demands of a rapidly developing region.

Youth entrepreneurship offers several advantages in this context. Young entrepreneurs often bring fresh ideas, innovative thinking, and a willingness to take risks, which are essential for developing and implementing new climate and energy solutions. Additionally, youth entrepreneurship can drive economic growth and job creation, which are crucial for the region's sustainable development.

When addressing the skill gap in the UfM Region, green and blue skills usually rank high. As such, there is a dire need to discuss ways to fathom this challenge and to integrate best practices into the working culture of young entrepreneurs, which means skill development at grassroots level, that would have a cascading effect on the entire economic model.

The panelists in this session will share their views, expertise, and engage in a discussion to build consensus on actions that need to be taken for a smarter, more responsible and more resilient entrepreneurial culture in the Euro-Mediterranean region.



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

### 3<sup>rd</sup> UfM Energy and Climate Business Forum at the margins of MEDCOP Climate 22 June 2023, Tangier, Morocco



#### **Session 4 - European Union Sustainable Energy Week: Accelerating Energy Transition in the Mediterranean Region**

The Mediterranean region is a climate hotspot facing severe weather events such as extreme heat, water scarcity, reduced rainfall that have the potential to trickle down into economic instability and forced displacement / migration. Furthermore, it is also a very asymmetric region. On the one hand, the North shore is a very integrated region with the EU common market, whereas the South shore is very fragmented along country lines. In addition, the demographic trends are also quite diverse.

At the same time, the region has a tremendous potential for renewable energy, namely solar and wind power. While at the moment, the South shore of the Mediterranean region is a net energy importer of energy, it can become a net exporter if energy transition policies are implemented. In particular, the South Mediterranean countries can become net energy exporters as early as 2030 under an energy transition framework, which has important socio-economic implications.

Recently, the war in Ukraine has brought to the spotlight the issue of energy security and raised concerns about the dependence on traditional fossil fuel sources, as well as the social and economic consequences. It highlighted the need to speed up energy transition and pour more investments in renewables, as well as how the Mediterranean countries can help the EU to achieve the decarbonization targets set by the EU within the Green Deal, the Union's roadmap to reach climate neutrality by 2050.

The session will link the EUSEW to the MedCoP Energy Business Forum event happening in Morocco (Tangier) on the same dates, which is being co-organized by the Union for the Mediterranean together with the Mediterranean Climate House and the Tanger-Tétouan-Al Hoceima Region. This event is a mid-point stock take against towards COP28 as well as a gathering of the private sector from the region.

The session aims to address issues related to clean energy, decarbonization in the Mediterranean and interconnections between both markets, focusing on handling urgent issues in the Mediterranean, such as decarbonization strategies, transition through renewables, green hydrogen, taking advantage of the momentum created by the EUSEW (in Brussels) and the Med CoP event (in Tangier) in June 2023.

#### **Session 5 - Regenerative Agriculture (TBD)**



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