

Hydrogen in the Mediterranean area, a driver for the energy transition and to which extent?

Press release

Paris, 19 November 2020 - The OME Strategy Committee organized a workshop on the role of hydrogen within the energy transition in the Mediterranean region. The objective of the meeting was to exchange views on the potentials and opportunities for the development of the hydrogen value-chain in the area, also to evaluate the opportunities for a regional cooperation. More than 50 participants took part in the workshop.

Chaher Boulakhras, CEO of Sonelgaz and Vice Chairman of OME, opened the conference welcoming participants and emphasizing how important it is for OME to address and discuss such a pivotal issue, given the potential for regional development of hydrogen and the role of Southern Mediterranean countries, such as Algeria.



A roundtable followed, moderated by François Dassa, Director of Prospective Mission and International Relations at EDF and Vice Chairman of the OME Strategy Committee, to discuss to which extent hydrogen could be a driver for the energy transition in the Mediterranean area. Three panelists addressed the topic from different perspective angles.

José Bermudez, Energy Technology Analyst at the IEA, presented the point of view of the Agency on the development of hydrogen at global level, pointing out the benefits in terms of renewables integration, hard-to-abate sectors decarbonization and energy security enhancement. He also summarised the challenges, as the need of lowering costs, developing infrastructures, overcoming regulatory barriers and promoting a cleaner hydrogen.

Tudor Constantinescu, Principal Advisor to Director General for Energy of the European Commission, illustrated the EU strategy on hydrogen and the EU scenarios, stressing the importance of strengthening the Europe's global leadership role by putting renewable hydrogen high on the EU strategic agenda, and emphasizing the opportunity for a concrete cooperation with the South Mediterranean region.

Mahmah Bouziane, from CDER (the Algerian Center for the Development of Renewable Energies) outlined the Algeria's hydrogen potential and illustrated the international initiatives operating in Algeria for the development of this promising sector, emphasizing the role of solar energy and the water for energy issue.

Mr. Boulakhras concluded thanking the speakers and congratulating all participants, highlighting the workshop confirms the importance for OME to further investigate the topic. François Dassa, vice chair and Khalil Lagtari, Chairman of the Strategy Committee closed the workshop also thanking participants and underlying the just launched joint study OME-WEC on hydrogen, which results will be ready before summer 2021, is for sure one of the steps forward and will be a useful tool for the OME roadmap as well.