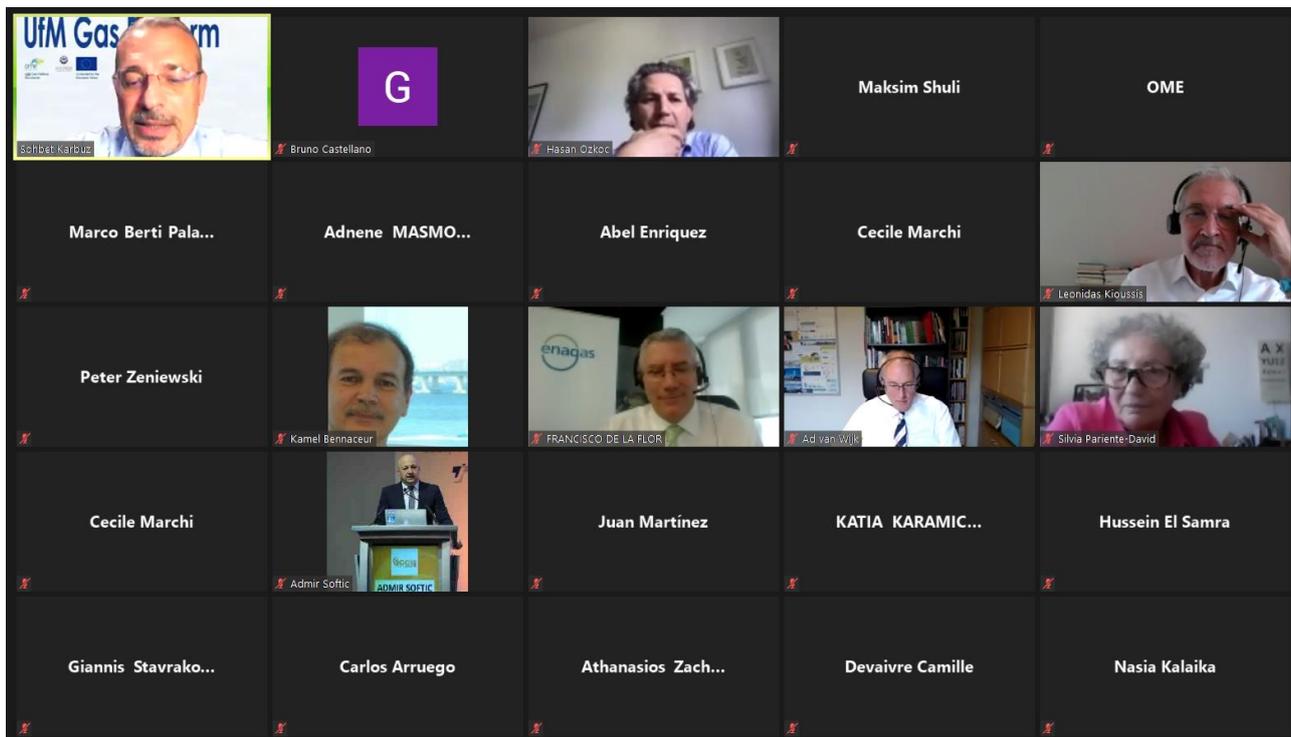


Press Release

UfM Gas Platform workshop on the role of renewable gases as an energy carrier towards a low carbon energy future



Paris, 12 July 2021 – As part of the UfM Gas Platform 2021 activities, the Observatoire Méditerranéen de l'Énergie (OME) organized with the support of the European Commission, a workshop on the role of renewable gases as an energy carrier towards a low carbon energy future on 1 July 2021. The workshop was organised through video conferencing. More than 70 registered delegates to the video conference from institutions and the industry from both shores of the Mediterranean Sea participated to the success of the event.

In his welcoming remarks, Leonidas Kioussis, representing the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) co-presidency, European Commission, underlined the importance of today's discussion in regard to identifying the role of renewable gases in the energy transition process. He recalled that both the promising potential of renewable gases and the importance of regional cooperation was strongly highlighted at the last UfM Ministerial Meeting on Energy held on 14 June 2021. They also agreed to foster exchange of knowledge and capacity building which was perfectly served by today's event.

Next, Sohbət Karbuz, OME, stressed on the opportunity to hear from senior experts on the role renewable gases can play towards a sustainable energy future and how. The event follows the launch, in February 2021, of a UfM Gas Platform working group dedicated to the role of power-to-gas and renewable gases technologies in the Mediterranean energy transition.

First, Lukasz Lisicki, European Commission, set the scene presenting the EU hydrogen strategy and gas markets decarbonization package. He focused on the roadmap to 2050 for the EU Hydrogen strategy and the future role of renewable and low-carbon gases.

Opening the first session of the workshop “Biogas and biomethane”, Peter Zeniewski, International Energy Agency, provided some key findings from the World Energy Outlook analysis on the potential of biomethane. Liquids and gases will still account for the majority of energy consumption in 2040. But biogas and biomethane are needed in a clean energy transition and offer multiple co-benefits.

Harmen Dekker, European Biogas Association, continued the session with the review of the recent development of biogas and biomethane production in Europe and selected countries, as well as the potential until 2050. He mentioned that the role of biogas and biomethane should also be seen from the angle of circular city and agro-ecology.

Concluding the session, Germán Medina, Naturgy, presented the Naturgy perspective on the energy transition and the renewable gases. Naturgy’s aim is to be a key player in energy transition projects, promoting sustainable mobility for more than twenty years.

Abel Enriquez, Enagas, started the second session on hydrogen and power-to-gas by presenting Enagas vision towards 2050 and key points of the future EU Gas/Hydrogen package. Blending of hydrogen into the gas network will play an important role in the development of hydrogen market.

Barbara Jinks, International Renewable Energy Agency, continued the conversation on the opportunities and risks of hydrogen in the Mediterranean region. Gases are still expected to provide a quarter of energy end use in 2050. And hydrogen will be needed to reduce carbon emissions in Hard-to-Decarbonise Sectors like aviation, heavy transport and heavy industry.

Finally, Professor Ad van Wijk of the University of Delft, discussed the potential for multi-GW low-cost power to hydrogen in the Euro-Mediterranean region. He described the power to hydrogen model reviewing several aspects of the value chain; technology, production cost, transport and storage, strategies and projects.

To conclude the workshop, Leonidas Kioussis, EC, and Sohbet Karbuz, OME, stressed on the crucial role for renewable gases and hydrogen in the energy transition. Cost gap is still significant between biogas/biomethane and natural gas, but they are widely distributed around the world and technology is not an issue. For its part, hydrogen will be needed to reduce carbon emissions in hard to abate sectors. Repurposing existing natural gas infrastructure and establishing an international framework for hydrogen trade, and hence collaboration, are crucial. While legislative aspects are in progress, the EU legislative packages will be a key driver.

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Initiated in Malta in July 2014, confirmed in Rome in November 2014 and launched in June 2015, in Brussels, the objective of the UfM Gas Platform is to enhance the cooperation in the Euro-Med. region between all stakeholders of the gas chain, in a bottom-up approach to improve gas security by identifying barriers and opportunities. The "Observatoire Méditerranéen de l'Énergie" (OME) runs the Platform's secretariat in close coordination with the UfM co-presidency.

The UfM Gas Platform is one of the three UfM Energy Platforms (The two others are on regional electricity market and on renewable energy and energy efficiency) established by EU Energy Ministers, Ministers of Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries, and the European Commission to further strengthen regional cooperation in the Mediterranean for ensuring secure, affordable and sustainable energy for the region and beyond.

More information about the UfM Gas Platform available at <https://www.ufmgasplatform.org/>