



PACT OF ISLANDS

WHEREAS the Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has confirmed that climate change is a reality and that the use of energy for human activities is largely responsible for it;

WHEREAS on 9 March 2007 the EU adopted the Energy for a Changing World package, committing unilaterally to reduce its CO₂ emissions by 20% by 2020, as a result of a 20% increase in energy efficiency and a 20% share of renewable energy sources in the energy mix;

WHEREAS the "European Union Action Plan for Energy Efficiency: Realising the Potential" includes the creation of a «Covenant of Mayors», as a priority;

WHEREAS the «Covenant of Mayors» initiative has been implemented successfully and provides guidance for the Pact of Islands initiative;

WHEREAS the EU Committee of the Regions stresses the need to join local and regional forces, as multi-level governance is an effective tool to enhance the efficacy of actions to be taken against climate change;

WHEREAS islands are usually highly dependent on imported fossil fuels, having constraints in accessing continental energy networks and faced with higher fuel costs, which is a constraint for socio-economic development, but also an important opportunity for research and demonstration on renewable energies and energy efficiency actions;

WHEREAS islands can contribute to the European Research Framework as laboratories to develop and demonstrate new energy technologies and methodologies to reduce CO₂, taking into account the principle of incubator islands and the primary energy supply overcosts;

WHEREAS insular territories are more vulnerable to climate change because of the high value of the biodiversity and because of their more fragile ecosystems;

WHEREAS actions implemented in islands have a high multiplicative potential because results are easier to show, tourism allows a wide visibility and the proximity of some European insular territories to external markets (Eastern and North Africa, Central America, North Europe, etc.) is also an opportunity to promote European technologies;

WHEREAS we recognise that local and regional island authorities share the responsibility with national governments of fighting global warming and must be committed thereto independently of the commitments of other parties;

WHEREAS the EU commitment to reduce emissions will be achievable only if regional and local stakeholders, citizens and their groupings share it;

WHEREAS local and regional island authorities, representing the closest administration to the citizen, need to lead action and to set an example;

WHEREAS many of the actions, on energy demand and renewable energy sources, necessary to tackle climate disruption fall within the scope of competence of island authorities, or would not be attainable without their political support;

WHEREAS the EU Member States can benefit from effective decentralised action at regional and local level in order to meet their commitment to greenhouse gas emission abatement;

WHEREAS local and regional island authorities throughout Europe are reducing global warming pollutants through energy efficiency programmes, including sustainable urban mobility, and the promotion of renewable energy sources;

WHEREAS Article 174 of the Consolidated Version of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (2010/C 83/01) states that

“the Union shall develop and pursue its actions leading to the strengthening of its economic, social and territorial cohesion.

In particular, the Union shall aim at reducing disparities between the levels of development of the various regions and the backwardness of the least favoured regions.

Among the regions concerned, particular attention shall be paid to rural areas, areas affected by industrial transition, and regions which suffer from severe and permanent natural or demographic handicaps such as the northernmost regions with very low population density and island, cross-border and mountain regions.”;

WHEREAS renewables are in abundance in European islands and their development can have a significant impact on alleviating islands’ permanent structural handicaps and can provide significant socio-economic benefits to islands;

WHEREAS Directive 2009/28/EC states that

“(44) The coherence between the objectives of this Directive and the Community’s other environmental legislation should be ensured. In particular, during the assessment, planning or licensing procedures for renewable energy installations, Member States should take account of all Community environmental legislation and the contribution made by renewable energy sources towards meeting environmental and climate change objectives, in particular when compared to non-renewable energy installations”.

COMMITMENTS

WE, THE POLITICAL LEADERS OF SIGNATORY EUROPEAN ISLAND COMMUNITIES, COMMIT TO

Go beyond the objectives set by the EU for 2020, reducing the CO2 emissions in our respective territories by at least 20%, through the implementation of an Island Sustainable Energy Action Plan. The commitment and the Action Plan will be ratified through our respective procedures;

Prepare a baseline emission inventory as a basis for the Island Sustainable Energy Action Plan;

Prepare, adopt and submit to the European Commission an Island Sustainable Energy Action Plan within the year following signature of the Pact of Islands;

Adapt island structures, including allocation of sufficient human resources, in order to undertake the necessary actions;

Mobilise the civil society in our geographical areas to take part in developing the Action Plan, outlining the policies and measures needed to implement and achieve the objectives of the Plan;

Submit an Implementation Report to the European Commission, at least every second year after submission of the Action Plan for evaluation, monitoring and verification purposes – the first Implementation Report will be submitted before the end of ISLE-PACT, through the Project Co-ordinator;

Share experience and knowhow with other signatory islands, including participation in European conferences and events, in the direction of innovation and the development of bankable projects in the framework of the implementation of the Island Sustainable Energy Action Plans;

Share experience and collaborate with the EU «Covenant of Mayors» initiative;

Organise local and regional public awareness campaigns and events, in co-operation with the European Commission and with other key stakeholders:

- to allow citizens to benefit directly from the opportunities and advantages offered by a more intelligent use of energy;
- to increase acceptability of renewable energy sources by local communities and promote the idea of rational use of energy; and
- to regularly inform the local media on developments concerning the Action Plan;

Disseminate the message of the Pact of Islands at European level in the appropriate fora and in particular, encourage other island authorities to join the Pact of Islands;

Mobilise sustainable energy investments in our respective territories, in the framework of the Pact of Islands;

Accept termination of our membership of the Pact of Islands, subject to prior notice in writing by the European Commission, in case of either:

- i) failing to submit the Island Sustainable Energy Action Plan within the year following formally signing up to the Pact;
- ii) non-compliance with the overall CO₂ reduction objective as set in the Action Plan, due to failure to implement or insufficient implementation of the Action Plan;
- iii) failing to submit Implementation Report in two successive periods.

WE, THE ISLAND AUTHORITIES, APPRECIATE

The island-specific initiatives and actions of the European Parliament and the European Commission;

The assistance and related financial support from the European Commission, particularly through the ISLE-PACT initiative.

WE, THE ISLAND AUTHORITIES, REQUEST SUPPORT FROM

The European Commission and the national administrations in setting up co-operation schemes and coherent support structures including financing for the implementation of the Island Sustainable Energy Action Plans and in facilitating at legislative and/or regulatory level the overcoming of non-technical barriers that prevent investment projects from becoming bankable;

The European Commission and the national administrations in recognising the activities in the Pact of Islands as strategic priorities in their respective support programmes within the framework of their climate change initiatives;

The European Commission by providing recognition and public visibility of the signatory islands through the use of a Pact of Islands logo and promotion of this commitment and of its objectives and actions through the Commission's communication facilities;

The European Investment Bank or similar financial institutions for insular project financing;

The European Commission by allocating funds for Technical Assistance under the ELENA Facility. The allocation of these funds should take into consideration the specificity of the islands' regions, as well as the difficulties of these peripheral areas to have direct access to decision making bodies (e.g. EIB). Other funds (e.g. loans, Recovery Plan etc.) may be directed to mature projects in the European islands, through Supporting Structures (nominated under the Covenant of Mayors scheme) and/or Regional Authorities, to facilitate local actors' accessibility to those funds and to assure the visibility of the whole process.

WE, THE ISLAND AUTHORITIES, INVITE

Other islands and island regions to join the Pact of Islands as a declaration of their political commitment to adhere to and respect its objectives;

Other major stakeholders to formalise their contribution to the achievement of our commitments.

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