

Clean Energy for EU Islands Secretariat

Highlights from the pilot years

2018-2020



Preface:

An important driver for the co-creation of the Clean Energy for EU Islands Initiative was to offer a leading platform for exchanging expertise and experience between all relevant stakeholders for de-carbonising our islands. We launched the Clean Energy for EU Islands Secretariat as part of the agreements of the Valletta declaration. The Secretariat has now been operational for 29 months, establishing an increasingly growing and inclusive EU wide island community. In doing so, the Secretariat has consolidated the Clean Energy for EU Islands Initiative as an Initiative *for islands by islands*.

These highlights not only indicate the activities carried out by the Secretariat, but also reflect how a vibrant and energetic EU-wide island community rise to our climate change challenge, showing themselves as important frontrunners of the European Green deal.

The pilot phase and the newly signed Memorandum of Split for an upgraded Clean Energy for EU Islands Initiative predict a positive future for the strengthened collective efforts of the decarbonisation of the EU islands.



*Catharina SIKOW-MAGNY,
Director for Internal Energy Market,
Directorate-General for Energy,
European Commission*

Clean Energy for EU Islands Secretariat - Highlights from the pilot years 2018 - 2020

Author: Clean Energy for EU Islands Secretariat

Cover photo: Clean Energy for EU Islands Secretariat

Published by the Clean Energy for EU Islands Secretariat

Rue d'Arlon 63, BE-1000 Brussels | info@euislands.eu | euislands.eu | November 2020



The Clean Energy for EU Islands Secretariat is an initiative by the European Commission. This publication does not involve the European Commission in liability of any kind.

Background - A network of European islands in transition

The Secretariat was established in 2018 as a pilot project to support the EU-wide community of islands in their efforts to transition to sustainable energy sources and reduce energy consumptions. It has been built on the vision that, in order to assure the best conditions for the clean energy transition and to benefit all members of the island communities, a balanced collaboration between public and private stakeholders is essential.

The core of the initiative is the Clean Energy Transition Agenda, which is the recommended process for a solid and inclusive energy transition on the islands. The island communities are collectively defining their own decarbonisation vision as well as elaborating a series of pathways to reach it. The Clean Energy Transition agenda or 'CETA' serves as a living document and compass for all the involved organisations afterwards. See [here](#) for much more information.

The transition to clean energy, with the active participation of the island communities, will future-proof the islands, increase their resilience and improve the communities' well-being. In parallel, the islands engaged in the transition have become lighthouses for the energy transition of the European Union and beyond. At the end of the Pilot Phase, the Secretariat has registered 52 islands who have committed themselves within the initiative as actively decarbonising their islands.



Map overview of the islands who have committed to decarbonise as part of the Clean Energy for EU Islands Initiative during the Pilot Phase (www.euislands.eu)

Check out the Clean Energy for EU Islands [interactive map](#) to learn more about how the EU's pioneering islands are working with all stakeholders in their communities to advance renewable energy production and energy efficiency, and how this enables the islands to create diverse and prosperous local communities.

Highlights from the pilot phase

Throughout the pilot phase of the Clean Energy for EU Islands, a series of decisive milestones and highlights can be identified, depicting main developments and achievements and decisive moments of the initiative.

It provides a concise overview of the progress made in the building of the initiative as well as the progress of the involved islands. It is presented as a chronology of main achievements and numbers within the pilot phase years:



2017→ 4 June 2018: Signing of the Valletta Declaration and first CE4EUI Forum in Chania.

The Starting point for the Clean Energy for EU Islands Secretariat was set with the Valletta Declaration and the following first CE4EUI Forum in Chania. These events carved out the need for a Secretariat of the Initiative acting as the platform for building and managing the day-to-day operations of the Initiative. This led the European Parliament to send a Preparatory Action request to the European Commission for determining the requirements of the planned Secretariat. You can read the full Valletta Declaration [here](#).



June 2018: Official start of the Clean Energy for EU Islands Secretariat.

The official announcement was made during the EU Sustainable Energy Week in the European Commission in Brussels with high interest from colleagues within the European Institutions and, in particular, stakeholders already working in the field.



First presentation of the new Secretariat at EUSEW 2018 in Brussels



5-7 November 2018: The Clean Energy for EU Islands Forum in Lanzarote

continued the Initiative' Forum series that started in Chania, Greece. The Forum in Lanzarote focused on the political level from national to local decision makers and included high-level speakers from the EU. Also, this was the first time that the Secretariat ensured support for 'least resourceful stakeholders', thus compensating a number of island stakeholders who normally would not attend and contribute to this kind of dialogues. With Lanzarote and the Canaries Government as Co-host, a natural focus was put on the Outermost Regions and their specificities for succeeding in decarbonising their energy systems. A large number of representatives from the Outermost Regions joined for a specific session facilitated by the Government of the Canaries including representatives from Mayotte, Saint Martin, La Réunion, Guadeloupe, Martinique, Azores and Madeira.



Site visit - Desalination plant powered by the wind on Lanzarote



January 2019: The Islands Pledge discussion.

The clean energy transition requires a good collaboration between stakeholders aware of their roles, responsibilities, and in particular their commitment in the process. The Islands Pledge was co-created with a number of leading island associations in order to set this framework right and anchor it from the start. The framework spells out the national and international context the islands are joining

when committing to fight climate change, as well as a series of practical principles for good collaboration on the islands. Altogether, the Islands Pledge is made to ensure the long-term commitments from all stakeholders who join forces in developing the decarbonisation vision for their islands, as well as the pathways and respective roles for all relevant stakeholders who want to help reaching the overarching goal. The process will also help avoiding negative surprises for some stakeholders on the island by ensuring a common vision at an early stage in the process, thereby alleviating opposition and NIMBY effects. Instead, the Islands Pledge ensures an inclusive exercise for the whole island community to take action.



February 2019: Start of the workshop series started in Croatia with the first of 10 workshops. Each workshop was developed together with local hosts with a two-fold focus. Firstly, to establish or consolidate the 'Transition team' on the hosting islands, and, secondly, to use this local platform to inform other islands and relevant stakeholders about the process for inspiration, replication and exchange. All workshop's activities, speakers and level of expertise were tailored to the different contexts. See part 6 for further details of the latest workshops. The workshops were all backed up by the capacity building material that can be found in the library of the website [here](#).



Participants of the Greek workshop (April, 2019)



March 2019: Call for Technical Support The Secretariat provided technical support, specifically focusing on projects on islands that are progressing at implementation stage to build the Initiative and strengthen the ongoing decarbonisation momentum on leading islands. This included pre-feasibility studies, yield assessments of RES, as well as support on finding the most effective financing model. The 30 interventions targeted islands already supported for the development of their CETA, as well as other islands. These individual interventions emphasised the need to show progress with individual projects, alongside develop and refine the overall decarbonisation plan (the CETA) as a way to ensure community engagement, and to demonstrate how the energy transition affects the daily life on the islands and how that can be gradually scaled up. (See the [Island Transition Handbook](#) p. 50).



May 14-16 2019: Clean Energy for EU Islands Forum Stockholm/Åland Islands.

Based on inputs from the participants at the first Forum, the second Forum launched in Stockholm was hosted by the National Association for the Swedish Archipelago, Öland and Gotland, and FÖSS and by the Åland Islands on the second day. The Forum therefore took place in two different countries. On the second day, the conference continued in the meeting facilities on board the 'Viking Grace', who brought the participants for the final meeting venue in the



Co-hosts presenting their islands on day 1



Viking Grace with 'Rotor Sails' and venue on day 2 across the Gulf of Bothnia to Åland

parliament of the Åland islands. The commuter ferry is test pilot for new 'Rotor sails' and runs on LNG.



June 2019: Agreement on the Island Pledge text, among the leading island associations and members of the Co-Development Platform, as the framework for expansion beyond the 26 selected islands towards an inclusive movement, as well as on the principles for Supporting Organisations. You can read the final pledge and guidance [here](#).



Island Pledge signing template



October 2019: The Island Transition Handbook was published as a mix of experiences from local energy planning, the Covenant of Mayors, the Transition Management approach, and the inputs from the Pilot islands. The result is a practical step-by-step handbook for any stakeholder on islands that wish to start, restart or boost their Clean Energy Transition. The Handbook is currently available in eight languages. Recently, a summary was also published targeting local and regional decision-makers. You can find the Handbook [here](#).



The Island Transition Handbook



November 2019: Preparations of the Split MoU with Croatia being part of the EU Presidency Trio. Croatia's upcoming presidency coincided very well with the following Forum of the Initiative, where the Energy Attachés of the EU Island Member States were invited to learn more about the Initiative and use it as input and inspiration for the upcoming negotiations on the Split MoU.



20-22 November 2019: Clean Energy for EU Islands Forum in Split/Hvar Croatia included

keynote speeches from ministerial level and civil servants and networking sessions among all participants. The Forum was partly held on the Croatian mainland in Split, and participants were, in the evening brought by public ferry to the island of Hvar where the Co-hosts welcomed them to their medieval town, with walks and talks about their progress towards decarbonisation. A significant take-away from the Forum in Split was the aligned vision for developing the Clean Energy for EU Islands at all levels of governance.



Group picture from day 1 of the



11 December 2019: Presentation of the European Green Deal. Despite still being a young initiative, the Clean Energy for EU Islands was one out of few citizens initiatives specifically mentioned in the roadmap for the new President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen. It spells out a commitment from the European Commission to the EU Islands directly via the main strategic document for the new President. You can read the full text [here](#).

'The Commission will take forward the work on the Clean Energy for EU Islands Initiative to develop a long-term framework to accelerate the clean energy transition on all EU islands.'

European Green Deal December 2019



22 November 2019: The first 6 Clean Energy Transition Agendas finalised and presented



during the Forum in November. The Clean Energy Transition Agendas were the focus of several sessions. They were presented and discussed in detail as reference processes for the pioneering islands and other islands who wish to embark on their clean energy transition process. You can find the CETAs online [here](#). The CETAs are the tangible outputs for following the guidance in the Island Transition Handbook.



June 2020: The Split MoU signed. As with most other activities, the final signing of the Split MoU was also delayed by COVID-19. However, 14 Member States signed the Memorandum laying out the draft for strengthening and broadening the Initiative further. You can read the full MoU of Split [here](#). The Memorandum of Split is a strong commitment from national level as a good point of departure for national support to local climate action on the EU islands.



September 2020: Support for 30 specific projects as part of the Initiative finalised. Shortly before the end of the pilot phase, all 30 bilateral project interventions were finalised. This included: 5 projects related to PV installations, 4 related to wind power, 8 related to assessment of renewable energy overall potentials, 5 to financing solutions, 3 related to grid analysis and 3 related to energy efficiency in buildings.



October 2020: 65 Supporting Organisations registered on the CE4EUI website declaring their specific support to the islands in transition. This is done through the official 'Declaration of Support'.

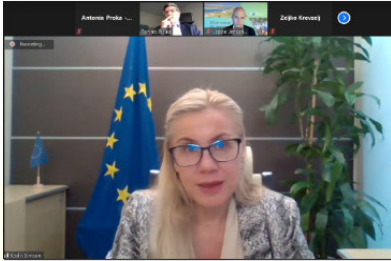
Similar to the Island Pledge, this document was also co-created and approved by representatives from the 4 helixes represented in the advising Co-development platform of the Secretariat. The Supporting organisations include all organisations, public and private, small and large, national and international that agree on supporting the cause of the Initiative and are aware of the process of the Clean Energy Transition Agenda. This growing database comprises islands in transition as well as specialised entities that can offer support in the different steps of the process; these entities often come from the same country, and the EU wide initiative thereby strengthening the close support opportunities for the decarbonisation at Member State or even regional levels too.



Declaration of Support document



26-29 October: Clean Energy for EU Islands (online) Forum



Commissioner Simson opening the 4-day Forum

replaced the Forum that was initially planned for May but postponed and entirely moved online due to the pandemic. A 4 days' Forum took place with a focus on the EU institutions' support to the Initiative and with a thorough introduction to the various aspects of the Co-host's Azores 2030 Energy strategy. In her opening speech, EU Commissioner for Energy Ms. Kadri Simson emphasised the role of the EU islands with the new emission reductions target of 55pct. By 2030. The forum also announced a gallery of videos submitted from islands as online site-visits as well as an overview of CETA's available for inspiration. You can find the video gallery [here](#).



29 Clean Energy Transition Agendas finalised by islands.

Throughout the final phase of the pilot, several islands finalised their CETA. Some islands with existing plans used the Island Transition Handbook as a check-list, other islands started from scratch on their decarbonisation. It is promising to see that 7 islands submitted their CETAs without bilateral support from the Secretariat, only by making use of the empowering framework with the guidance material, regional and national support, as well as the general community and capacity building support provided by the EU-wide island community. This functions as a positive indicator for a next phase with further roll out and expansion of the Initiative. See all the public CETA's [here](#).



A Illa de Arousa (Spain)



Brač (Croatia)



Ibiza (Spain)



Kasos & Symi (Greece)

All public CETAs are available on www.euislands.eu

Indirect highlights - Creating ripples in the water


The Initiative is developed as a growing empowering network that enables all EU islands to start, restart or boost their clean energy transition on their own. This is based on the resources available within the initiative, such as contacts to relevant experts, publications and guidance to find the right support. Some individual highlights showing examples of the empowering effect achieved already in the Pilot Phase. The list is a selection and in no way an exhaustive list of local achievements; for more highlights and events see the website [here](#) for news on island achievements




Job creation: The pilot island of Cres in Croatia has recently allocated budget for a full time position as Transition Team coordinator within the municipality, who will be in charge of managing and ensuring progress of the Clean Energy Transition Agenda on the island. In addition, the Irish Island Federation (Comhdháil Oileáin na hÉireann) has created a new position of Climate Action Officer to ensure the inclusion of Clean Energy Transition in the ongoing work of the organisation and to work with other relevant groups and agencies at local, national, and European level.




Community energy development: On Crete in Greece and Cres in Croatia, local energy cooperatives have been established as part of the dialogue around the Clean Energy Transition engaging citizens directly in the energy transition.

 **New multi-stakeholder collaborations:** On the Small Isles in Scotland, the collaboration around the CETA that invites all stakeholders into the dialogue was used afterwards as a platform when organising the Isles' coordination in tackling COVID-19.

 **New inter-municipal collaborations:** On the island of Salina in Italy, the CETA process with Transition Dialogues on a common vision and pathways for decarbonisation has led to a (re)newed collaboration between the three municipalities on the island, which were previously facing a challenging collaboration on the topic of energy. The first tangible result coming out of the dialogue is a rooftop PV plant on a local hotel, embodying a clear sign of the collaboration and the first joint step towards decarbonising Salina.



PV's on Salina as a first tangible outcome of CETA

 **Empowering initiative:** Apart from the 26 Islands supported directly with their CETA activities, 7 other islands have submitted their CETA independently by making use of material, events and network as sources of guidance for starting the clean energy transition, of the information received from the Helpdesk, and of the received islands Pledges. It is clear that more islands follow suit!

 **Multi-level governance dialogues:** In Ireland, Cork County Council gathered six islands in their county in a coordinated support for them to develop their CETAs. This has furthermore 'trickled up' in the Irish governance levels as attention and support from the Irish national government has now been put in place. This predicts a positive development of the support for the energy transition on the Irish Islands as well as serves as a great inspiration to other Member States in developing designated national support for islands in transition. The picture shows Transition Team representative from Cape Clear Islands handing over the Island Transition Handbook to Leo Varadkar, Prime Minister of Ireland (2017- June 2020)



Prime Minister of Ireland Leo Varadkar receives the Island Transition Handbook

The Journey continues...

Haven't you joined yet?

Learn more how to join through

an [Island Pledge](#) or a [Declaration of Support](#)

Published by the
Clean Energy for EU Islands Secretariat



© European Union
This publication does not involve the European Commission in liability of any kind.