

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, ENVIRONMENT AND WATER

DRAFT MINUTES

of the meeting in Rabat, Morocco
on 24 September 2012

1. Opening of the meeting

The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming all committee members and thanking the House of Representatives of the Parliament of the Kingdom of Morocco for hosting this meeting. The Chair then welcomed Mr Jamel **KIKANE** (Algeria), who replaces Mohamed BESSAÏH as new Vice-Chair of the Committee. Finally, the Chair stated that in accordance with the structure of the Committee Bureau as adopted by the Plenary in Rabat in March 2012 Mr Ibrahim **ABU AYYASH** (Palestinian Authority) would be the third Vice-Chair together with Ms **PARVANOVA** (European Parliament) and Mr KIKANE. There was no objection by the Committee.

In his welcome address, Mr Karim **GHELLAB**, the President of the House of Representatives of the Parliament of the Kingdom of Morocco, stressed that the joint challenges of the Euromediterranean area could be resolved only if resources were pooled. The PA-UfM, and in particular this committee, would play a central role in coming to tangible solutions. Morocco would be able to establish green energy as a priority after adopting “an arsenal of laws”, added the President.

2. Adoption of the draft agenda

The agenda of the meeting was adopted.

3. Adoption of the minutes of the meeting in Rabat on 24 March 2012

The minutes of the last meeting of the Committee on Energy, Environment and Water, held in Rabat on 24 March 2012, were adopted.

4. Opening statement by Mr Fouad DOUIRI, Minister of Energy, Mines, Water and Environment of the Kingdom of Morocco

In his opening statement Minister **DOUIRI** referred to Morocco's growing energy demand and high dependence on energy imports . On the other hand, he added, Morocco had a large potential of renewable energies such as wind power, solar energy and marine energy, which were not yet being extensively exploited. To this end, the national strategy to 2020 focussed on the development of more capacity in these fields in order to annually produce 43% of electricity through renewable energy, to avoid 9.5m tons of CO₂ per year and to create 13 000 jobs in Morocco. It should be possible that by the year 2020 1000 MW be produced annually from wind power, 2000 MW from solar energy and there should be an increase of energy production from natural gas up to 10 billion m³ by 2019. He also explained the activities and projects of the ministry in the environment and water sectors.

In the discussion delegates from France, Turkey, Tunisia, the European Parliament, Algeria, Estonia and Poland took the floor.

5. Potential of solar energy in the Union for the Mediterranean

Mr Sotiris **VAROUXAKIS**, Deputy Secretary General of the Union for the Mediterranean, began his introduction by saying that the Union for the Mediterranean united countries from both sides of the Mediterranean: the EU and the partner countries were natural partners with complementary needs, and therefore they would have common objectives. While crude oil and natural gas were not equally distributed, partner countries did have an incomparable natural solar energy potential as well as wind energy potential. The Mediterranean Solar Plan aimed at providing a capacity of 20 GWH per year of renewable energies by 2020 and exporting part of the energy to Europe while creating employment opportunities and promoting industry in the partner countries, Mr Varouxakis added.

Ms Raffaella **IODICE**, Head of Unit for Regional Programs Neighbourhood South in the European Commission, described the Mediterranean Solar Plan (MSP) as a "lighthouse project" of the UfM that would make it possible in the long run to replace traditional energy sources. The European Commission and the UfM-Secretariat in Barcelona would work closely together on such projects as MEDREG and MEDENEC II. For further development the protection of investments, an integrated regional market and the creation of energy grids were key factors, she added. In this context the local authorities had a special role to play; that is why the European Commission wanted to launch the project "Cleaner energy-saving Mediterranean cities" by the end of this year.

Mr Guido **PRUD'HOMME**, Head of Office of the European Investment Bank (EIB) in Morocco, opened his presentation by stressing that sustainable energy was the only viable solution to overcome the triple challenges of increased energy demand, of environmental stress and of high unemployment in the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean. Despite its vast potential, renewable energy still accounted for a very small share of the total energy consumption, he added. The EIB could provide financing for projects, using a variety of instruments ranging from senior loans to equity funds. With lending amounting to almost € 5.9 billion since the creation of FEMIP in 2002, the energy sector represented 56% of EIB commitment in the region. In order to achieve the MSP's objectives the EIB had launched the MSP Project Preparation Initiative to accelerate up to 20 renewable energy and energy efficiency projects in the MENA region.

In the discussion delegates from Poland and Turkey took the floor.

6. Challenges for cities in the sectors of energy, environment and water

Ms Rima **TARABAY**, Vice President of the Lebanese NGO “Bahr Loubnan”, deplored the present environmental situation in Lebanon, in particular that of the coastline. According to her there were no laws that protected the coast from construction and the treatment of used water was not adequate. Even when sources of pollution were identified, solutions were difficult to implement against the background of the “mosaic of communities”. Bahr Loubnan tried to rehabilitate the coast near the village of Naqoura, the last village before the Israeli border, situated in the military zone controlled by UNIFIL and from which Israeli troops had withdrawn in 2000. She pointed out that the preservation of the environment could regroup the various political and religious identities and create employment opportunities.

In the discussion delegates from Turkey, Tunisia, Algeria and the European Parliament took the floor.

7. Waste map of the Mediterranean – M.E.D. Expedition & follow up of the “Let’s Do It” Campaign

Mr Bruno **DUMONTET**, Project Manager of the “Mediterranean EnDangered” (M.E.D.) Expedition, presented a summary of the dangers of plastic to marine fauna, which his international scientific and educational program had been investigating for the past several years. In this regard the impact of invisible micro debris of fragmented plastic was not yet well known. Plastic bags, industrial pellets and microfiber had been identified as major sources of marine pollution, Mr Dumontet added. In the end, micro debris would enter the food chain and hence would not only present a threat to the marine environment but also to humans. Therefore a change in legislation and awareness raising efforts were necessary.

Mr Stefan **SCHENNACH**, Chair of the Committee, referred to the findings of the report “Let’s Do It” which had been adopted by the Plenary of the PA-UfM at its last annual meeting in Rabat in March 2012. In this regard the Committee recommended that once a year all Mediterranean countries participate in an event, using the campaign “Let’s Do It” as a reference, intended to promote proper waste management and improve the level of knowledge of the dangers of pollution. Contacts with the Secretariat General of the UfM had already been established to organize the follow up. A separate meeting of the Board of the Committee together with the co-rapporteurs of the said report (Estonia, Israel, Palestinian Authority) and Mr **RAMPONI** (rapporteur of the 2011 report on the creation of marine parks in the Mediterranean) at the seat of the Secretariat General in Barcelona was envisaged to this end.

In the discussion delegates from Tunisia and the European Parliament took the floor.

8. Any other business

The **next meetings** of the Committee on Energy, Environment and Water will take place in **Berlin on 10-11 December 2012** and in **Stockholm on 27-28 May 2013**.

The Chair informed the Committee that following a decision by the Bureau of the PA-UfM it was not envisaged to continue preparing committee reports, which had previously been drafted by two or more rapporteurs, but rather to present **committee position papers** to the Plenary. In this regard the Chair announced a focus on the implementation of the solar energy plan, on the cooperation between cities in the environment field, as well as on food security within a year
