

Ministers from the 42 member countries of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), which includes countries in southeastern Europe, have signed a declaration underlining their commitment to decarbonizing the energy sector in the fight against climate change.

At the third Union for the Mediterranean ministerial meeting on energy, the agreed text confirms the intention to set a new clean energy transition pathway for the region, as well as priorities for strengthened regional cooperation in the energy sector. The declaration was agreed by ministers at a meeting in Lisbon hosted by Portuguese Minister for Environment & Climate Action Joao Pedro Matos Fernandes, representing the EU Council Presidency, and co-chaired by EU Commissioner for Energy Kadri Simson and Jordan's Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Hala Zawati.

Speaking after the event, EU Commissioner for Energy Kadri Simson said that without policy change, the Mediterranean region will be 2.2 degrees warmer by 2040 than it is today. To limit global warming, member states urgently need to be more energy efficient, while increasing the use of clean energy in all sectors, including transport, industry and heating and cooling. The adopted declaration sends a powerful signal and shows the willingness of the region to work together towards a clean energy transition.

The declaration underlines the importance of setting a new clean energy transition ambition for the region. It refers to accelerating the implementation of ambitious roadmaps and targets for increased energy efficiency application, and facilitating the deployment of renewable energy production units. It speaks of addressing the challenge of making the gas sector sustainable by promoting low carbon gaseous energy, notably clean hydrogen and its derivatives, and reducing methane emissions. It calls for increased cooperation on innovation and knowledge exchange and improving market integration and interconnectivity. It acknowledges the importance of investment, not only calling for actions to step up public and private investments in sustainable renewables, green hydrogen in energy efficiency, but also underlining the importance of facilitating the financing of energy projects and ensuring the consistency of interventions in the energy sector.