WORLD FUTURE ENERGY SUMMIT

Part of ABU DHABI SUSTAINABILITY WEEK

Hosted by MASDAR

EU-GCC-MENA HYDROGEN & ADVANCED FUELS SUMMIT

Accelerating Regional Cooperation

13 JAN 2026

EVENT SUMMARY REPORT

Organized by

THE EU-GCC COOPERATION ON GREEN TRANSITION PROJECT

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WORLD FUTURE ENERGY SUMMIT | Part of ABU DHABI SUSTAINABILITY WEEK | Hosted by MASDAR

EU-GCC-MENA Hydrogen & Advanced Fuels Summit: Accelerating Regional Cooperation

Thursday | DEC 11

12:30 - 13:00 | Opening Segment

Opening Remarks

H.E. Lucie Berger
Ambassador
European Union Delegation to the United Arab Emirates

Keynote Speech

HE Ditte Jørgensen
Director-General of the Directorate-General for Energy (DG ENER)
European Commission

Keynote Address

Mohammad Abdelqader El-Ramahi
Chief Hydrogen Officer
Masdar

13:00 - 13:45 | Bridging Regions: The Strategic Role of Cross-Border Cooperation in Accelerating the Hydrogen Economy

Framing Interventions

Policy Perspective
Connecting Regions, Powering the Transition: The Trans-Mediterranean Pathway for Hydrogen and Clean Technologies

Florian Ermacora
Head of Unit, Directorate-General for Middle East, North Africa, Gulf DG MENA
European Commission

Industry Perspective
Bridging Regions: Cross-Border Cooperation as a Catalyst for Scaling the Global Hydrogen Economy

Khalid Bin Hadi
CEO
Siemens Energy UAE, Bahrain & Oman

Panel Discussion

Moderator

Spyros Kouvelis
Team Leader
EU-GCC Cooperation on Green Transition Project

Panelists

Florian Ermacora
Head of Unit, Directorate-General for Middle East, North Africa, Gulf DG MENA
European Commission

Ahmed El-Hoshy
CEO
Fertiglobe

Raul Manzanas Ochagavia
Development Director
Acciona & Nordex Hydrogen

Michael Spitzbart
Senior Vice President Refining Business MEA
OMV

Discussion Points:

This high-level dialogue will gather senior representatives from governments, industries, and financial institutions across Europe, the GCC, and the Mediterranean. Panelists will explore how cross-regional cooperation can unlock large-scale hydrogen projects, strengthen energy security, and build a globally competitive hydrogen economy. Discussions will highlight trade corridors, joint investment frameworks, and geopolitical alignment for a shared green future

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Thursday | DEC 11

14:00 — 14:45 | Session I: Regulatory Frameworks and Certification — Enabling Trusted Hydrogen Trade

Moderator

Frank Wouters
Director
MED.GEM Network

Panelists

Frank Mischler
Director at International Power-to-X Hub (GIZ)
PtX-hub

Nawal Al Hanaee
Director of Future Energy
UAE Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure

Reham Al Maimani
Director - Markets & Strategy
Hydrom

Discussion Points:

This session will examine how regulatory frameworks and sustainability-focused certification standards can enable trusted international hydrogen trade. With perspectives from the EU, GCC, and Southern Mediterranean, the discussion will explore how aligned standards, safety requirements, and sustainability criteria can support market interoperability, reduce trade barriers, and build confidence as global hydrogen markets scale.

14:45 — 15:30 | Session II: Connecting Innovation to Market — Scaling Technologies and Business Ecosystems

Moderator

Kamel Bennaceur
General Manager
Nomadia Energy Consulting

Panelists

Mark Geilenkirchen
VP Business Development ME
Advario

Prof Lourdes Vega
Professor and Director, Research and Innovation Center on CO_2 and Hydrogen (RICH Center)
Khalifa University

Siddiqa Al Lawati
Advisor, Low Carbon Molecules
OQ Alternative Energy (OQAE)

Kamel El Kholy
MENA BD Director
John Cockerill Hydrogen

Ahmed Saad
CEO
Suez Canal Economic Zone

Manuel Kuehn
VP Sustainable Energy Solutions
Siemens Energy

Discussion Points:

This session dives into the technical and commercial heart of hydrogen and advanced fuels development. It will showcase scalable innovations in production, infrastructure, and value chain integration, while addressing how to accelerate technology readiness, de-risk investments, and create viable business ecosystems.

15:30 - 15:45 | Closing Remarks

H.E. Alexander Schoenfelder
Ambassador
Federal Republic of Germany to the United Arab Emirates

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EXECTIVE SUMMARY

The EU Hydrogen & Advanced Fuels Summit, held on 13 January 2026 during Abu Dhabi Sustainability Week (ADSW), brought together 219 senior policymakers, industry leaders, financiers, and technical experts from Europe, the GCC, and the wider Mediterranean to examine how cross-regional cooperation can accelerate the development of a globally competitive hydrogen and advanced fuels economy.

Organized under a Team Europe approach by the EU-GCC Cooperation on Green Transition Project and the MED-GEM Network, in close coordination with the Delegation of the European Union to the UAE, the Embassy of Germany in the UAE, the dialogue provided a high-level platform to align policy, regulation, technology, and investment perspectives across regions.

Discussions highlighted that hydrogen and advanced fuels are moving beyond pilot phases and policy ambition into a critical implementation phase, where success will depend on regulatory clarity, bankable projects, integrated infrastructure, and trusted international partnerships.

Across the opening segment, framing interventions, and three substantive panel sessions, participants converged on several key conclusions:

- Cross-border cooperation is indispensable to scaling hydrogen markets, enabling economies of scale, reducing costs, and strengthening energy security for both importing and producing regions.
- Regulatory alignment, certification, and sustainability standards are prerequisites for trusted international hydrogen trade, but must be implemented pragmatically to avoid delays, cost escalation, and market fragmentation.
- Infrastructure, logistics, and system integration are as critical as technology readiness in moving projects from concept to Final Investment Decision.
- Early flagship projects and trade corridors play a decisive role in de-risking investment, building confidence, and accelerating market maturity.
- Public-private collaboration and blended finance mechanisms are essential to crowd in private capital and support scalable, commercially viable hydrogen ecosystems.

The dialogue reaffirmed the strategic importance of EU–GCC–Mediterranean cooperation in shaping future hydrogen value chains and underscored the need to move decisively from dialogue to delivery. Participants agreed that sustained engagement, policy coherence, and coordinated investment will be central to building a resilient, competitive, and climate-aligned global hydrogen and advanced fuels market.

Welcome Remarks
H.E. Lucie Berger, Ambassador, EU Delegation to the UAE

In her welcome remarks, Ambassador Lucie Berger underlined the strategic importance of the EU Hydrogen & Advanced Fuels Dialogue in strengthening cooperation between Europe, the GCC, and the wider Mediterranean at a critical moment for the global energy transition.

She highlighted in particular:

- The growing role of hydrogen and advanced fuels in addressing energy security, competitiveness, and climate objectives
- The need for Europe's energy transition to be pursued through international partnerships, rather than in isolation
- The importance of cooperation with the GCC and neighbouring regions to scale clean energy solutions and develop resilient value chains
- The urgency of moving from dialogue to implementation, through concrete projects, investment frameworks, and public-private collaboration

Ambassador Berger concluded by emphasizing that structured cooperation between regions will be essential to translate shared climate ambitions into tangible economic and industrial outcomes.

Keynote Speech
Ditte Juul Jørgensen, Director-General, Directorate-General for Energy (DG ENER), European Commission

In her keynote address, Director-General Ditte Juul Jørgensen reaffirmed the European Union's long-term commitment to the energy transition, stressing that decarbonisation remains central to energy security, affordability, industrial competitiveness, and climate resilience.

Key points highlighted in her intervention included:

- The indispensable role of hydrogen and hydrogen derivatives in decarbonising hard-to-abate sectors such as heavy industry, maritime transport, and aviation
- The importance of predictable regulatory and policy frameworks, including sustainability and certification standards, to provide clarity for investors and partners
- The EU's focus on scaling hydrogen through dedicated instruments such as the EU Hydrogen Bank and the Global Gateway initiative
- The necessity of international hydrogen trade and cross-border infrastructure, given that Europe's future hydrogen system will depend on diversified supply routes

She concluded by underlining that trusted partnerships with neighbouring regions, including the GCC and the Mediterranean, will be critical to building a competitive and resilient European hydrogen market.

Industry Keynote Address
Mohammad Abdelqader El-Ramahi, Chief Hydrogen Officer, Masdar

In his industry keynote address, Mr Mohammad Abdelqader El-Ramahi presented a regional industry perspective on the development of global hydrogen and advanced fuels value chains, highlighting the GCC's role as a natural partner for Europe.

He emphasized the following points:

- The GCC's renewable energy potential, infrastructure readiness, and long-term investment outlook as key enablers for large-scale hydrogen production
- The critical role of low-carbon hydrogen and advanced fuels in decarbonising sectors that cannot be electrified
- The importance of scale, technology development, and regulatory clarity in driving down costs and enabling commercial viability
- The need for long-term offtake arrangements and certification frameworks to support bankable projects

Mr El-Ramahi concluded by reaffirming Masdar's commitment to advancing hydrogen development through cross-regional partnerships, stressing that close cooperation between policymakers, industry, and financiers will be essential to building a competitive global hydrogen economy.

Policy Perspective – Connecting Regions, Powering the Transition
Mr Florian Ermacora, Head of Unit, Directorate-General for Middle East, North Africa, Gulf, DG MENA , European Commission

Mr Ermacora outlined the European Commission's strategic approach to accelerating hydrogen and clean technology deployment through cross-regional cooperation, with a particular focus on the Mediterranean, the GCC, and Europe. He presented the Trans-Mediterranean Renewable Energy and Clean Technology (T-MED) Initiative as a central implementation platform to translate policy commitments into investment-ready projects.

He stressed that decarbonisation pathways—particularly for hard-to-abate sectors—will require international trade in renewable and low-carbon hydrogen, underpinned by economies of scale, strong private-sector participation, and aligned regulatory frameworks. Cooperation with neighbouring regions was framed not only as an energy security imperative for Europe, but also as a catalyst for industrial development and domestic decarbonisation in partner countries.

Key points highlighted included:

- The strategic role of the T-MED Initiative in mobilizing EU instruments, international financial institutions, and private capital to support renewable energy, hydrogen, and clean technology projects across the Mediterranean region.
- The importance of bankable projects and business cases, noting that public funding alone is insufficient and must be used to de-risk and crowd-in private investment.
- The need for regulatory alignment, certification, and standards to enable cross-border hydrogen trade and ensure interoperability between producing and importing regions.
- A strong emphasis on industry-led implementation, with close collaboration between policymakers, developers, financiers, and technology providers.
- The launch of a forthcoming investment platform under T-MED, designed to support project preparation, blending of grants and concessional finance, and technical assistance to accelerate final investment decisions.

Mr Ermacora concluded by emphasizing that the success of the hydrogen economy will depend on moving decisively from targets and declarations to concrete projects, positioning EU–GCC–Mediterranean cooperation as a cornerstone of a resilient, competitive, and climate-aligned energy future.

Link to Mr. Ermacora's Presentation can be downloaded here.

Industry Perspective – Bridging Regions: Cross-Border Cooperation as a Catalyst for Scaling the Global Hydrogen Economy
Mr Khalid Bin Hadi, CEO, Siemens Energy UAE, Bahrain & Oman

Mr Bin Hadi framed hydrogen not merely as a technological transition, but as a strategic instrument of international cooperation, linking energy security, industrial competitiveness, and decarbonisation across regions. He emphasized that the global hydrogen economy will be shaped by trusted cross-border value chains, rather than isolated national initiatives.

Drawing on concrete examples from the Middle East and Europe, he highlighted how early export projects, industrial partnerships, and integrated infrastructure are already demonstrating the feasibility of international hydrogen trade. He positioned the GCC—particularly the UAE—as a key global supplier of competitively priced low-carbon hydrogen and derivatives, capable of supporting Europe's decarbonisation objectives.

Key points highlighted included:

- Hydrogen must be approached as a system-level value chain, encompassing renewable power, electrolyzers, conversion, storage, logistics, and end-use markets.
- The Middle East is uniquely positioned to play a leading role in global hydrogen supply, building on its energy expertise, scale advantages, and export infrastructure.
- The UAE's hydrogen strategy targets 1.4 million tonnes per year by 2031, scaling to 15 million tonnes by 2050, reinforcing its ambition to become a global low-carbon hydrogen hub.
- Early export milestones—such as the first green ammonia shipments from the region to Europe—demonstrate that cross-border hydrogen trade is already moving from concept to reality.
- Industrial partnerships, including collaborations between Masdar, OMV, Siemens Energy, and regional stakeholders, are essential to de-risk projects and move from pilots to bankable infrastructure.
- Scaling hydrogen requires integration across sectors, including renewables, grids, industrial demand, and digital optimization, rather than standalone projects.

Mr Bin Hadi concluded that hydrogen will define the next chapter of global energy cooperation, stressing that regions able to build trust, alignment, and shared standards today will shape future markets, competitiveness, and long-term resilience.

Panel Discussion – Bridging Regions: The Strategic Role of Cross-Border Cooperation in Accelerating the Hydrogen Economy

Moderator:
Mr Spyros Kouvelis, Team Leader, EU-GCC Cooperation on Green Transition Project

This high-level panel examined how cross-border cooperation between Europe, the GCC, and the wider Mediterranean can translate hydrogen ambitions into bankable projects, scalable infrastructure, and competitive international value chains. The discussion focused on aligning policy frameworks, investment platforms, and industrial partnerships to accelerate deployment while managing risk, cost, and regulatory complexity.

Moderator's Framing – Mr Spyros Kouvelis
Mr Kouvelis framed the discussion around the need to move decisively from ambition to implementation, stressing that hydrogen markets will only scale through concrete projects, coordinated investment, and trust-based regional cooperation. He highlighted the importance of:

- Linking EU regulatory frameworks with GCC and MENA production potential,
- Creating de-risked pathways for early projects,
- Ensuring that hydrogen cooperation contributes to energy security, competitiveness, and geopolitical stability across regions.

Speaker Highlights
Mr Florian Ermacora, Head of Unit (North Africa), Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR), European Commission

Mr Ermacora underlined that the EU's hydrogen strategy has entered a decisive implementation phase, shifting focus from targets and declarations to investment-ready projects. He presented the Trans-Mediterranean Renewable Energy and Clean Tech Cooperation Initiative (T-MED) as a central tool to operationalize cross-border hydrogen cooperation.
Key contributions included:

- Emphasizing that trade in renewable and low-carbon hydrogen is essential to achieve economies of scale and cost competitiveness.
- Stressing that hydrogen cooperation is not a pure export strategy, but must also support domestic decarbonization, industrial development, and job creation in partner countries.
- Highlighting the role of private sector engagement, supported by EU de-risking instruments, blended finance, and cooperation with international financial institutions (IFIs).
- Announcing the forthcoming Trans-Mediterranean Clean Energy Investment Platform, designed to bring project developers, IFIs, and public finance together to accelerate bankable projects.

Mr Raul Manzanas Ochagavia
Development Director, Acciona and Nordex Hydrogen

Mr Manzanas Ochagavia provided the developer perspective, emphasizing that regulatory alignment and infrastructure planning are critical to moving hydrogen projects from concept to execution.

Key points included:

- Alignment between EU frameworks and regional investment platforms is essential to unlock cross-border hydrogen projects.
- Hydrogen projects must be designed to deliver local value creation, including skills development and industrial integration, rather than focusing solely on exports.
- Developers require clarity on transport routes, infrastructure availability, and long-term market signals to commit capital at scale.
- Hydrogen financing differs fundamentally from oil and gas models, requiring long-term offtake visibility and public de-risking in early phases.

Mr Michael Spitzbart
Senior Vice President, Refining Business MEA, OMV
Mr Spitzbart highlighted hydrogen's role as a practical decarbonisation tool for industry, particularly for hard-to-abate sectors such as refining.

Key contributions included:

- Cross-border cooperation allows industry to pool expertise, share risk, and accelerate learning curves.
- OMV's partnership with Masdar illustrates how strategic industrial alliances can translate policy ambition into large-scale projects.
- The OMV–Masdar project in Austria (140 MW electrolyzer capacity) demonstrates how regulatory certainty and EU support mechanisms, such as the EU Hydrogen Bank, can enable final investment decisions.
- Early flagship projects are critical to creating a "demonstration effect", encouraging further private investment across regions.

Mr Ahmed El-Hoshy
Chief Executive Officer, Fertiglobe

Mr El-Hoshy focused on the market and value-chain dimension, stressing that hydrogen only becomes viable when treated as a cross-border commodity.

Key points included:

- Hydrogen and its derivatives—particularly ammonia—are best suited for long-distance trade, enabling energy transfer from resource-rich regions to demand centres such as Europe and East Asia.
- Existing infrastructure and logistics assets can significantly reduce project risk and cost, accelerating deployment.
- Regulatory uncertainty, evolving standards, and pricing volatility remain challenges, underscoring the need for close coordination between policymakers, financiers, and industry.
- Scaling hydrogen will require continuous collaboration and a shared commitment to moving projects through final investment decision and commissioning.

Key Takeaways from the Panel

- Hydrogen markets will scale only through cross-regional cooperation, not national self-sufficiency.
- Regulatory clarity, investment de-risking, and infrastructure planning are decisive enablers.
- Early flagship projects play a critical role in reducing uncertainty and attracting follow-on investment.
- Strong alignment between EU demand frameworks and GCC/MENA production capacity can position hydrogen as a cornerstone of long-term energy and industrial cooperation.

Session I – Regulatory Frameworks and Certification: Enabling Trusted Hydrogen Trade
Moderator:
Frank Wouters, Director, MED-GEM Network

This session examined how regulatory frameworks, certification schemes, and sustainability standards can enable trusted international hydrogen trade between Europe, the GCC, and the Southern Mediterranean. The discussion highlighted the importance of interoperability, mutual recognition, and regulatory clarity to reduce trade barriers, support investment decisions, and accelerate the scaling of global hydrogen markets.

Moderator's Framing – Frank Wouters
Mr Wouters framed the discussion around the practical challenges of translating regulatory ambition into bankable projects, noting that while standards and certification are essential for trust and trade, they also introduce cost, complexity, and timelines that must be managed carefully.

He highlighted:

- The long lead times traditionally required to establish international standards,
- The need for pragmatic, interoperable solutions rather than fragmented national approaches,
- The importance of aligning certification with real market needs, including shipping, aviation, and industrial offtake.

Speaker Highlights
Mr Frank Mischler, Director, International Power-to-X Hub (GIZ)

Mr Mischler focused on the regulatory foundations required to make hydrogen and its derivatives bankable and tradable across borders, drawing on practical experience supporting governments and markets globally.

Key contributions included:

- Emphasizing that hydrogen trade depends on clarity around EU compliance, including RFNBO definitions, additionality rules, and lifecycle emissions accounting.
- Highlighting that national regulatory frameworks must be designed from the outset to be interoperable with international standards.
- Stressing that certification systems must avoid double counting, inconsistent auditing, and data fragmentation, which increase cost and investor risk.
- Underlining the importance of early regulatory alignment to prevent project redesigns, delays, and cost escalation.

Ms Nawal Al Hanaee
Director of Future Energy, UAE Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure

Ms Al Hanaee outlined the UAE's approach to positioning itself as a credible and competitive supplier in international hydrogen markets, grounded in strong regulatory alignment and international cooperation.

Key contributions included:

- Highlighting the UAE's emphasis on partnership-based market development, including bilateral and multilateral cooperation with importing regions such as the EU.
- Emphasizing active UAE engagement in international hydrogen platforms and standard-setting bodies, including work on mutual recognition of certification schemes.
- Noting that hydrogen certification is a core pillar of the UAE National Hydrogen Strategy, alongside domestic decarbonisation and export readiness.
- Pointing to emerging trade corridor concepts, where mutually recognized standards enable seamless cross-border hydrogen and derivative flows.

Ms Reham Al Maimani
Director – Markets and Strategy, Hydrom

Ms Al Maimani provided the perspective of a national hydrogen orchestrator, focusing on how regulatory clarity and certification directly affect project cost, timelines, and investor confidence.

Key contributions included:

- Stressing that acceptance of Omani hydrogen in European markets is a decisive signal for investors.
- Highlighting Hydrom's efforts to ensure EU-aligned certification, including the use of isolated green power systems to meet additionality and traceability requirements.
- Identifying additionality rules as a major cost and design driver, often forcing project redesigns and delaying bankability.
- Underlining the importance of one-stop-shop permitting, infrastructure planning, and transparent land allocation to reduce non-technical risk for developers.

Key Takeaways from the Session

- Regulatory alignment and certification are prerequisites for international hydrogen trade, but must be implemented pragmatically to avoid cost inflation and delays.
- Mutual recognition and interoperability of standards are essential to enable cross-border value chains and trade corridors.
- Early regulatory clarity reduces redesign risk, improves bankability, and accelerates final investment decisions.
- Close coordination between governments, regulators, industry, and financiers is required to ensure certification supports — rather than hinders — market scale-up.

Session II – Connecting Innovation to Market: Scaling Technologies and Business Ecosystems

Moderator:
Kamel Bennaceur, General Manager, Nomadia Energy Consulting

This session explored how hydrogen and advanced fuels technologies can move from pilots to commercial deployment, focusing on the technical, financial, and ecosystem conditions required to scale production, infrastructure, and integrated value chains. Panelists examined how to de-risk investments, align innovation with market demand, and build viable cross-regional hydrogen business ecosystems linking Europe, the GCC, and the wider MENA region.

Moderator's Framing – Kamel Bennaceur
Mr Bennaceur framed the discussion around the implementation challenge, stressing that while technology readiness is advancing, market scale-up depends on coordinated progress across infrastructure, regulation, finance, and demand.
He highlighted:

- The need to move beyond announcements toward projects reaching Final Investment Decision (FID),
- The importance of system integration across renewables, grids, storage, logistics, and offtake,
- The role of industrial zones, ports, and logistics corridors in enabling large-scale hydrogen trade.

Speaker Highlights
Mr Mark Geilenkirchen, Vice President, Business Development Middle East, Advario

Mr Geilenkirchen provided a logistics and infrastructure perspective, emphasizing that scale and coordination are decisive factors for commercial viability.

Key contributions included:

- Highlighting that existing infrastructure for ammonia and methanol storage is largely molecule-agnostic, allowing rapid transition to low-carbon variants.
- Stressing that scale is essential — small, fragmented projects significantly increase unit costs for terminals and logistics.
- Noting that the cost impact of green fuels on end consumers is often marginal, underscoring the importance of demand-side communication and market signals.
- Emphasizing the need to plan infrastructure around trade routes and volume aggregation, not isolated projects.

Prof Lourdes Vega
Professor and Director, Research and Innovation Center on CO_2 and Hydrogen (RICH Center), Khalifa University

Prof Vega addressed the innovation-to-deployment gap, drawing on her experience at the interface of academia and industry.

Key contributions included:

- Emphasizing that many hydrogen technologies already work in laboratories, but fail at scale due to integration, impurities, and operating conditions.
- Highlighting the need for early industry involvement in applied research, ensuring technologies are designed for real operating environments.
- Stressing that misaligned success metrics between academia and industry slow commercialisation.
- Underlining the role of applied research centres in technology validation, standards development, and workforce skills.

Ms Siddiqa Al Lawati
Advisor, Low Carbon Molecules, OQ Alternative Energy

Ms Al Lawati shared the project developer perspective, focusing on derivative selection and near-term market readiness.

Key contributions included:

- Identifying green ammonia as the most immediately scalable export product, given existing infrastructure and market familiarity.
- Highlighting growing interest in e-methanol and e-SAF, particularly where industrial CO_2 sources are available.
- Emphasizing that early projects require clear pricing signals, infrastructure certainty, and strong EPC partnerships.
- Stressing the importance of phased project development to manage cost and technology risk.

Mr Kamel El Kholy
MENA Business Development Director, John Cockerill Hydrogen

Mr El Kholy focused on electrolyser deployment and localization, highlighting supply-chain and cost dynamics.

Key contributions included:

- Emphasizing the importance of diversified manufacturing bases to strengthen supply security and reduce costs.
- Noting that localization follows market demand and scale, not policy alone.
- Stressing that long-term cost reduction depends on durability, lifetime performance, and system efficiency, not only upfront CAPEX.
- Highlighting the GCC's strong potential to become a global production hub for green hydrogen.

Mr Ahmed Saad
Chief Executive Officer, Suez Canal Economic Zone

Mr Saad presented the role of industrial zones and trade corridors in enabling hydrogen ecosystems.

Key contributions included:

- Highlighting the strategic importance of the Suez Canal as a global energy and trade nexus.
- Emphasizing that hydrogen projects require integrated industrial ecosystems, not standalone assets.
- Stressing the need for tailored financing mechanisms, particularly for emerging markets facing higher capital costs.
- Underlining the importance of government-to-government cooperation to de-risk infrastructure investment.

Mr Manuel Kuehn
Vice President, Sustainable Energy Solutions, Siemens Energy

Mr Kuehn addressed system integration and bankability, drawing on large-scale project experience.

Key contributions included:

- Emphasizing that electrolyser systems are complex industrial assets, requiring cautious, step-by-step scaling.
- Highlighting that integration costs — not electrolyser CAPEX alone — remain a major challenge.
- Identifying grid-electrolyser interaction as a critical bottleneck requiring further technical validation.
- Stressing that investor confidence depends on predictable performance metrics, long-term offtake visibility, and regulatory stability.

Key Takeaways from the Session

- Scaling hydrogen requires integrated ecosystems, not isolated projects.
- Infrastructure, logistics, and system integration are as critical as technology readiness.
- Applied research, industrial zones, and supply-chain localization play key roles in reducing cost and risk.
- Long-term offtake certainty and regulatory stability are essential to unlock financing and reach FID.
- Cross-regional cooperation between Europe, the GCC, and MENA is central to building competitive hydrogen markets.

Closing Remarks
H.E. Alexander Schoenfelder
Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to the United Arab Emirates

In his closing remarks, Ambassador Alexander Schoenfelder reflected on the discussions throughout the EU Hydrogen & Advanced Fuels Dialogue, underscoring the growing momentum for cross-regional cooperation between Europe, the GCC, and the wider Mediterranean in advancing hydrogen and advanced fuels markets.

He highlighted the importance of long-term partnerships built on trust, regulatory alignment, and industrial collaboration, noting that hydrogen and advanced fuels are no longer emerging concepts, but strategic components of future energy systems and industrial competitiveness. Ambassador Schoenfelder emphasised Germany's strong commitment to supporting international cooperation that enables innovation, investment, and technology deployment at scale.

Key messages from his intervention included:

- The need to translate dialogue into concrete, bankable projects that deliver tangible climate and economic benefits.
- The importance of policy consistency and regulatory certainty to create confidence for investors and industry.
- The role of public-private cooperation in accelerating technology deployment and reducing risk across hydrogen value chains.
- Germany's continued engagement in supporting international hydrogen partnerships, including through bilateral and EU-level initiatives.

Ambassador Schoenfelder concluded by encouraging stakeholders to maintain the momentum generated by the dialogue, stressing that sustained cooperation across regions will be essential to building a resilient, competitive, and climate-aligned global hydrogen economy.

ABOUT THE PROJECT

THE EU-GCC COOPERATION ON GREEN TRANSITION PROJECT

Launched in August 2023, this project funded by the European Union marks a significant milestone in the long partnership between the European Union (EU) and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). By addressing critical global challenges such as climate change and sustainable development, the project builds upon the EU-GCC Cooperation Agreement Document signed in 1989. The Joint Action Programme for 2022-2027 endorsed in February 2022 outlines the strategic framework for cooperation, emphasizing the need to join forces in addressing climate change and make progress on green transition. This project reflects the shared commitment to leveraging EU expertise to deepen cooperation and engagement, promote green policies and technologies, and create a conducive business environment for collaboration among energy- related and green tech companies in the Gulf.

KEY OBJECTIVES

The project aims to strengthen political and technical relationships at regional and bilateral levels by:

- Deepening engagement towards green transition and climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- Promoting the uptake of green transition policies and technologies by the GCC countries.
- Facilitating a conducive business environment between EU and GCC green tech companies in the Gulf region.

IMPACT

- Enhanced knowledge exchange on climate action and green transition.
- Raised awareness on climate change, sustainable practices and circular economy.
- Strengthened network for collaboration in green solutions and energy transition.
- Proactive EU Climate Diplomacy in the region.

STAKEHOLDERS

- State and non-state institutions, business community, & environmental NGOs.
- Researchers, academia, youth groups, & media outlets.
- EU and GCC businesses, particularly SMEs.
- EU Member States present in the GCC.

FOCUS AREAS

GREEN TRANSITION
Promote transformative change for green transition policies & practices within the GCC.

NET ZERO CARBON
Implement solutions for reducing carbon emissions in industrial & public sectors.

HYDROGEN MARKET
Support the development of a renewable hydrogen market in the Gulf region.

CLEAN-TECH SOLUTIONS
Foster innovations in renewable energy technologies & clean-tech industries.

CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION
Strengthen resilience & adaptive capacities to climate-related hazards.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
Launch initiatives to preserve biodiversity & natural habitats, including marine protection.

CIRCULAR ECONOMY
Encourage the adoption of sustainable waste management & resource efficiency.

SUSTAINABLE FINANCE
Engage financial institutions in channelling investment & finance in support of green transition.

Funded by the European Union

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