



SECOND ENERGY COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY FORUM

Vienna, 22 June 2018

Forum Statement

The second Sustainability Forum took place under the auspices of the Energy Community in cooperation with Balkan Green Foundation, Heinrich Böll Foundation and RES Foundation on 22 June 2018 in Vienna. The Forum gathered Ministers and Deputy Ministers responsible for energy, environment and climate change of the Energy Community Contracting Parties, high-level officials of the European Commission, EU Member States and Contracting Parties as well as representatives of academia, civil society and non-governmental organisations to discuss the best ways to shape energy and climate policy in the Energy Community.

All participants underlined that the clean energy transition requires inclusiveness, a high level of transparency and strongminded action of all actors. They welcomed the value added of the Sustainability Forum as a multi-stakeholder platform bringing together all relevant stakeholders to contribute towards a low-carbon Energy Community. They agreed that further engagement of civil society actors will accelerate the clean energy transition.

The participants acknowledged that the renewables and energy efficiency 2020 targets adopted by Energy Community Contracting Parties will soon expire. All stakeholders, including industry, urgently need investment predictability and therefore a new climate and energy framework at least until 2030 is required.

The participants agreed on the need to be ambitious and increase substantially the share of energy from renewable sources, improve energy efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas emission, in accordance with the Paris Agreement, where countries called on each other to step up their climate action, to hold global warming to well below 2 degrees Celsius and to pursue efforts to limit it to 1.5 degrees Celsius.



All of the participants recognized the importance of the Energy Community as the organization supporting the target setting process at regional level in the framework of the Energy and Climate Committee and its Technical Working Group. They reiterated the relevance of a robust, EU-consistent and sound quantitative approach to establish overall 2030 targets, reflecting also common interests and obligations already existing in the framework of the Paris Agreement.

The participants highlighted that the Sustainability Charter serves as a tool to reinforce Contracting Parties' commitment to tap into their high potential for energy efficiency and renewable energy generation by a set of measures to increase the sustainability of national and regional energy markets as well as generation and consumption patterns. They recalled that at the Trieste Summit (12 July 2017) Western Balkan leaders acknowledged the need to increase their efforts to attract investments in clean energy and reap their full benefit.

The participants stressed that, although a valuable instrument, the Sustainability Charter should focus on new priorities, including the adoption of the climate acquis, the preparatory steps to integrate energy and climate plans and the establishment of a rigorous, streamlined and inclusive process to set overall 2030 targets. The Energy Community Secretariat is called upon to support all Contracting Parties, not only the Western Balkans, in monitoring the implementation of ongoing and new policy, regulatory and practical measures and sub-measures.

The participants also encouraged the development of strategies, legislation and new business models across the Energy Community ensuring that citizens and communities can actively participate in the energy system by contributing to local development, thus increasing the acceptance of renewables and self-sufficiency.

The participants recognized that energy poverty continues to be a major challenge in the Energy Community Contracting Parties and must be one of the key considerations in the transition towards low-carbon power systems. They stressed the importance for Contracting Parties joining ongoing EU initiatives supporting tailor-made energy transition strategies, including the Coal Regions in Transition Platform and the EU Energy Poverty Observatory, to enable a shift that is not only sustainable but also fair on those who stand to lose out.