

Report on NCEP national roundtable in Portugal

Background

In 30th of January 2024, in Caldas da Rainha (Portugal), ENA – Environment and Energy Agency of Arrábida attended the second Climate and Energy Dialogue organized under the LIFE project "*NECPlatform - National Energy and Climate Platforms to meet the EU's 2030 objectives*", funded by the European Commission, with ZERO Association as a partner.

The project aims to promote the participation of local authorities in the process of updating the National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP), which will take place by June 2024, making sure that it is aligned with the needs and capacities of all key stakeholders, along with the policies and strategies in place at regional/local governance levels.

For that aim, the *NECPlatform* project supports six EU Member States (Bulgaria, Croatia, France, Italy, Portugal and Romania) in setting up and managing Climate and Energy Dialogues (CEDs), multi-stakeholder and multi-level exchange platforms, supporting the national level in developing and monitoring national energy and climate policies, including the updating of NECPs. This will support Member States in complying with Article 11 of the Regulation on the Governance of the Energy Union and Climate Action, which asks them to set up "climate and energy dialogues", allowing various stakeholders (from different sectors and different administrative levels) to co-create coherent climate and energy strategies.

In this scope, *ZERO - Sustainable Earth System Association*, as *NECPlatform* coordinator in Portugal, invited ENA to participate in a series of round tables established to create a framework for the exchange and coordination of actions between national and regional/local administrative levels to achieve common climate and/or energy objectives.

Methodology

A series of six dialogues have been organized between the second quarter of 2023 and the end of 2024. These face-to-face meetings, moderated by *ZERO - Sustainable Earth System Association*, last approximately half a day and include the public bodies

responsible for the NCEP review process, relevant bodies in the context of developing energy and climate strategies and representatives from regional/local administrative levels (e.g. municipalities and inter-municipal bodies).

The dialogues contribute to the process of updating the NCEP and also to some thematic discussions that address specific policy areas, such as mobility or energy efficiency.

The following timetable is planned:

#1 Climate and Energy Dialogue Kick-off-meeting – 17th April 2023

#2 Dialogue – 30th January 2024

#3 Dialogue – April 2024

#4 Dialogue – July 2024

#5 Dialogue – October 2024

#6 Dialogue – January 2025

NECPs in Portugal

The National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP) is the main instrument on climate and energy for the decade 2021-2030 with the overall goal of carbon neutrality. The NECP includes a characterization of the existing situation in Portugal regarding Energy and Climate, covering five dimensions: decarbonisation, energy efficiency, security of supply, internal energy market and research, innovation and competitiveness, as well as the main action points planned to fulfil the different commitments.

In terms of goals, Portugal commits itself through the NECP to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions between 45% to 55% in comparison to 2005 levels, to make a 47% incorporation of renewable energies, to invest 35% in greater energy efficiency, in addition to commitments of energy security, internal market and research, innovation and competitiveness.

Consultation processes: the dialogue between local and national authorities

The NECP has several measures to be implemented at the local level, but in the elaboration of its first version this level was not sufficiently involved. Some of the measures involving municipalities concern the promotion of distributed energy generation and self-consumption, the decarbonisation of the Local Government

building stock, the role of local energy and climate agencies, and the implementation of the National Strategy for Active Mobility 2020-2030, for example.

Local authorities face many challenges in being able to adequately contribute to the discussion of energy and climate policies at national level. Among them are the lack of internal specialised human resources, technical knowledge and training, communication among municipalities, financial resources and platforms for municipalities. They also face some instability because political commitments might change according to political cycles.

However, there are also many opportunities to reverse this, such as new financing schemes and the decentralization of some competencies on climate and energy since 2022. Also, the National Climate Law requires municipalities to have a municipal climate action plan until the end of February 2024, which will ensure municipalities can bring content in the discussions with the national government. As such, there is a need to reinforce teams, cooperation and commitment, which also makes municipalities better equipped to participate in the national dialogue.

ENA has supported its three municipalities (Setúbal, Palmela and Sesimbra) in the development of their SEAPs/SECAPs, their Climate Change Local Adaptation Plans and now, through the EUCityCalc Project, their Climate Neutrality Roadmaps. Thus, it is important for ENA to participate in these dialogues with different actors from different levels, to capitalize its experience on mitigation and adaptation measures, and to contribute for the improvement of national strategies.

The NCEP National Roundtable in Portugal

Agenda

14h15-14h30	Welcome and participant registration	
14h30-14h40	Introduction - Dialogues objectives - Meeting agenda	ZERO
14h40-14h55	Participants' presentation	ALL
14h55-15h15	Presentation of NECP preliminary draft	APA/DGEG
15h15-15h30	Presentation: local sustainable mobility	OESTE CIM

15h30-15h45	Presentation: renewable energy communities (CER)	COOPÉRNICO
15h45-16h00	Coffee break	
16h00-16h50	Roundtables: mobility and building	ALL
16h50-17h15	Wrap up on roundtables	ALL
17h15-17h30	Conclusions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Summary of first meeting - Next steps 	ZERO

The meeting

The meeting was attended by the public bodies responsible for the NECP review process, relevant organisations in the context of developing energy and climate strategies and representatives from the regional/local administrative levels (e.g. municipalities, inter-municipal entities and ENA, as the only representative of energy agencies).

Francisco Ferreira, President of ZERO, began the meeting by welcoming and thanking the participants for their presence. This was followed by a presentation of the NECPlatform project by Ana Muller, ZERO's project manager, and the objectives of the dialogues, the work plan and the meeting agenda were also presented. After this introduction, all the participants had the chance to introduce themselves so that they could get to know each other.

Paulo Jorge Lopes Simões, First Secretary of Oeste CIM (the host entity), made a presentation on sustainable mobility at local level.

Next, António Vasconcelos, from the Directorate-General for Energy and Geology, and Paulo Lourenço, from the Portuguese Environment Agency, presented the NECP, focusing specially on the measures that concern local authorities.

Ana Rita Antunes, from Coopérnico, made a presentation on renewable energy communities.

After the talks, the main part of the meeting began: a group discussion among the participants on the themes of mobility and buildings, with the proposal of recommendations for NECP improvement.

Outcomes

During the meeting, synergies between different actors and administrative levels were discussed in order to tackle climate change and achieve the EU's climate and energy objective in a coherent and concerted way, coordinating and aligning strategies.

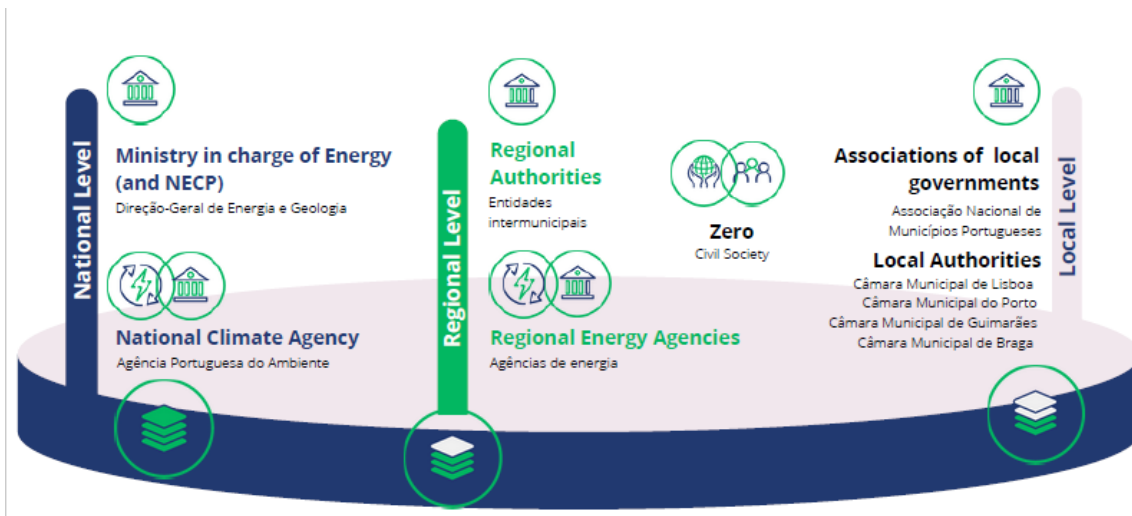
Contributions from regional/local administrations and other relevant stakeholders, were collected to feed into the revision of the National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP). The main conclusions/suggestions of the discussions by the groups are as follows:

- Regarding electromobility, the electrical infrastructure (supply and power networks) must be strengthened*
- Emissions' calculation metrics at national, regional and local level must be harmonized and standardized and scope 1, 2 and 3 must be clearly defined for cities*
- CO₂ capture for industrial processes must be included*
- Municipal technicians must be trained to carry out the Local Climate Action Plans required by law*
- Regarding renewable energy communities, regulatory changes must be introduced to allow municipalities to participate in the creation of these models (currently there are constraints in the Public Procurement Procedures that make impossible the factual participation)*
- Connections between public transport networks must be promoted, especially in rural areas.
- Municipalities must be provided with administrative instruments for certain solutions (e.g. tender specifications).
- Procedures for licensing and installing charging points must be simplified or technical support must be provided.
- The electrification of the logistic sector must be prioritized.
- The relevance of linking mobility measures with the rail network must be emphasized.
- Decentralized production must be encouraged: sale to the grid vs. self-consumption.

Recommendations marked with (*) were made by ENA.

List of attendance

To allow a constructive discussion, it was established a number of participants around 25. The institutions involved should cover all the sectors in which the NECP operates, in addition to all the sub-national administrative levels (municipalities and inter-municipal entities).



Representatives that attended the meeting:

- National level: Ministry in charge of Energy (and NECP): DGEG - General Directorate of Energy and Geology + ADENE - National Energy & Climate Agency + APA - National Environment Agency + Academia
- Regional level: Regional Energy Agency (ENA) + Intermunicipal entities
- Local level: Association of local governments + Local Authorities
- Non - governmental sector: ZERO - Sustainable Earth System Association

NAME	ENTITY
Ana Batalha	Municipality of Arruda
Ana Machado da Graça	Portuguese Environment Agency
André Alves	Municipality of Torres Vedras / Adapt.local
André Sobral Lopes	Oeste Intermunicipal Community
António Vasconcelos	General Directorate of Energy and Geology
Bruno Santos	Municipality of Bombarral
Cristina Cardoso	General Directorate of Energy and Geology
Ema Machás Maranhã	Oeste Intermunicipal Community
Helena Abreu	Oeste Intermunicipal Community
Isabel Rodrigues	ENA – Energy and Environment Agency of Arrábida
João Dinis	Municipality of Cascais
Joaquim Brandão Pires	Algarve Intermunicipal Community
José António Santiago	National Association of Local Governments
Jose Lopes	Coimbra Region Intermunicipal Community
Lindsey Wuisan IN+	IN+ Center for Innovation, Technology and Policy Research

Machado Dias	Municipality of Torres Vedras
Mariana Mata	Municipality of Óbidos
Orlando Paraíba	ENA - Energy and Environment Agency of Arrábida
Paulo Lourenço	Portuguese Environment Agency
Sofia Cordeiro	ADENE - Portuguese Energy Agency
Vítor Zarro	Municipality of Nazaré

Pictures

