

17th Energy Community Oil Forum Conclusions

Location: Belgrade

Date: Wednesday, October 1, 2025

1. The 17th Oil Forum, held in Belgrade on 30 September 2025, gathered representatives of the European Commission, the Energy Community Secretariat, Contracting Parties, industry stakeholders, international organisations, and civil society. Mr Antony Lagrange (European Commission) chaired the forum, which was hosted by the Ministry of Mining and Energy of the Republic of Serbia. In his keynote, Mr Predrag Grujicic highlighted the central role of oil security and the need to align the sector with the European Green Deal objectives and the broader decarbonisation policy.

Session I – Energy Security in the EU and the Energy Community

2. Participants underlined that energy security remains a cornerstone of EU and Energy Community policies. They discussed the role of oil security in the global transition, emphasising strategic reserves, resilience, and preparedness for the upcoming winter period 2025/26.
3. The Serbian experience in managing the implications of international sanctions was recognised as an example of resilience. Presentations from the International Energy Agency and the European Commission stressed the importance of coordinated preparedness and solidarity mechanisms.
4. The Forum emphasised that strategic oil stocks remain crucial in a context of geopolitical uncertainty and security, which is the most important pillar of any energy policy today. They should be complemented with decarbonisation goals, without compromising security.

Session II – Oil Stocks Directive Transposition and Implementation

5. The Secretariat outlined the status of transposing and implementing the Oil Stocks Directive. While progress has been made, gaps still exist across several Contracting Parties. Notable advancements are seen in Ukraine and Montenegro, which successfully transposed the core and most secondary legislation on oil stocks during 2024/2025. This marks a significant step towards improving their emergency preparedness and aligning their frameworks with EU standards.



6. The Forum was informed that the Estonian Stockpiling Agency's (ESPA) priority is maintaining emergency stockpiles and ensuring national security and supply resilience. In light of Russia's increasing threat, including warfare, sanctions, and hybrid activities, ESPA is shifting its focus from stockpiling to comprehensive security-of-supply solutions, investing in cyber defence and strengthening crisis preparedness.
7. The Forum underlined the need for robust institutional frameworks, continued monitoring, and technical assistance to ensure full compliance with the acquis.

Session III – Green Deal Pathways for Oil and Petrochemicals

8. The Forum addressed the role of the oil and petrochemical sectors in the energy transition. Discussions covered decarbonisation of petrochemicals, monitoring and mitigating emissions at the refinery level, and opportunities in green chemistry.
9. Participants recognised that decarbonisation requires innovation across the entire value chain, supported by effective policy frameworks. Monitoring and reducing emissions such as methane, benzene, and Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) is critical for ensuring credibility and compliance with climate objectives.
10. Green chemistry and sustainable technologies were highlighted as tools to bridge industrial and environmental priorities, contributing to the sector's alignment with Green Deal targets.

Session IV – Panel Discussion on Emergency Oil Stockholding Models

11. The panel discussed comparative approaches to regulatory frameworks, lessons from crisis response, regional cooperation, and the role of the private sector in emergency stockholding.
12. The panel emphasised that different stockholding models can be applied, but resilience depends on strong and reliable institutions.
13. Panellists agreed that regional cooperation and cross-border solutions can enhance cost-effectiveness, while digitalisation offers tools for transparency and efficiency.
14. The Forum concluded that past crises offer valuable lessons for building flexible and resilient stockholding systems, including stronger private sector involvement.



Closing

15. In the closing session, the Forum reaffirmed the importance of oil security and resilience while recognising the sector's role in the broader energy transition.
16. The Forum invited the European Commission and the Energy Community Secretariat to continue supporting Contracting Parties in strengthening their oil security frameworks and aligning the oil and petrochemical sectors with the decarbonisation policies aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions – primarily carbon dioxide (CO₂) – across the economy.
17. The Forum invited the remaining CPs to finalise the transposition and implementation of the Emergency Oil Stocks Directive.