



PROCEDURAL ACT OF THE ENERGY COMMUNITY SECRETARIAT

2025/23/ECS-ENC: ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ENERGY COMMUNITY SECRETARIAT'S CENTRE FOR RENEWABLES ACCELERATION

The Energy Community Secretariat,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the Energy Community, and in particular Article 67(e) thereof;

Considering the Energy Community's objectives to improve the environmental situation in relation to Network Energy and related energy efficiency and foster the use of renewable energy, and set out the conditions for energy trade in the single regulatory space as stipulated by points (d) and (b) of Article 2 of the Treaty, respectively;

Having regard to the present *acquis communautaire* which underlines the need for, and provides a framework for safeguarding sustainability principles when developing energy projects, plans and programmes (in particular, Directive 2011/92/EU of 13 December 2011 on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU, Directive 2001/42/EC of 27 June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment, Directive 79/409/ECC of 2 April 1979 on the conservation of wild birds, Directive 2018/2001 of 11 December 2018 on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources and Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 on the Governance of the Energy Union and Climate Action);

Having regard to the Ministerial Council of the Energy Community Recommendation 2024/1/MC-EnC on accelerating the deployment of renewable energy projects and implementing the energy efficiency first principle, which calls upon Energy Community Contracting Parties to prepare the legal and institutional preconditions for the implementation of the provisions of Article 1 of Directive 2023/2413 of 18 October 2023 amending Directive (EU) 2018/2001 in particular with respect to the mapping of areas for the deployment of renewable energy and the necessary grid and storage infrastructure, as well as the designation of renewable acceleration areas pursuant to Articles 15b, 15c, 15d and 15e thereof, and with respect to the permit-granting procedures for renewable projects pursuant to Articles 16, 16a, 16b, 16c, 16d, 16e and 16f thereof;

Considering the draft proposals of the European Commission to the Energy Community to extend and align the scope of the Directive 79/409/ECC of 2 April 1979 on the conservation of wild birds, and to incorporate provisions of the Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora and the Directive 2000/60/EC of 23



October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy, to further support accelerated and coherent renewable energy deployment through the effective integration of environmental sustainability into planning and of environmental assessment into the streamlined permitting of renewable energy projects;

Building on the work of the Energy Community Secretariat's Task Force on Environment that supports Energy Community Contracting Parties in their transposition and implementation of the environmental *acquis communautaire* via the assessment, peer review and drafting of different implementation tools, in order to overcome challenges in the transposition and implementation of the *acquis communautaire* on environment; and taking into account the conclusions of the XXV Environmental Task Force meeting held on 25 April 2023;

Taking into account joint initiatives of the Task Force on Environment and other working groups and committees of the Energy Community Secretariat on cross-cutting topics and challenges concerning the decarbonisation component in particular, including the development of renewable energy projects, permit-granting processes and financial support for energy projects; Taking into account the Energy Community Secretariat's Renewable Energy Coordination Group commitment to enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of permitting and planning processes for renewable energy projects, aligning with EU best practices and supporting the Energy Community's renewable energy targets.

Recalling that the development of new energy projects in the region, in particular renewable energy projects, requires a dynamic and comprehensive permit-granting framework, and recognizing that accelerating such projects will enhance energy security, reduce demand in the Energy Community Contracting Parties, and support the achievement of their 2030 targets under Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 on the Governance of the Energy Union and Climate Action, as incorporated and adapted by Ministerial Council Decision 2021/14/MC-EnC and amended by Ministerial Council Decision 2022/02/MC-EnC;

Recognising that many Contracting Parties may benefit from support in developing robust criteria for identifying renewables acceleration areas, improving spatial and environmental data availability, integrating environmental safeguards into renewable energy siting and planning, strengthening institutional coordination, and enhancing administrative capacity for effective and accelerated permitting;

Taking into account the conclusions of the 23rd Ministerial Council of the Energy Community held on 18 December 2025, which agreed to continue discussions on the incorporation of additional EU environmental *acquis*, notably Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds, Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, and Directive 2000/60/EC establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy, and which underlined that the incorporation of such *acquis* ensures legal coherence while enabling the accelerated deployment of renewable energy projects in line with the evolving EU regulatory framework;

Recalling that the Ministerial Council welcomed the efforts of Energy Community Contracting Parties that have initiated legal and institutional preparations for the transposition and implementation of Directive (EU) 2023/2413 amending Directive (EU) 2018/2001, with regard to the designation of Renewable Energy Acceleration Areas and the streamlining of permit-granting procedures for renewable energy projects;

the Secretariat ADOPTS THE FOLLOWING PROCEDURAL ACT:

Article 1

Establishment of the Energy Community Secretariat's Centre for Renewables Acceleration

- 1) A Centre for Renewables Acceleration is hereby established within the Energy Community Secretariat (hereinafter "the Centre").
- 2) The Centre shall assist the Energy Community Contracting Parties in their efforts to develop appropriate permit – granting processes and a planning mechanism to streamline the permitting of renewable energy projects, and to provide a platform for exchange and discussion of all related issues among relevant energy sector stakeholders in the Energy Community.
- 3) The activities performed by the Centre shall include:
 - a) General:
 - i. Establishing a platform for cooperation among national, regional, and local authorities of the Energy Community Contracting Parties, as well as with relevant institutions and organisations across Europe and beyond, on matters related to the permit-granting, planning, and programming of energy projects;
 - ii. Organizing meetings, workshops and training to exchange views and best practices;
 - iii. Liaising with and providing input to the Energy Community Task Force on Environment, the Renewable Energy Coordination Working Group, and other relevant Energy Community fora, initiatives, working groups, and task forces, as appropriate;
 - b) Concerning the permit-granting processes:
 - i. Developing targeted technical assessments and hands-on recommendations to streamline and digitalise the permit-granting processes for renewable energy projects based on national data, workflows, and system diagnostics;
 - ii. Supporting the Energy Community Contracting Parties in practical rollout of efficient permit-granting mechanisms and tools in line with environmental sustainability principles;

- iii. Supporting the institutionalisation of single contact points and the establishment of “one-stop-shop” procedures for energy project permitting, including workflow mapping, user-journey design and process optimisation;
 - iv. Assisting the Energy Community Contracting Parties in developing practical options for the resolution of disputes arising in the permit-granting process, including, where appropriate, the use of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, as a form of capacity-building and procedural system-design work;
 - v. Facilitating the sharing of know-how, and organising training and capacity-building activities for relevant authorities and stakeholders involved in the permitting process.
- c) Concerning the energy projects planning and programming:
- i. Support the Energy Community Contracting Parties in developing mechanisms for comprehensive spatial mapping and planning of renewable energy projects, including GIS-based data cataloguing, environmental constraints integration, and identification of technically feasible renewable energy areas, based on sustainability criteria and environmental considerations;
 - ii. Providing operational expertise and technical support in the identification, designation, and development of Renewables Acceleration Areas, including technical siting criteria, data processing and spatial modelling, with particular focus on brownfield sites such as coal mines;
 - iii. Facilitating the sharing of know-how, and organising training and capacity-building activities for relevant authorities and stakeholders involved in renewable energy project planning and programming.

Article 2

Organisation and Operational Framework of the Centre

- 1) The Centre shall be managed by the Senior Expert on Environmental Governance, Permitting, and Planning of the Energy Community Secretariat and shall be supported by delegated experts seconded through the Secretariat’s partnership arrangements and consultants, covering specialised topics relevant to the Centre’s mandate.
- 2) The Centre shall receive targeted support by all Secretariat's units and experts, in accordance with their expertise, if appropriate, and bearing in mind the limited resources available.
- 3) The Centre shall establish a core working group, which will serve as the operational backbone, and shall work closely with:
 - a) The Energy Community Task Force on Environment, to ensure alignment with environmental assessment and nature protection requirements; and

- b) The Renewable Energy Coordination Working Group, to facilitate the implementation of single contact points and other measures related to renewable project permitting and planning.
- 4) The Centre shall also promote a broader layer of cooperation with external groups and independent experts who may provide technical opinions, guidance, and advisory support to the Centre on a pro bono basis.
- 5) The Centre shall have the capacity to implement pilot projects, coordinate technical and operational initiatives, and facilitate access to external funding and resources to support its activities.

Article 3 Entry into force

This Procedural Act shall enter into force upon adoption.

For the Energy Community



Artur Lorkowski
Director

Done in Vienna on 18 December 2025