



TRANSPORT IN THE WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN FACING THE CLIMATE CRISIS: THE CHALLENGE OF TRANSITIONING TOWARDS A CLIMATE-RESILIENT TRANSPORT SYSTEM

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

23 June 2026, Rabat (Morocco)
14:30h – 19:00h
Hotel La Tour Hassan

PRESENTATION

On the occasion of the 11th Conference of Ministers of Transport of the 5+5 Dialogue in Rabat, Morocco, this side-event, organised within the framework of the MedThink 5+5 network by the European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed) and the Centre for Transportation Studies for the Western Mediterranean (CETMO), and in collaboration with IMAL Initiative for Climate and Development, aims to foster a forward-looking discussion on how the 5+5 countries can advance the transition towards a climate-resilient, integrated transport system in the face of a changing climate and growing geopolitical instability.

The side event builds on a joint IEMed and CETMO policy study of the same name. In this study, eight experts, most of whom are also either moderators or panellists, provide a multidisciplinary assessment of the challenges facing the transport sector across the Western Mediterranean. The analysis examines the implications of climate change and geopolitical instability, as well as the opportunities and risks associated with emerging technologies and low carbon energy sources. It also explores the financial mechanisms needed to support adaptation and strengthen resilience. The policy recommendations below come from the six articles included in the study.

Co-organised by:



In collaboration with:



Paper 1: Maritime Transport Facing Climate Change in the Western Mediterranean

Imed Zammit, Consultant, Transport & Logistics at SRDB Consulting

- **Establish Euro-Mediterranean working platforms**, drawing on expertise from specialised organisations such as the IMO, REMPEC, and the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM).
- **Systematically integrate climate risk assessments and emissions reduction targets into national maritime transport strategies**, supported by measurable indicators for monitoring and implementation.
- **Strengthen port infrastructure resilience** through investments in coastal protection, early warning systems, and resilient energy infrastructure and equipment.
- **Accelerate the decarbonisation of maritime transport** through the development of alternative fuels, expansion of shore-side electrification, improvements in vessel energy efficiency, digitalisation of port operations.
- **Reduce asymmetries between shores** by mobilising dedicated financial instruments, encouraging technology transfer, and strengthening institutional capacities.
- **Integrate climate, energy, and digital dimensions into maritime curricula** to build skills for a just and sustainable transition.

Paper 2: Resilient Transport Infrastructure in the Western Mediterranean under Climate and Geopolitical Uncertainty

Sergi Saurí, Deputy President, CETMO Foundation

- **Strengthen regional coordination to support implementation of decarbonisation measures in international trade**, including the extension of ETS to maritime transport, and to manage cross border spillover effects.
- **Enhance resilience of transport infrastructure** in response to climate change and geopolitical tensions, both international and intra-regional.

- **Develop adequate financing mechanisms** as a core pillar for addressing future transport and climate related challenges.
- **Reinforce regional cooperation frameworks** as a second key pillar to improve preparedness and coordinated response capacity.

Paper 3: Climate, Energy and Transport: Emerging Dependencies in a Mediterranean in Transition

Nora Aboushady, Associate Professor of Economics, Cairo University and Associate Researcher, German Institute of Development and Sustainability (IDOS)

- **Countries on the southern shore should adopt integrated policy frameworks** that reflect the strong interlinkages between climate, energy, investment, and transport policies.
- **Strengthen South-South connectivity** to promote cooperation in building sustainable and resilient transport systems across the southern region, for example, by fully operationalising the Trans-Maghreb Multimodal Corridor as a key backbone of regional connectivity.
- **Develop multimodal transport systems**, as they improve logistics efficiency and support climate mitigation by reducing congestion and emissions from the overreliance on road transport.
- **Leverage EU frameworks to invest in sustainable infrastructure**, such as through the new Pact for the Mediterranean and its Action Plan, and through Global Gateway.
- **Prioritise just transitions within and between countries**; northern partners in the Western Mediterranean should avoid reinforcing a model of clean energy export enclaves in the South that primarily serve Europe's transport and energy transition while leaving local development needs behind.

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Paper 4: Western Mediterranean Ports at the Nexus of Operational Sustainability, Digital Transformation, and Energy Innovation

Jérôme Verny, Professor, NEOMA Business School

Ouail Oulmakki, President, Ethica-Chain Association

- **Explicitly place regulatory and normative convergence as a priority of the Group of Western Mediterranean Transport Ministers**, by working on mutual recognition of renewable origin certificates, harmonisation of hydrogen metrology, and port cybersecurity standards, within the framework of dialogue with the EU and the IMO.
- **Systematically link European and international financing mobilised in the Mediterranean energy transition**, whether from the Clean Hydrogen Partnership, the EIB facilities, or the World Bank, to contractual clauses on industrial co-development and capacity transfer toward southern shore countries, in order to avoid long-term primary specialisation.
- **Under the auspices of CETMO and the MedThink 5+5 network, create a joint North South monitoring and evaluation mechanism** that tracks the actual evolution of logistics chains, deployed technologies, and structural dependencies in Mediterranean corridors, in order to provide decision-makers and ports with a shared knowledge base and best practices to adjust maritime and port strategies in support of operational excellence, data driven digital innovation, and the energy transition

Paper 5: The Value of Investing in Climate Adaptation in the Transport Sector in the Western Mediterranean and its Financing

Juan Alario, Former Associate Director, European Investment Bank

Joan Ignasi Alario Piedra, GNE Finance

- **5+5 countries should accelerate the preparation of national adaptation plans for the transport sector**, if they have not done so yet.
- **These plans should apply best practice standards, in line with recent developments**, to identify and evaluate with accuracy climate adaptation investments in their transport infrastructure. This includes performing economic and financial evaluations, in order to select and prioritise investments that maximise socioeconomic benefits.
- **Actions to accelerate the required investment are necessary**, as there is often a significant gap between plans and investment implementation.

- **Develop climate adaptation pilots using sophisticated methods to assess the economic and financial benefits of climate investments**, and in some cases using innovative financial methods able to mobilise private capital. This will allow drawing lessons for future projects.
- **5+5 countries should take actions to maximise the use of TA funds and adaptation financing provided by MDBs and other international financial institutions**, as these institutions can provide long-term competitive finance and political coverage, which is what is required to finance these investments.

Paper 6: Financing Resilient Transport Infrastructure in the Western Mediterranean: Mobilising European, Multilateral and Private Capital

Andrea Tinagli, Senior Associate Fellow, IEMed

- **Transition to integrated investment ecosystems.** The evolution of European external policy, notably through the EFSD+ and the Global Gateway, signals a shift toward blending public finance with development bank lending and private capital. Future frameworks must move beyond isolated funding toward these integrated structures to effectively close infrastructure gaps and bolster climate resilience.
- **Deploy operational regional investment platforms**, building on models like the BMP but extending them to the full transport sector and other strategic areas.
- **Institutionalise dedicated project preparation facilities** to strengthen project preparation capacity, improve regulatory frameworks, and develop credible PPP structures. A Mediterranean project preparation facility paired with guarantee mechanisms could unlock significant private investments.
- **Synchronise regional planning and institutional coordination.** To maximise economic returns and optimise project prioritisation, infrastructures must be assessed through network effects rather than as isolated assets, building on the 5+5 Dialogue and existing corridor mapping initiatives.
- **Embed climate resilience and data harmonisation**, for example, by adopting harmonised performance indicators and integrating so-called avoided disruption costs into project appraisals. This will not only protect assets but

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also increase access to international green and climate financing by improving the alignment between investments and long-term climate adaptation objectives.

- **Foster peer-to-peer capacity building**, so countries with more mature frameworks can help reduce technical asymmetries, ensuring a more competitive and cohesive Mediterranean market.