SESSION CONCEPT – ALF in COP31 Mediterranean Pavilion

November 14th, 10.00

Proposed title: Bridging the Mediterranean: A Just, Inclusive and Resilient Energy Transition through Regional Cooperation

Moderator: Josep Ferré, Executive Director of ALF

Panellists:

- Simone Borghesi, Director of the Florence School of Regulation – Climate at the European University Institute and Vice Rector for International Relations at the University of Siena.
- Sezgin Bilgiç, Secretary General, Marmara Group Strategic and Social Research Foundation
- Dr. Ayşegül Arslan, ALF Young Leader & Researcher at Gelecek Araştırmaları Enstitüsü (Future Research Institute),
- Suad Talafha, ALF Young Leader & Climate Change Advisor, Al-Sendyan Land Association for Environmental Development

Concept:

The Mediterranean is at the forefront of climate change and the global energy transition. While the region faces shared challenges related to climate resilience, energy security and sustainable development, its diverse economic, social and institutional contexts call for stronger regional cooperation and inclusive solutions.

This session, organised by the Anna Lindh Foundation (ALF), will explore how effective climate policies, renewable energy, resilient supply chains and cross-border partnerships can accelerate the transition towards sustainable and secure energy systems while ensuring a fair distribution of costs and benefits.

Placing people at the centre of the discussion, the panel will highlight the importance of social justice, youth participation and civil society engagement in shaping a transition that responds to the needs and aspirations of communities across the Euro-Mediterranean region. It will also examine how intercultural dialogue, scientific expertise and cooperation among public institutions, academia and other stakeholders can turn shared challenges into opportunities for collective action.

Bringing together perspectives on climate economics, regional cooperation and future-oriented research, the session will identify practical pathways towards a more resilient, inclusive and sustainable Mediterranean, with a focus on partnerships and opportunities for action beyond COP31.

Proposed questions:

1. Climate action and energy transition – Participatory processes: How can participatory processes involving citizens, local communities, civil society, and other stakeholders contribute to accelerating the clean energy transition in Mediterranean countries, ensuring that climate policies and economic incentives reflect local needs while safeguarding energy security, affordability, and environmental sustainability?

2. Social justice and inclusion – Examples that worked: What successful examples and good practices from the Mediterranean region demonstrate how the costs and benefits of the energy transition can be distributed fairly, ensuring that vulnerable communities and disadvantaged groups benefit from climate action and are not left behind?

3. Youth and future generations – What is needed to ensure it: What enabling conditions, mechanisms, and resources are needed to ensure that young people across the Euro-Mediterranean region move beyond being beneficiaries of climate policies to become meaningful participants in decision-making, climate action, green innovation, and sustainable development?

4. Regional cooperation and shared resilience – Successful stories of cooperation with civil society involvement: What successful examples of regional cooperation in the Mediterranean demonstrate how public institutions, academia (including networks such as MEDAERE), businesses, and civil society can work together to strengthen energy security, build resilient supply chains, and transform shared climate challenges into opportunities for inclusive and sustainable development?

Choreography

10.00-10.05: Introduction of moderator, panelists, and topic

10.05-10.09: Opening round (1 min/panelist): Ask each panelist to briefly identify the most urgent challenge or opportunity for the Mediterranean energy transition.

10.09-10.17: Question 1 on climate action and regional cooperation (2 min/panelist)

10.17-10.25: Question 2 on social justice and inclusion (2 min/panelist)

10.25-10.33: Question 3 on youth and future generations (2 min/panelist)

10.33-10.40: Question 4 on regional cooperation and shared resilience (2 min/panelist)

10.40-10.55: Q&A with audience under moderator's control

10.55-10.58: Last round with 1 min/panelist on short reflection

10.58-11.00: Moderator's closing remarks and thanks

Panelists' Bios



Josep Ferré, Executive Director, Anna Lindh Foundation

Josep Ferré has served as Executive Director of the ALF since September 2021, leveraging his 25+ years in policy research and development cooperation. His expertise encompasses managing networks and steering publications on Euro-Mediterranean topics. He was the Director General (2017-2021) and the Managing Director (2007-2021) of the IEMed. He was the Director General of the Spanish branch of AMREF (2004-2006) and the Executive Secretary of the Azahar Program to promote sustainable development in the Mediterranean of the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID) (2001-2004).



Simone Borghesi, Director of the Florence School of Regulation – Climate at the European University Institute and Vice Rector for International Relations at the University of Siena.

Simone Borghesi is Director of the Florence School of Regulation – Climate at the European University Institute and Vice Rector for International Relations at the University of Siena. He is currently Secretary General of the Policy Outreach Committee of the European Association of Environmental and Resource Economists (EAERE), and member of the WCEREA – World Council of Environmental and Resource Economists Associations. He is also member of various international institutions, including Brookings Institution (Washington D.C.), Environmental Defense Fund (New York), CEEPR MIT (Cambridge, MA) and Centre for Economic Policy Research (CEPR). He has been President of EAERE and of IAERE, the Italian

Association of Environmental and Resource Economists. Simone worked at the IMF and FEEM Milan and was visiting scholar at INRA, University of Cambridge and ETH Zurich. He has directed and collaborated on LIFE and Horizon projects and his main research areas include emissions trading, European climate policies, globalization and sustainability, evolutionary game models.



Sezgin Bilgiç, Industrial Engineer, Chief Executive Officer, Marmara Group Strategic and Social Research Foundation

Sezgin Bilgiç is the Secretary General of the Marmara Group Foundation and Coordinator of the annual Eurasian Economic Summits. He has held several leadership roles within the Foundation, promoting international dialogue, peace, and cooperation. He has represented Turkish civil society at international conferences, diplomatic forums, and election observation missions. His contributions to peace, intercultural dialogue, and conflict resolution have earned him several distinguished awards, including the 2026 Culture of Peace Contribution Award. Bilgiç holds degrees in Industrial Engineering and Business Administration and is CEO of Kazancıoğlu Engineering, specializing in industrial manufacturing, energy, and environmental solutions.



Dr. Ayşegül Arslan, ALF Young Leader & Researcher at Gelecek Araştırmaları Enstitüsü (Future Research Institute)

Dr. Ayşegül Arslan Sercan holds a PhD in Political Geography and is affiliated with the Institute for Future Research in Ankara, Türkiye. Her research interests encompass local governance, rural and urban

transformation, climate change and adaptation, human mobility, spatial inequalities, and social vulnerability. She has contributed to national and international research projects focusing on municipal governance, public service provision, territorial development, and the social dimensions of environmental change. Her academic work draws on qualitative and quantitative research methods, with particular emphasis on inclusive governance, community experiences, and socially differentiated vulnerabilities. As an Anna Lindh Foundation MYA Young Leader, she works on policy-oriented research addressing climate risks, seasonal agricultural labour mobility, and inclusive development in the Euro-Mediterranean region.



Suad Talafha, ALF Young Leader & Climate Change Advisor, Al-Sendyan Land Association for Environmental Development

Suad Talafha is a Jordanian climate change expert and renewable energy engineer working at the intersection of climate governance, energy transition, and youth-led climate action, with work focused on bridging the gap between climate policy commitments and community-level realities, advancing inclusive decision-making, and strengthening the role of young people in shaping climate and development priorities. She has led youth-driven climate initiatives, facilitated over 20 national and regional multi-stakeholder policy dialogues, and contributed to national climate policy engagement, including Jordan's Local Conference of Youth (LCOY) 2025. Through her work, Suad advocates for a just, people-centred energy transition that prioritises community participation, local development needs, equitable access to resources, and the fair distribution of economic and environmental benefits.