EUROPEAN DEFENCE AGENCY

FACTSHEET
www.eda.europa.eu

Assessment of suitable mechanisms for addressing defence energy-related topics at the EU level

Background

Since 2015, the European Defence Agency (EDA), in cooperation with the European Commission Directorate-General for Energy (DG Energy) has been implementing **the Consultation Forum for Sustainable Energy in the Defence and Security Sector (CF SEDSS).** The CF SEDSS has become the largest European defence energy community providing a unique platform to assist the European Union Ministries of Defence (MoDs) to move towards green, resilient, and efficient energy models.

It aims at promoting and assessing the implementation of the EU legal and policy framework on energy as well as facilitating information sharing and best practices to improve energy efficiency and energy performance of buildings, utilising renewable energy sources, and increasing the resilience of defence-related critical energy infrastructure.

To stimulate ongoing defence efforts to enhance energy resilience and climate adaptability, the European External Action Service (EEAS) published the EU Climate Change and Defence Roadmap to introduce EU concrete actions to address the links between climate change and defence, including the operational dimension, capability development and multilateralism and partnerships, contributing to the wider climate-security nexus.

Problem Analysis

In line with the EU Climate Change and Defence Roadmap, EDA (CF SEDSS) has been asked to **investigate and assess the conditions and feasibility of establishing a suitable mechanism** at the **EU level** for assisting national authorities (MoDs) **to reduce energy consumption, increase energy efficiency and resilience and thereby contributing to the implementation of the EU's climate and energy targets.**

In this respect, **the mechanism should work to harmonise existing and future activities** related to defence energy topics and **to foster collaboration among the EU MoDs as well as with other stakeholders.**

The mechanism should also act as the **EU's repository, observatory and research platform** for collecting defence energy-related data, facilitating the sharing of best practices and knowledge and **providing additional services, functionalities and tools to accelerate cross-border cooperation, projects development and financing, capacity building, the highest level of integration through a more structured and long-term organisation model.**

EUROPEAN DEFENCE AGENCY | European Defence Energy Network

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 882171

Scope and Objectives

This **CF SEDSS research study** explores the conditions for **establishing a cooperative mechanism** to support the implementation of the **European Green Deal and the prospect of an Energy Union.** This reflects the overarching political mobilisation for climate and sustainability, where the role of the defence sector becomes equally vital.

In that respect, this **scoping study aims** to identify a suitable mechanism to:

- Provide support in a comprehensive, systematic and structured way to enable the MoDs to tackle defence energy-related considerations and challenges;
- Underpin policy and decision-making processes of the MoDs to increase energy efficiency and ensure the coherence of activities in implementing the EU's energy and climate objectives targets.

As a result, the scoping study is a precursor to an in-depth feasibility study that would bring conclusions and recommendations for decision-making on such a mechanism.

More specifically, the **objectives** of the scoping study aim to:

- Bring to European defence experts strategic and operational vision;
- Identify potential activities delivered by such cooperation mechanism;
- Compare applicable legal, financial and operational frameworks;
- Point out barriers, risks, caveats as well as opportunities;
- Provide recommendations for the implementation of the above objectives.

Methodology

This scoping study provides an expert-based (bottom-up) approach. Consulted experts have provided input and guidance without any institutional restriction, by expressing a personal technical judgment about the potential new mechanism and not the official position of Member States, and EU institutions or other international organisations.

The study focused on five target groups:

- MoDs;
- EU Institutions (European Commission and related executive agencies, members of the European Parliament - MEPs and civil servants);
- NATO;
- Industry;
- Research and technology organisations (RTOs).

The **methodology** was structured in four phases as follows:

- Inception phase;
- Data collection phase;
- Data analytics phase;
- Reporting.

If output, recommendations and take-aways are considered relevant, this experts-based approach should firstly be completed by an in-depth feasibility study, drilling down on details for each critical point, and then by a top-down review to integrate the political dimension and vision.

The methodology will consist in collecting various opinions with different perspective for future users, regulators, policymakers and partners. For confidential reasons, the interviewees will not be disclosed.

Solution Implementation

Further to research and analysis, the study recommends creating an **"EU-led Competence Centre on Climate Change, Security and Defence"** that should be structured on **five core building blocks:**

- An intergovernmental agreement based on a voluntary engagement from MoDs;
- Permanent team recruited on the market for its technical skills and experience;
- EU seconded national experts (SNEs) to bring national technical skills and experience;
- Hosted premises for a period of 3 to 5 years based on voluntary candidatures;
- Co-working platform.

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 882171

The recommended Competence Centre should focus on the following key activities:

- **Pilar 1 - Inclusive governance:**
  - Top-down and bottom-up consultation;
  - Integrated EU defence energy and climate cooperation governance.

- **Pilar 2 - Knowledge and compliance:**
  - Knowledge, information and data sharing and storage;
  - Adaptation and application of EU regulatory and policy frameworks;
  - Capacity building.

- **Pilar 3 - Collaborative investments:**
  - Collaborative research, development and innovation (R&D&I);
  - Common capabilities, infrastructure and equipment;
  - Public and private funding.

- **Pilar 4 - Technical assistance**
  - Technical assistance will consist of direct support to MoDs provided by future staff or external consultants.

Risks and Challenges

Three types of risks have been identified:

- **Political risks:**
  - MoDs' buy-in at the political level;
  - Time and willingness to sign an intergovernmental agreement.

- **Operational risks:**
  - Achieving fluent governance;
  - Setting up an operational team with appropriate skills;
  - Defining clear missions and scope of activities.

- **Financial risks:**
  - Securing a reasonable budget;
  - Achieving a sustainable economic model.

Those risks, if not mitigated, would jeopardise the feasibility of the mechanism/Centre or would drive to poor results.

Impact and Opportunities

The proposed "EU-led Competence Centre on Climate Change, Security and Defence" would:

- Enhance, in a structured, coordinated and long-term approach, the defence energy resilience and autonomy, while ensuring alignment with the EU efforts for climate neutrality by 2050;
- Accelerate cross-border cooperation, including fostering civilian and military cooperation in the energy and climate change domains;
- Generate significant economic savings;
- Enable additional means allocated to military priorities.

Way Ahead

Success will depend on political buy-in and commitment and the future mechanism's technical capacity and capabilities. It should require two preconditions:

- launching a top-down consultation, through a new research study to anticipate and identify potential political barriers and concerns that should complete the output of the scoping study;
- appointing a core team (task force) to start establishing the structure and mission of the Competence Centre.

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 882171