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European Defence Sustainable Energy Profiles (EDESEP)

Background

The EU is firmly dedicated to decarbonisation, viewing it both as an imperative challenge and a significant opportunity. The defence sector is poised to be a pivotal player in this transition. Moreover, current geopolitical shifts have underscored the importance of energy sustainability for strategic reasons.

Since 2015, the joint work of the Consultation Forum for Sustainable Energy in the Defence and Security Sector (CF SEDSS) and the Energy and Environment Capability Technology Group (CapTech) has highlighted the need for setting up a collaborative virtual platform that provides a comprehensive overview of defence energy-related activities of the EU ministries of defence (MoDs) and armed forces.

While constituting an integral part of the EU's overall effort to tackle climate change, this CCDR encompasses three different interlinked areas of action: The Operational dimension; Capability development; Strengthening Multilateralism and Partnership.

Scope and Objectives

This platform, conceived as **"European Defence Sustainable Energy Profiles" (EDESEP),** aims to collect, compile and present the best sustainability efforts carried out by all EU MoDs and interested strategic partners. This platform will give visibility to all those successful initiatives and best practices that are replicable, and from which other members can benefit in terms of sustainability, efficiency and resilience.

Problem Analysis

Data aggregation on defence sustainable energy models with comprehensive analysis, that would be easily accessible to EU MoDs and relevant defence stakeholders, is not available yet. This initiative intends to address this gap by creating an exchange platform aimed at:

- Fostering communication, synergies and cooperation among pMS;
- Preventing redundancies and overlapping;
- Identifying energy consumption and production improvement areas;
- Identifying potential dependencies of EU armed forces from external sources;
- Improving, in short, the use of overall resources by strengthening multilateralism and partnerships.

Methodology

The different stages followed to complete this study included selecting the most relevant topics in terms of sustainability and energy efficiency in the field of defence through a preliminary analysis and surveys, which were used as criteria for the development of a specific questionnaire.

The information collected through these surveys have been processed and will be made available to the member states through a special web platform called "EDESEP", which will allow data to be consulted and updated.

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Proposed solution

The defence energy profiles of the EU MoDs and armed forces will be an interactive web resource designed for information sharing purposes, presenting relevant information in the following four key areas:

- Sustainability, energy efficiency and buildings performance.
- Utilisation of renewable energy sources in the defence sector.
- Resilience of defence-related critical energy infrastructure.
- Crosscutting topics (energy management and policies, innovative energy technologies, funding and financing).

Impact and opportunities

The European Union is steadily moving towards a new paradigm in energy management and aims at becoming the first climate-neutral continent by 2050.

According to the EU's Climate Change and Defence Roadmap, as developed by the European External Action Service (EEAS), the global defence sector is an energy-intensive industry and reducing energy demand and increasing energy resilience is essential for the armed forces.

To move safely in the direction, as set by the EU, it is paramount that the most relevant information is made available to stakeholders and decision makers, and that the spirit of cooperation between MoDs is fostered.

A more structured approach, as proposed by the solution provided, will allow a better overview and understanding of the MoDs and armed forces' activities and plans on sustainable energy and climate adaptation and mitigation activities, with a focus on energy management and efficiency, energy building performance, the use of renewable energy sources, and resilience of defence-related critical energy infrastructures.

Way Ahead

In the current context, it is paramount to establish synergies and join forces to present a common front in the face of the challenges ahead. This platform is an innovative and unique tool in the European defence landscape. It can assist the Member States in enhancing their defence energy resilience and autonomy and reducing foreign dependencies while contributing to EU efforts to achieve climate neutrality by 2050.

Because of the publication of the contents, member states cross-interests, collaborative projects, synergies and, ultimately, a flow of information; it will be vital to ensure not only sufficient visibility and adequate maintenance but also optimisation and enhancement of the platform.

It is recommended that the EDA, in collaboration with the European Commission and the EEAS, explore and support the implementation of EDESEP. This will enhance the MoDs' efforts in advancing the defence energy transition while aligning with the European Green Deal's overall objectives.

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