The Francorchamps Hydrogen Initiative

We, the signatories of this initiative, gathered in Francorchamps, Belgium, on the 18th of April 2023, collectively aim to maximize the great potentials of sustainable hydrogen for the decarbonization of multiple sectors, the energy system and the development of the economy (companies, R&D centers, skillsets) in the Euregio Meuse-Rhine (EMR).

**Our ambition**

Welcoming the range of opportunities of sustainable hydrogen in decarbonizing the economy and ensuring safe, competitive, available and sustainable energy supply, we want to increase our focus, ambitions and efforts in the following fields across the EMR:

# Structuring the EMR H2 economy

We intend to work on and favor:

- Proper legislations at national and regional level as well as their alignment across borders;

- Funding mechanisms and their alignment across borders;

- Major projects that will shape the economy and should be promoted at EU Regio level (pipes / industrial sites / transport corridors);

- Technological developments / pilot projects in partnership across borders;

- Training and skillsets developments / workforce developments in partnership across borders;

- Bringing together the members of the different hydrogen networks of each province to develop a large hydrogen community at Euregio level.

# Developing the EMR H2 rivers corridor

We take good notice that the Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine, in their most ambitious decarbonization scenario, considers that hydrogen and its derivatives could account for up to 45% of the future fuels used by river barges on the Rhine, while other projects of hydrogen barges are in development along the Meuse and Canal Albert.

We believe that the Euregio Meuse-Rhine has the potential to be one to the leading regions in the world with state art development of hydrogen (and hydrogen derivates) fueled vessels (with related technologies and local know how) and we will therefore contribute to develop a vision and then implement a hydrogen rivers corridor and barges ecosystem on the rivers Rhine and Meuse.

# Developing the EMR hydrogen highways corridor

We acknowledge that transport by road is today an essential part of transport activities and put forward that the Euregio Meuse-Rhine is rich in key highways, and placed at the cross section of many trans-European transport corridors that either originate in the Region or pass through it.

We will therefore contribute to develop a vision and then implement an appropriate network of hydrogen refueling stations, as well as support the development of hydrogen, and hydrogen-based vehicles, production & supply in the EMR.

# Political and legal character of this initiative

This document does not create any legal rights or obligations and does not intend to replace or modify any existing legal rights or obligations.

It is non-binding document stating a declaration of common interest of the signatories to act for the development of the hydrogen economy in the Euregio Meuse-Rhine along the three main fields of action mentioned here-above, that will be adjusted as further meetings take place.

Any signatory of the document intends to take part to common activities in relation to at least one of the three fields.

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