

Recommendations

The **NECPlatform project** organised an in-depth workshop with representatives from 14 different Member States, of which 8 representatives of national ministries in charge of the NECPs, and the European Commission. The discussions concluded in a series of recommendations for strengthening Article 11, which are shared with the European Commission and other EU Institutions in view of the upcoming revision of the above-mentioned regulation according to its art. 45.

1. Enhancing the composition of the CEDs and role of stakeholders

a. Broaden representation:

- Ensure multilevel engagement, incorporating local and regional authorities.
- Ensure multistakeholder engagement including enterprises, and civil society organisations and pay specific attention to the inclusion of academia and youth associations alongside existing stakeholder groups.

b. Consider hybrid facilitation: a tandem composed by the national government and a non-governmental third party should facilitate dialogues and ensure they are maintained in the long run despite governmental changes

c. Flexible but structured pool of participants: establish a predefined list of organisations to guide Member States on the type of actors to involve, while leaving the flexibility to adapt to the national context.

2. Improving consultation methodology for Climate and Energy Dialogues

a. Diversified engagement formats:

- Use a mix of general and targeted (sector-specific) workshops.
- Allow both physical and online participation to increase accessibility.

b. Clear scheduling and expectations: publish timelines and agendas in advance to facilitate stakeholder preparation and provide minutes from the sessions to ensure a continuation in the next workshop.

- c. Flexible but structured framework:** establish a predefined list of elements such as participatory methods to use and potential topics to be addressed and the frequency to guide Member States while leaving the flexibility to adapt to their national context.

3. Strengthening implementation mechanisms

- a. Permanent engagement structures:** encourage institutionalization of stakeholder platforms rather than ad-hoc consultations.
- b. Ensure policy integration:** strengthen vertical (local-national) and horizontal (between the different sector and ministries) coordination to align efforts in a bi-directional manner, not only top-down but also bottom-up.
- c. Address barriers through feedback mechanisms:** establish feedback groups to identify challenges and solutions in real time.
- d. Accountability through binding commitments:** introduce SMART objectives (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Timely) to track progress effectively.

4. Enhancing transparency in reporting

- a. Standardised reporting templates for CEDs:** the format should be flexible enough to accommodate the needs of each MS. However, the reporting should include for each dialogues at least:
- The list of stakeholders involved and their role in the discussion.
 - The key discussion points and outcomes.
 - How and if the outcomes are taken into account in the national energy and climate policies.
 - Next steps
- b. Independent verification mechanisms:** the European Commission should have the possibility to verify reported results.
- c. Capacity planning for reporting:** the European Commission should provide Member States with an estimate of time required to compile all information required in the plans (e.g. NECP) that Member States need to submit. This would allow Member States to plan and allocate sufficient human and financial resources for effective reporting.