

CLEAN (CLimate changE covenANt of Mayor)

Result 1 | Uptake of the Joint Strategy in the Interreg IPA South Adriatic Region



Table of Contents

1. Project result.....	1
2. From outputs to result: the CLEAN uptake pathway	1
3. Adaptation and use of the Joint Strategy	1
4. Dissemination of uptake mechanisms	2
4.1 Facilitating access through clear procedures and reference roles.....	2
4.2 Capacity building and transfer of methodological references	2
5. Alignment with regional and national strategies	3
6. Environmental co-benefits of SECAP-based planning.....	3
7. Expected institutional effects / longer-term effects.....	3
8. Overall institutional effects and longer-term perspective	4

1. Project result

This section explains how the CLEAN project results from the uptake of the Joint Strategy (Output O.1.1) and the Joint Action Plan (JAP), and how this uptake contributes to a measurable increase in municipalities joining the Covenant of Mayors (CoM) and preparing Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plans (SECAPs).

The description is aligned with the project's expected significant rise in CoM adhesion and SECAP drafting across the programme area, strengthening the alignment of municipal climate and energy planning with regional and national sustainable development strategies.

The purpose of this document is to clarify how project outputs are taken up beyond the project partnership and lifetime, supporting transferability and reuse by municipalities and other public authorities across the Interreg IPA South Adriatic area.

2. From outputs to result: the CLEAN uptake pathway

CLEAN's project result is generated through a progressive uptake pathway linking project outputs to changes in municipal planning practices. The project delivers a Joint Strategy (Output O.1.1) that provides harmonised guidance and procedural references to support public authorities in joining the CoM and in structuring SECAPs in line with the official CoM methodology.

In parallel, CLEAN develops a Joint Action Plan (JAP – Deliverable D.1.11.4), which frames a shared strategic orientation and a common methodological reference for climate and energy planning across the partnership. Together, these outputs serve as reference frameworks that municipalities and other public authorities can use when approaching CoM adhesion and SECAP preparation.

Building on these outputs, municipalities and relevant public bodies are supported in taking up the project results by using the Joint Strategy and the JAP to structure planning processes, align local action plans with CoM requirements, and improve consistency and comparability of climate and energy planning approaches across the programme area.

3. Adaptation and use of the Joint Strategy

Municipalities and relevant public bodies are supported and enabled to take up and use the Joint Strategy and the related action planning framework through a progressive approach, which may materialise in several complementary ways, including:

- **Institutional uptake:** the Joint Strategy is considered and referenced within municipal and

CLEAN

regional governance processes (e.g. policy discussions, internal coordination mechanisms, planning cycles or departmental mandates), where relevant and appropriate.

- **Procedural uptake:** municipalities are guided in following the defined procedures to join the CoM and in structuring their SECAPs in line with the prescribed components (targets, inventories, risk and vulnerability assessment, action packages, monitoring and reporting), without prejudice to national or local specificities.
- **Technical uptake:** municipalities are introduced to harmonised methodologies and tools (such as templates, indicator logics and reporting formats) that can support the preparation of robust and comparable SECAPs, where feasible and appropriate.
- **Implementation-oriented uptake:** municipalities are better positioned to translate SECAP commitments into implementation and monitoring actions over time, benefitting from the shared strategic framework and from opportunities for coordination and exchange promoted within the project context.

This approach reflects CLEAN's ambition to go beyond awareness-raising, while focusing on enabling conditions for structured climate and energy planning, which can be progressively operationalised and further developed beyond the project lifetime according to local capacities and priorities.

4. Dissemination of uptake mechanisms

4.1 Facilitating access through clear procedures and reference roles

CLEAN supports increased CoM adhesion by disseminating clear information on the official joining procedures and by clarifying the reference roles involved in the CoM framework.

In particular, the project promotes a common understanding of:

- the role of **municipalities**, as political signatories responsible for initiating the adhesion process and for preparing SECAPs in line with CoM requirements;
- the role of **regional or sub-regional authorities**, as potential facilitators of municipal engagement and coordination, within their respective institutional competences;
- the role of **public or non-profit organisations**, which may support awareness-raising, networking and outreach activities.

By clarifying these reference roles and procedures, CLEAN reduces entry barriers to CoM adhesion and supports participation also by smaller municipalities, which may have limited internal capacity for climate and energy planning

4.2 Capacity building and transfer of methodological references

The JAP addresses the need to strengthen municipal capacities by sharing methodological references, examples and planning approaches relevant to SECAP preparation.

Within this framework, CLEAN promotes the transfer of tools and approaches related to:

- the structuring of climate and energy action plans;
- the organisation of planning and monitoring components in a manageable and proportionate way;
- the exchange of experiences among public authorities involved in similar planning processes.

Through its capitalisation logic, CLEAN makes available methodologies and planning references developed within the project, which can be reused and adapted by municipalities and other public

authorities according to their needs and capacities.

5. Alignment with regional and national strategies

Municipalities that prepare SECAPs are expected to contribute to targets set in regional and national strategies on sustainable development, by aligning local climate and energy planning with broader policy frameworks. In this context, the Joint Strategy and the JAP support public authorities in capitalising on lessons learnt, methodologies and planning approaches developed within the project, which may inform future policy reflections and coordination practices.

The JAP contributes to strengthening vertical coherence by positioning the CoM/SECAP methodological framework as a shared planning reference that facilitates alignment between European objectives, national strategies and local action planning.

In this sense, the uptake of the Joint Strategy and the JAP does not constitute a standalone planning exercise, but rather supports the integration of EU climate and energy objectives into municipal planning processes, helping ensure consistency of local actions within higher-level strategic frameworks.

6. Environmental co-benefits of SECAP-based planning

While the primary result of CLEAN lies in increased uptake of the CoM and the preparation of SECAPs, SECAP-based planning is also designed to generate positive environmental co-benefits over time.

By promoting integrated approaches to energy efficiency, renewable energy, sustainable mobility and waste management, SECAPs help municipalities address key environmental pressures and support improvements in air quality, pollution reduction and ecosystem resilience. In this perspective, municipalities equipped with SECAPs are better positioned to integrate climate mitigation and adaptation considerations into local planning processes, with indirect benefits for land use, environmental quality and long-term sustainability.

These co-benefits are consistent with the broader objectives of regional and national sustainable development strategies, to which municipalities with SECAPs are expected to contribute through coherent and structured climate and energy planning.

7. Expected institutional effects / longer-term effects

The uptake of the Joint Strategy and the JAP is expected to produce institutional and longer-term effects primarily by strengthening the capacity of municipalities and public authorities to structure climate and energy planning in a more coherent and comparable way.

Within this framework, the JAP promotes a shared understanding of monitoring and reporting principles aligned with CoM methodology. Rather than establishing operational monitoring systems, the project contributes by familiarising public authorities with common concepts, reference indicators and reporting logics that can support transparency, learning and comparability over time. In this sense, CLEAN supports public authorities in becoming better positioned to:

- frame climate and energy actions within structured planning and reporting cycles;
- align local monitoring approaches with CoM methodological references;

- improve the consistency of data and information used to inform future planning and policy decisions.

These effects are expected to materialise progressively beyond the project lifetime, depending on local capacities, resources and policy priorities, and contribute to more informed and coordinated climate and energy planning across the programme area.

8. Overall institutional effects and longer-term perspective

Through the uptake of the Joint Strategy and the JAP, CLEAN contributes to strengthening the capacity of public authorities in the Interreg IPA South Adriatic area to engage in structured climate and energy planning aligned with the CoM framework.

By providing harmonised guidance, shared methodological references and opportunities for exchange, the project supports municipalities in becoming better equipped to approach CoM adhesion and to prepare SECAPs in a coherent and informed manner. This contributes to an increased number of municipalities engaged in structured climate and energy planning and supports alignment with regional, national and European climate and energy objectives.

In the longer term, the availability and reuse of the project output and strategic deliverables may facilitate continued learning, coordination and policy alignment beyond the project lifetime, depending on institutional priorities, resources and local contexts. In this sense, CLEAN's results are designed to remain relevant as reference tools that can inform future governance models, planning processes and initiatives.