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Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Uecker

— **Mr Kreuzer**

Number: 542-2/2025-1630-138
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Subject: Response to IOV Request for information and cooperation regarding the protection of the Mediterranean and shared responsibility Regional Cooperation and Risk Assessment

Dear Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Uecker and Mr Kreuzer,

Thank you for your correspondence concerning environmental pressures from energy infrastructure development in the Mediterranean region and Sardinia, as well as international obligations related to environmental protection.

The Republic of Slovenia is actively engaged in transnational cooperation within the Mediterranean region through the Interreg Euro-MED Programme (2021-2027), which represents one of five transnational Interreg programmes in which Slovenia participates as part of European territorial cooperation under Cohesion Policy Objective 2.

The Interreg Euro-MED Programme brings together partners from 69 regions across 14 countries along the northern Mediterranean coast with a shared objective: achieving a climate-neutral and resilient society for the benefit of its citizens.

Slovenia and the Italian region of Sardinia both participate in this programme, providing a direct framework for cooperation on environmental challenges affecting the Mediterranean basin.

The programme supports projects developed and managed by public administrations, universities, private sector entities, and civil society organizations, focusing on climate change mitigation, environmental protection, and sustainable development.

The programme supports cooperation through four thematic missions that directly address environmental pressures and risks in the Mediterranean:

Protecting, Restoring and Evaluating the Natural Environment and Heritage

This mission specifically promotes measures for climate change mitigation and adaptation, encourages sustainable management of natural resources, and supports restoration of degraded ecosystems. Projects under this mission address the preservation of ecosystems that contribute to disaster and disease mitigation, resilience building, and climate regulation, thereby reducing risks to human societies.

Strengthening Innovative and Sustainable Economies

Projects under this mission enhance capacities for implementing and coordinating regional innovation strategies while strengthening the competitiveness of SMEs, accelerating the transition to a circular and sustainable economy, including sustainable energy infrastructure.

Promoting Greener Living Areas

This mission addresses negative impacts of urban sprawl on human health and the environment, focusing on air pollution, energy consumption, and overall environmental impacts of living areas on the Mediterranean and global climate system.

Strengthening Sustainable Tourism

Projects related to tourism address sustainability of ecosystem services, promotion of natural resource conservation, and cultural heritage protection across the Mediterranean region.

The Interreg Euro-MED Programme thus represents Slovenia's primary platform for planned cooperation with Sardinia and other Mediterranean regions regarding joint assessment of major environmental risks, including those related to energy infrastructure development and marine/coastal ecosystem protection.

We trust this information addresses your inquiry regarding Slovenia's engagement in Mediterranean regional cooperation for environmental risk assessment.

For questions specifically related to all the other points of your inquiry, we refer you to the responses provided by the relevant line ministries.

We remain available should you have any further questions.

Yours sincerely,

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