1. **Background**

With the support of an array of key partners, the EMR (Euregio Meuse-Rhine) H2 Booster project wants to develop the hydrogen economy across the Dutch and Belgian provinces of Limburg, the German province of North Rhine-Westphalia, the Belgian Rhine and Meuse rivers as well as the dense European highway network that connects these provinces.

During the past months, a series of interviews with different public and private stakeholders across the EMR region have shown that there is a great interest for players on the different sides of the borders to unite in action to shape this new interregional hydrogen cross-border ecosystem.

The interviews have identified three actions paths which actors intend to follow:

*Path A - structuring the interregional hydrogen economy*

Focus should be on:

- proper national and interregional legislation and their cross-border alignment

- projects that will shape the hydrogen economy (e.g., building pipeline infrastructure, developing industrial sites, or expanding transport corridors), which should be promoted at the EMR level

- funding mechanisms and their alignment across borders

- technological development and cross-border pilot projects

- training, skillset, and workforce development in cross-border partnership

- connecting hydrogen networks across the different provinces to create a large EMR hydrogen community

*Path B – developing the interregional “hydrogen rivers” transport corridor*

According to simulations done by CCNR (Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine), hydrogen and its derivatives could account for up to 45% of fuels used by river barges, in their most ambitious decarbonization scenario. An array of related projects is already in development along the Rhine, Meuse, and Albert Canal. The EMR region could easily become one of the world centers for the development of such new vessels as well as the development of skill sets around the topic of “hydrogen rivers”.

Therefore, it is necessary to bring interested parties together to develop a vision, implement a hydrogen corridor, and a hydrogen barges-ecosystem on the rivers Rhine and Meuse.

*Path C – developing the interregional “hydrogen highways” transport corridor*

Today, the transport by road is an essential part of logistical activities. The EMR region is rich in key highways and located at the intersection of many trans-European transport corridors that either originate in the region or pass through it.

Therefore, it is necessary to bring interested parties together to develop a vision, implement a network of hydrogen refueling stations, support the production of hydrogen, and the development, production, and supply of hydrogen-based vehicles.

1. **The Francorchamps Hydrogen Initiative**

We invite all stakeholders active in hydrogen across the EMR region to join us in Francorchamps on April 18th, to hear presentations from experts in the field, network, and discuss the future of a shared vision for a hydrogen economy in the region.

<https://www.emrh2booster.eu/event/the-future-of-the-h2-economy-and-the-position-of-h2-in-heavy-duty-mobility/>

At this occasion the “Francorchamps Hydrogen Initiative” can be signed by all interested parties. This declaration is a **non-binding agreement stating an interest** to participate in **further shaping the hydrogen economy in the EMR** and/or the **hydrogen rivers corridor** and/or the **hydrogen highways corridor**.

Creating this momentum will be a critical political signal towards key decision makers and the press.

Further action will then be taken by bringing these interested parties together in subsequent workshops.

We invite you to participate as well as to be a signatory of the declaration. To support the declaration, you can send us your company’s logo in advance to give more visibility to the declarations the day of signing. Please specify which part(s) of the declaration you want to support:

1. Structuring the interregional hydrogen economy
2. Developing the interregional “hydrogen rivers” transport corridor
3. Developing the interregional “hydrogen highways” transport corridor

For further information, please contact us by email vcounet@clustertweed.be.

More information about the EMRH2Booster: <https://www.emrh2booster.eu>