



Greening the Islands Foundation

Gianni Chianetta, Chair Greening the Islands Foundation

Statement:

“Excellencies, distinguished delegates, esteemed colleagues,

Small islands are custodians of our ancient natural and cultural resources, but their very existence is threatened by climate change. Yet, within this vulnerability lies an unprecedented opportunity: leading the transition to 100% renewables.

Renewable energy is not merely an environmental imperative for small islands, nor is it only bounded to the energy sector; it is a paramount cornerstone for economic revitalization, circularity, and nexus.

Harnessing their rich sun, wind, water, and earth resources, small islands can build a pathway to sustainable development, resilience, and energy security.

Renewable energy catalyses unmatched job creation, economic diversification, and empowerment of local value chains, from installation and maintenance of renewable infrastructure to new business opportunities in energy services and beyond.

However, despite the promising potential, progress is slowed by limitations in accessing cutting-edge technologies, complex policy frameworks, and limited access to finance, compounded by the high cost of debt and inadequate financing mechanisms.

Developed nations must fulfil their climate finance pledges, and mechanisms for loss and damage must address the devastating consequences islands already face.

But for effective de-risking of island investments and accelerated transformation, multistakeholder cooperation is crucial, with active involvement of the local and international private sector at the decision-making tables.



Partnerships between governments, local businesses, and international investors can drive much-needed capital and technological innovation into a robust market for renewables while making transitions sustainable.

Small islands' potential to contribute to the global target to triple renewable energy capacity should not be underestimated. They are uniquely placed to showcase the technical and economic viability of 100% renewable energy systems and ensure their sustainability, originating replicable and scalable models that can guide global change.

In conclusion, I call upon this conference to recognize the pivotal role of renewable energy in the sustainable development of small islands and support greater ambition, beyond their limited size, prioritizing the transition to fully renewable energy systems as a vital action for islands over the next decisive decade.

This will send a clear signal to the world, driving greater support and ambition from other nations.

I thank you”