

Academic Cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region for the Energy Transition

*The region already has a knowledge network.
The task is to turn it into operational capacity.*

Prof. Piotr Stepnowski
Rector of the University of Gdańsk



Baltic Energy Conference 2026



29 June 2026 · Inaugural Edition

1st Baltic *Rectors'* Forum

Proceedings, Strategic Insights
and Recommendations



Minister of Science and Higher Education
Republic of Poland

The Baltic academic community is large – and already connected

Eight EU countries bordering the Baltic Sea; latest comparable Eurostat data.



6.01m

Students

(B.Sc., M.Sc., Eng., Ph.D.)



885k

academic staff



120+

*universities in
Baltic oriented
intern. projects*



94

*universities in the Gdańsk
Declaration proces*

The energy transition needs more than engineering

Universities connect technology, systems and society –
from seabed to social licence

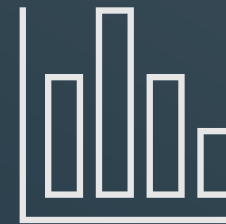


Technology

offshore wind · grids · storage
hydrogen · CCS · nuclear

Systems

marine spatial planning · ports ·
supply chains · cyber resilience



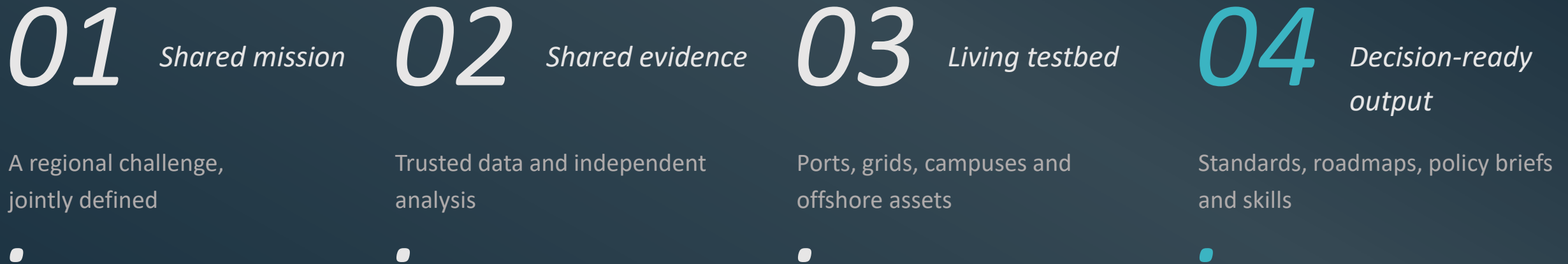
Society

economics · law · permitting
· public acceptance · skills

Academia's advantage is integration: independent evidence
across technical, regulatory and social boundaries.

Move from sponsorship to mission-based partnership

A repeatable model for academia-industry cooperation



Success means faster decisions, lower risk and people ready to deliver - not publications alone

The Baltic Rector's Forum turns capacity into coordination

- 100+ participants
- Gdańsk Declaration
- Baltic Energy Council
- 2027 Klaipėda

A permanent platform where universities, industry, and public institutions can build continuity beyond individual projects



Gdańsk Declaration and operating coalition

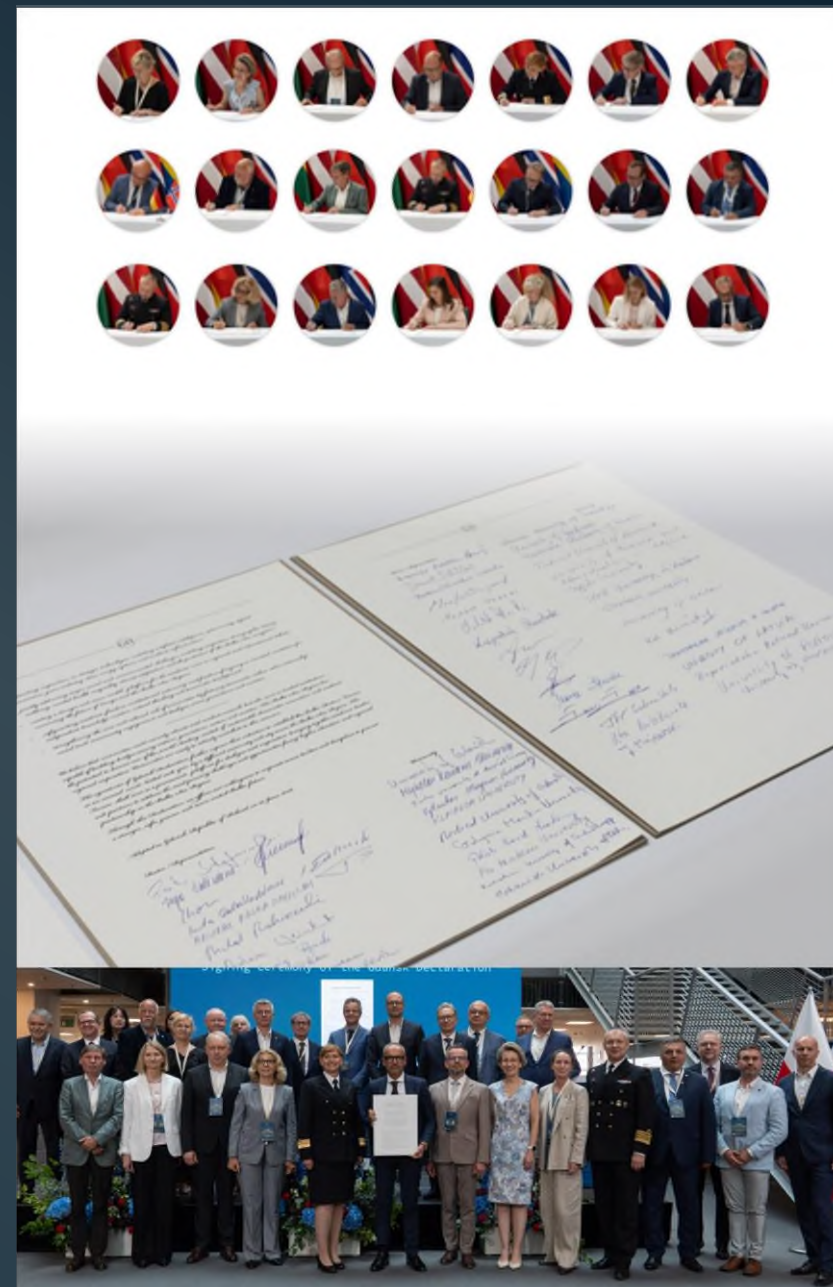
38 _____ *signed*

56 _____ *awaiting signature*

94 _____ *universities in signing process*

29 JUN _____ 2026 · *adopted in Gdańsk*

A shared agenda for education, evidence-based policy,
the energy transition and regional resilience



What signatories commit to

01 Partnerships

universities · governments ·
cities · industry

02 Joint education

programmes · degrees ·
microcredentials · mobility

03 Policy

Independent evidence for
public decision

04 Energy & tech

clean energy · strategic techno-
logies · resilient infrastructure

05 Regional resilience

social · climate · Baltic
ecosystem challenges

06 Academic values

freedom · democracy · civic
responsibility

GD

Gdańsk Declaration

Universities for a Resilient, Innovative and Sustainable Baltic Sea Region

We, the Rectors and representatives of universities of the Baltic Sea Region, gathered during the Baltic Rectors' Forum in Gdańsk on 29 June 2026, recognize that the future strength, resilience, and competitiveness of our region depend on deeper cooperation among academia, governments, industry, civil society, and international institutions.

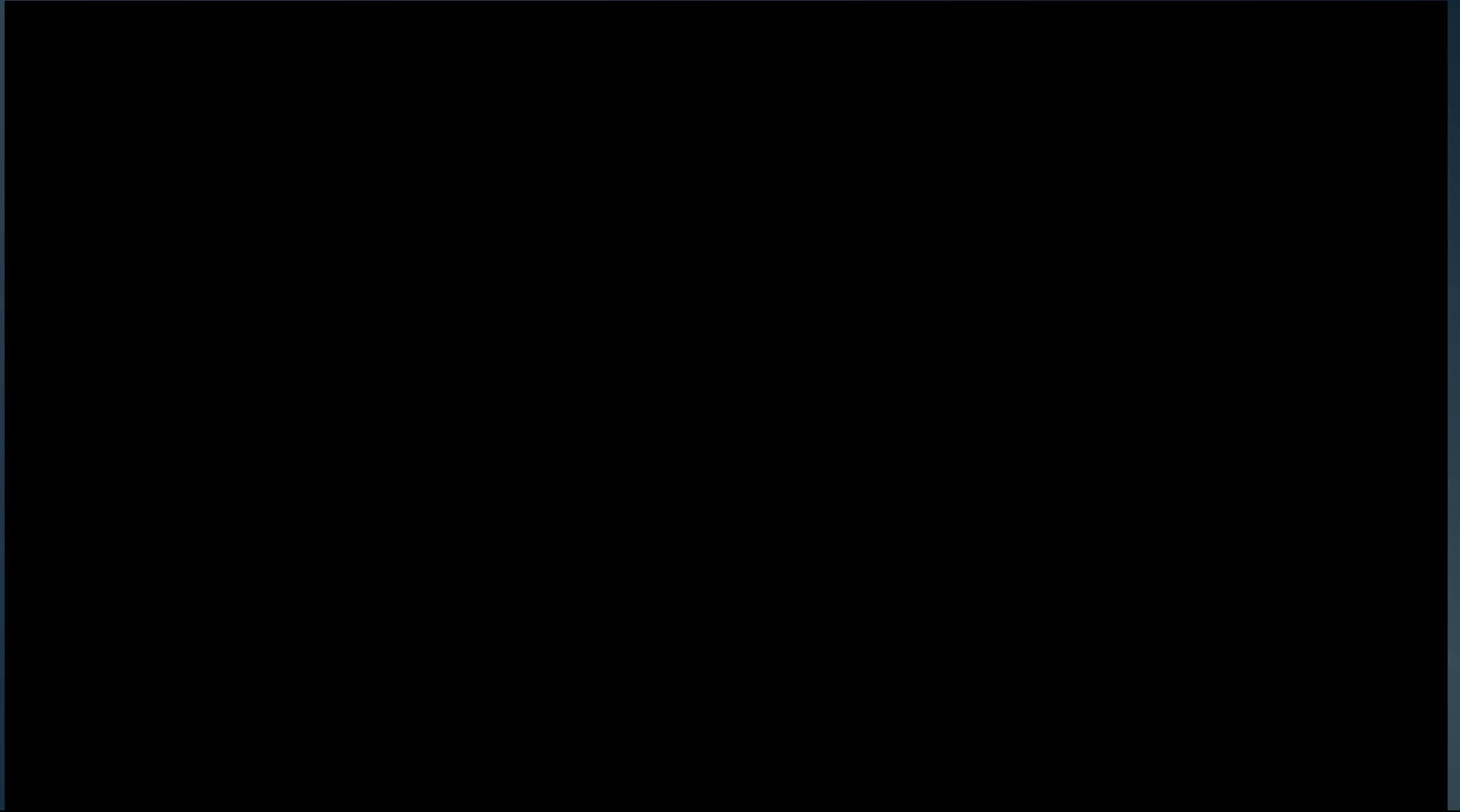
In the face of accelerating geopolitical, technological, environmental, demographic, and social transformations, we declare our shared commitment to strengthening universities' role as strategic actors in shaping the future of the Baltic Sea Region and Europe.

We acknowledge that the Baltic Sea Region stands at a historic crossroads today. Energy security, climate transition, healthy ecosystems, technological sovereignty, defence resilience, migration, social cohesion, the resilience of democratic institutions, public health, and sustainable economic development, require coordinated regional responses supported by science, innovation, and education.

Therefore, we commit to:

- strengthening existing academic cooperation, platforms across the Baltic Sea Region and creating new long-term partnerships among universities, research institutes, governments, cities, and industry;*
- developing joint educational initiatives, including common curricula, interdisciplinary programmes, microcredentials, mobility schemes, and joint or dual degrees that prepare future leaders for regional and global challenges;*
- actively contributing to the development of evidence-based public policies and strategic recommendations for governments, the European Union, NATO, the United Nations, and regional institutions;*
- reinforcing the Baltic Sea Region as a globally recognized centre of innovation, democratic resilience, sustainability, and responsible technological development;*

1st Baltic Rectors' Forum - movie



Baltic Offshore: a delivery problem

2.8 GW _____ *installed Baltic offshore capacity*

19.6 GW _____ *2030 Baltic target*

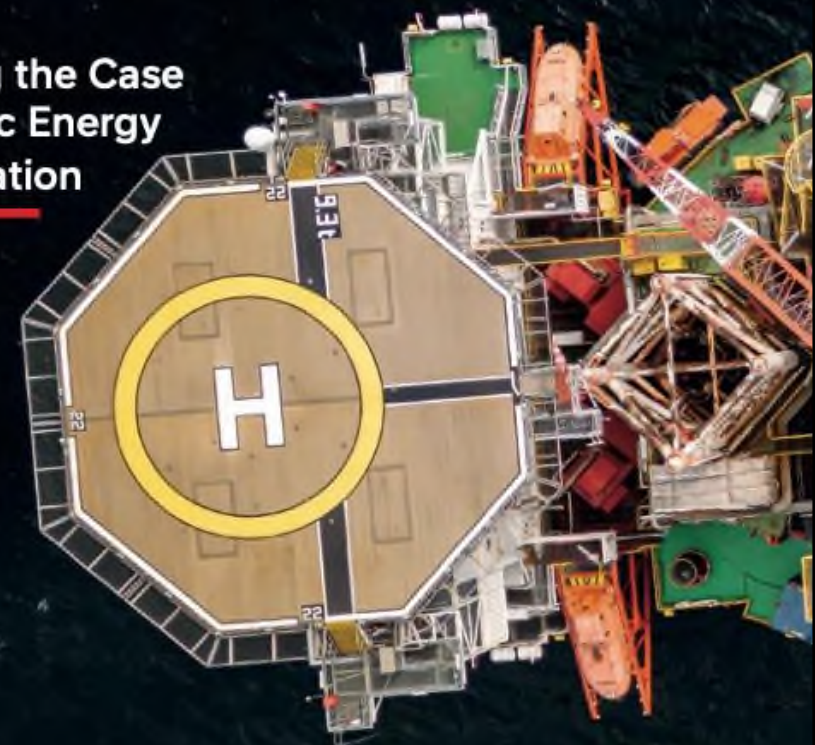
60 GW _____ *2030 North Sea target*

Poland _____ *potential anchor market*

Ambition is not the bottleneck. Stable governance,
finance and coordinated delivery are.

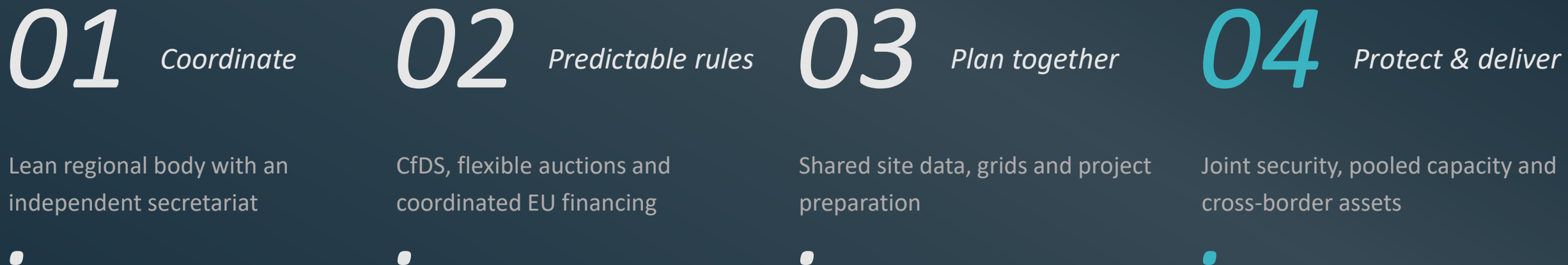
Learning from the North Sea:

Building the Case
for Baltic Energy
Cooperation



Move from targets to a regional project pipeline

Governance, predictable rules and shared infrastructure turn ambition into delivery



Shared targets ➡ Regional pipeline. ➡ Joint financing ➡ Delivery

— 29 JUNE 2026 · INAUGURAL EDITION

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Thank you for your attention