

SeaCoop – a cooperative social enterprise under Belgian law (*coöperatieve vennootschap met sociaal oogmerk/cvso*)

Goal

SeaCoop's main objective is, in the public interest, to have a positive social impact on people, the environment and society.

It considers renewable energy sources in general, and wind energy in particular, as shared resources or part of "the commons" to which citizens should have equal rights of access.

It therefore aims to involve citizens directly in the energy transition by giving them the opportunity to participate economically in the development and operation of large-scale renewable energy projects in general, and in the development and use of offshore wind energy in the North Sea in particular.

It aims to implement European energy and climate policy, which states that citizens deserve a central place in the energy transition, for example through co-ownership and control of renewable energy projects in their area.

It aims to contribute to the development of citizen cooperatives in a social and solidarity-based economy.

It aims to contribute to supplying citizens with sustainable energy at a price that is as stable and accessible as possible.

It aims to contribute to rational energy consumption and energy saving.

As a social enterprise, it promotes inclusivity. It strives to allow citizens/households living in energy poverty to also participate in renewable energy.

It serves the citizen cooperatives for renewable energy that are members of one of the federations: REScoop Flanders or REScoop Wallonia.

Objective

In order to meet these needs of its partners and interested third parties, SeaCoop will carry out the following activities:

It brings together citizens' renewable energy sources cooperatives, members of REScoop Flanders or REScoop Wallonia, who want to participate together in large-scale renewable energy projects. Its main purpose is to contribute to the production of offshore renewable energy through participation in the capital.

To achieve this, SeaCoop will support the federations to which their members are affiliated, namely REScoop Flanders and REScoop Wallonia, financially and logistically.

To this end, SeaCoop can engage in the following activities:

- Raising capital through citizens' renewable energy sources cooperatives to participate economically in large-scale renewable energy projects;
- Research and development activities;
- Organising awareness raising campaigns and training;
- Promoting the cooperative model according to the ICA principles;
- Developing programmes to combat energy poverty;

- Organising crowdfunding programmes to acquire venture capital;
- Organising and offering energy services for the cooperatives it represents (REScoops) or their members (citizens);
- Effective participation in or financial support for cooperative projects or the social and solidarity-based economy in the field of energy.

This list above is not exhaustive.

To achieve its objectives, SeaCoop may:

- cooperate with, participate in, or in any way take an interest in, directly or indirectly, other companies and/or organisations;
- act as guarantee for its own commitments as well as for the commitments of third parties, including by mortgaging or pledging its assets;
- act as a director, proxy holder, mandatary or liquidator in other companies or enterprises;
- perform all commercial, industrial, financial, movable or immovable transactions that are directly or indirectly related to its cooperative goals or objectives or which are of a nature to facilitate their realisation in whole or in part.

It generally has the full legal capacity to perform all acts and transactions that are directly or indirectly related to its objectives or that are of such a nature as to facilitate, wholly or partially, the achievement of these objectives, whether directly or indirectly.

Cooperative purpose and values

The operation of SeaCoop is based on the internationally recognised rules of the cooperative movement as specified in the definition and principles of the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) in which autonomy and ownership under democratic governance are central.

SeaCoop subscribes to the cooperative principles of the ICA, "an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social or cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly owned and democratically controlled enterprise", and actively promotes them in all its activities.

It bases its activities on the cooperative values of self-reliance, sense of responsibility, democracy, equality, justice and solidarity. In the cooperative tradition, the partners believe in the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility and concern for others.

In doing so, SeaCoop strives to apply the following principles:

Voluntary and open membership

SeaCoop is open – without sexual, social, racial, political or religious discrimination – to all candidate partners who meet the qualifications for membership of Article 8 and endorse its mission, vision and objectives.

Democratic control by its members

Pursuant to Article 38, none of its members can acquire a majority at the general meeting, regardless of the number of shares it owns, since the principle of 1 partner = 1 vote is applied.

Economic participation by members

Members have a dual relationship with SeaCoop. They not only bring in financial resources; they expect SeaCoop to meet their needs through the realisation of large-scale renewable energy projects, with maximum citizen involvement

Autonomy and independence

SeaCoop is an independent organisation that is under the control of its members at all times. If SeaCoop enters into agreements with other organisations, including governments, or raises capital from external sources, it does so in a way that guarantees its autonomy and democratic control by its members. No external stakeholder can have the upper hand in decision-making.

Providing information about the cooperative principles

SeaCoop reports annually on how it is putting the cooperative principles into practice and communicates this via all common communication channels such as its website.

Cooperation between cooperatives

When entering into commercial relationships, SeaCoop gives preference to cooperatives as partners. It also strives to strengthen the cooperative movement by working together with local, national and international structures such as the Belgian National Cooperation Council and Cooperatives Europe.

Attention to the community

In accordance with its goals and objectives, SeaCoop is working on a sustainable economic, social and ecological transition by developing activities in the field of renewable energy and striving for a CO₂-neutral society.

Contact

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