AVL and ECUBES join forces to scale eSAF technology to industrial production worldwide

Gorizia / Nova Gorica, 11 November 2026

- **Global commercialisation partnership:** ECUBES designated as AVL's global commercialisation partner for Co-SOEC power-to-liquid, eSAF, and synthetic-fuel technologies, with AVL remaining the core technology and engineering partner.
- **First commercial eSAF plant:** First industrial-scale Sustainable Aviation Fuel (eSAF) production facility in preparation in the North Adriatic region, as a modular blueprint for global replication. The plant is targeting an annual output equal to approximately 1% of the EU's 2030 eSAF requirements.
- **Industry-leading cost economics:** Delivers the lowest projected eSAF production costs per liter in the industry, significantly narrowing the price gap with conventional fossil jet fuel.
- **Competitive industrial hydrogen:** ECUBES' 1 GWh+ seasonal hydrogen storage - now entering deployment - combined with the high efficiency of AVL's electrolysers brings delivered renewable hydrogen into a competitive cost range for industry.
- **End-to-end clean fuel value chain:** Advances a shared vision to connect renewable hydrogen supply, dual-use energy infrastructure, Mediterranean and Atlantic hydrogen import corridors, and next-generation synthetic fuels, opening a new phase for strategic investors and industrial partners worldwide.

Grand Hotel Entourage Gorizia – Palazzo Strassoldo: Where European History Meets the Future of Global Energy

A global milestone for energy resilience

On November 11, 2026, Palazzo Strassoldo in Gorizia added a defining modern chapter to its legacy of international cooperation. Held alongside the 6th Hydrogen Ecosystem North Adriatic Conference, a key gathering of partners from the first European transnational hydrogen valley (NAHV), the event saw ECUBES and AVL sign a landmark Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) within the palace's historic first-floor Salone d'onore "Charles X".

The agreement designates ECUBES as AVL's global commercialisation partner for its breakthrough Co-SOEC Power-to-Liquid, eSAF, and synthetic-fuel technologies, while AVL remains the core technology and engineering partner.

The MoU was signed by Aleksander Gerbec, Founder and CEO of ECUBES, and Jürgen Rechberger, Vice President of AVL, witnessed by General (ret.) Tom Middendorp (the "Climate General") and Roland Schulze, Managerial Adviser (*Conseiller de Direction*), Low Carbon Energy Technology – Energy Department at the European Investment Bank (EIB).

Industrializing next-generation fuels for global markets

As a first concrete step, ECUBES announced plans to establish its first industrial-scale Sustainable Aviation Fuel (**eSAF**) production plant in the North Adriatic region, more specifically in Croatia, targeting an annual output equal to roughly **1% of the EU's 2030 eSAF requirements**. Designed as a modular, scalable blueprint for replication across Europe and global markets, the technology delivers the lowest projected eSAF production costs per liter in the industry, significantly narrowing the price gap with conventional fossil jet fuel. ECUBES welcomes strategic

investors and industrial partners worldwide to join this next investment phase and help accelerate the global energy transition.

Powering an independent energy future

This partnership marks a decisive step towards energy sovereignty and resilience. By converting locally generated Renewable Energy Sources (RES) into cost-competitive e-fuels, countries and industries can build a robust, dual-use energy infrastructure independent of external fuel imports. At the same time, industrializing Power-to-Liquid technology provides a vital demand driver to scale the hydrogen market. Combined with ECUBES' innovative, safe, easy-to-handle 1 GWh+ seasonal hydrogen storage, now entering deployment, and the high efficiency of AVL's electrolysers, renewable hydrogen moves into a competitive cost range, giving global industry a credible, bankable route to decarbonisation.

Jürgen Rechberger, Global Vice President Fuel Cell, Hydrogen and Energy at AVL, said: "Scaling next-generation e-fuel production requires turning promising technologies, such as our high-temperature co-electrolysis, into reliable and cost-efficient industrial systems. eSAF represents one of the most robust offtake opportunities for hydrogen derivatives, and by targeting a 30% improvement in conversion efficiency, we aim to significantly reduce energy demand and production costs, bringing clean aviation fuels closer to commercial competitiveness. Partnering with ECUBES allows us to move from demonstration to large-scale deployment, combining our electrolysis systems engineering expertise with their holistic supply chain and storage integration capabilities to make Europe's clean energy transition more cost-effective and resilient."

Alexander Gerbec, CEO of ECUBES, said: "With this agreement, ECUBES now expands its portfolio of technologies to enter the growing eFuel market. As an integrator developing the entire hydrogen supply chain, our approach enables us to bring breakthrough innovations like AVL's technology to the market. We are privileged to collaborate with AVL, a global leader in hydrogen technologies. Together with our technology partners and regional stakeholders worldwide, we are building resilient energy infrastructures engineered not only for efficient supply but also to withstand disruptions. First and foremost, this partnership will drive the production of eSAF, helping us meet the growing global demand for clean aviation fuels."

General (ret.) Tom Middendorp said: "Europe's strategic autonomy depends on building resilient energy ecosystems that combine innovation, infrastructure and cross-border cooperation. Initiatives such as the collaboration between AVL and ECUBES show how complementary expertise can be brought together to explore new solutions for energy storage and flexibility. Their potential contribution to Europe's energy security lies in reducing vulnerabilities and strengthening the resilience of the wider energy system."

Roland Schultze, Managerial Adviser at EIB, said: "Europe's clean hydrogen market is entering a decisive new phase, shifting from announcements to concrete investment decisions and pragmatic execution. From an investor's perspective, bridging the gap between promising innovation and a bankable, large-scale project requires an integrated value chain that connects renewable power, efficient production, storage, and clear industrial offtake. Partnerships like this demonstrate the exact kind of cross-border industrial collaboration needed to progress in clean fuel deployment, strengthen Europe's energy resilience, and mobilize long-term public and private capital."

About ECUBES

ECUBES is a European renewable hydrogen ecosystem builder and supply chain integrator and initiator of the North Adriatic Hydrogen Valley. The company builds end-to-end international hydrogen supply chains to import renewable hydrogen to Europe through Mediterranean and Atlantic corridors. Furthermore, ECUBES establishes dual-use hydrogen infrastructure, as well as 1 GWh+ seasonal energy storage solutions to convert intermittent renewables into affordable, dispatchable clean fuels and energy on demand.

About AVL

Headquartered in Graz, Austria, AVL (AVL List GmbH) is one of the world's leading mobility and industrial energy technology companies. Renowned for its global leadership in engineering, simulation, and testing, AVL stands behind its pioneering Co-SOEC Power-to-Liquid, high-efficiency electrolysis, and fuel cell technologies to drive industrial decarbonisation.

About General (ret.) Tom Middendorp

Widely recognized as the "Climate General," Tom Middendorp is the former Chief of Defence of the Netherlands and Chair of the International Military Council on Climate and Security (IMCCS). A leading international authority on the nexus of climate change, energy security, and defence, he champions clean energy independence as a cornerstone of geopolitical stability. He witnessed the signing of the agreement.

About Roland Schulze

Roland Schulze is Managerial Adviser (*Conseiller de Direction*), Low Carbon Energy Technology – Energy Department at the European Investment Bank (EIB). He witnessed the signing of the agreement.

About the European Investment Bank (EIB)

As the lending arm of the European Union and the EU's climate bank, the EIB is one of the world's largest providers of climate finance, mobilizing strategic capital to accelerate clean-energy infrastructure, industrial scale-up, and sustainable economic resilience.

About the (6th) Hydrogen Ecosystem North Adriatic Conference

The Hydrogen Ecosystem North Adriatic Conference is a premier European platform focused on industrial competitiveness, climate action, resilient energy supply, and the advancement of EU sovereignty.
The conference serves as a key meeting place and commercial marketplace where industry leaders, policymakers, researchers, and investors collaborate to build a resilient, cross-border clean energy infrastructure. Originating from a 2021 industrial partnership backed by ECUBES and the Clean Hydrogen Partnership, the initiative pioneered the EU's first transnational hydrogen valley in the Alpe-Adria / North Adriatic region. While deeply rooted in this cross-border cooperation between Slovenia, Croatia, and Italy, the conference delivers European-wide impact by expanding its value chain and investment partnerships into Northern Europe, Central Europe, and the MENA region by developing a regional hydrogen ecosystem with seasonal storage solutions and new hydrogen corridors linking Europe with MENA.
The 2026 event in Gorizia and Nova Gorica, 11 – 12 November, organised by ECUBES and GM Circularity, was held under the theme "At the intersection of EU sovereignty, industrial competitiveness and climate crisis".

About the Venue

Set at the foot of Gorizia's medieval castle in Piazza Sant'Antonio, Grand Hotel Entourage occupies the historic Palazzo Strassoldo, a 15th-century noble residence that reflects the enduring, cross-border spirit of the city itself.
A Crossroads of Nations

For centuries, Gorizia has stood as the geographic and cultural meeting point. Long celebrated under the Habsburg Empire as the "Austrian Nice" for its cosmopolitan openness, the city has evolved into a powerful European symbol of unity and cooperation. Together with its Slovenian neighbour Nova Gorica, the first cross-border European Capital of Culture (GO! 2025), Gorizia serves as a living bridge of international partnership, making it a fitting backdrop for milestones that strengthen and connect the future.

A Royal Sanctuary
Within this storied setting, Palazzo Strassoldo holds a distinct place in European history. Following the 1830 July Revolution in France, the exiled Bourbon royal court of King Charles X chose Gorizia as its refuge in 1836. The palace housed the King's inner circle and entourage, inspiring the hotel's name, and its first-floor apartments served as the residence of Marie Thérèse of France (Madame Royale), the surviving daughter of King Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette. Today, the palace's grand first-floor conference hall, the Salone d'onore "Charles X", still preserves the original oak floors once walked upon by the French royal family.

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Interview Availability
Aleksander Gerbec (Founder and CEO, ECUBES) and Jürgen Rechberger (Vice President, AVL) are available for broadcast, print and virtual interviews upon request. Please contact the media representatives above to arrange an interview.



Picture: Partners who witnessed the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding
Photo by: Ilaria Tassini