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Economic Commission for Europe

Committee on Sustainable Energy

Twenty-eighth session

Geneva, 25-27 September 2019

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Opening and adoption of the agenda

Annotated provisional agenda for the twenty-eighth session¹

To be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
starting at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, 25 September 2019

I. Provisional agenda

1. Opening and adoption of the agenda.
2. Matters related to the Committee on Sustainable Energy.
 - (a) Election of officers.
3. High-level segment: Accelerating and deepening the transition to sustainable energy systems.
 - (a) Pathways to Sustainable Energy: Presentation of results and recommendations.
 - (b) Discussion with the subsidiary bodies.
 - (c) High-level policy dialogue with countries.
4. Attaining carbon neutrality in the ECE region.
 - (a) Modernization of energy infrastructure and “just” transition.
 - (b) Decarbonizing electricity.
5. Sustainable resource management.
 - (a) Gas pathways to 2050 and the interplay with renewable energy.
 - (b) Managing resources in a carbon constrained world.

¹ Delegates attending meetings at the Palais des Nations are requested to register online at <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=51057>, if possible at least three weeks prior to the session. On the day of the meeting, delegates are requested to present themselves at least 45 minutes prior to the start time at the Pass and Identification Unit of the United Nations Office at Geneva Security and Safety Section, located at the Pregny Gate, 14, Avenue de la Paix opposite the Red Cross Building (see the map on the Energy Division's website) for the issuance of an identification badge. Registration is open every work day at the Pregny Gate from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.



- (c) Groups of Experts on Cleaner Electricity Systems and Gas and Expert Group on Resource Management: Mandates and work plans.
 - (d) Efficiencies, cities and circular economy.
 - (e) Groups of Experts on Energy Efficiency, Renewable Energy and Coal Mine Methane: Mandates and work plans.
- 6. Gender and energy.
- 7. Regional outreach and collaboration activities.
 - (a) Regional advisory services and collaboration activities.
 - (b) Extrabudgetary and UN Development Account projects.
 - (c) International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development.
- 8. Future work of the Committee on Sustainable Energy.
 - (a) Review of subprogramme performance and planning.
 - (b) Approval of documents.
 - (c) Any other business.
 - (d) Adoption of the report and close of the meeting.

II. Annotations

1. Opening and adoption of the agenda

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/122 – Annotated provisional agenda for the twenty-eighth session

The twenty-seventh session of the Committee on Sustainable Energy (the Committee) set in motion a consultation process to sharpen the structure of the Committee's work in response to shifting needs and to explore potential partnerships for enhanced capacity building and sharing of experiences in the energy space. The Committee had the opportunity during its open-ended consultation on 16 May 2019 to rethink its procedures, structures, and activities to deliver more compelling outcomes.

The twenty-eighth session will allow the Committee to exchange views about some of the consequences of the ongoing energy transition and the role that the Committee and its six subsidiary bodies can play to accelerate further and deepen the transition to sustainable energy systems based on these earlier deliberations.

The provisional agenda is based on decisions taken by the Committee at its twenty-seventh session (ECE/ENERGY/119) and on progress made since then in implementing the 2018–2019 programme of work. The provisional agenda is presented to the Committee for adoption.

2. Matters related to the Committee on Sustainable Energy

(a) Election of officers

The Committee will be invited to elect its Chair and Vice-Chair(s) as appropriate.

3. High-level segment: Accelerating and deepening the transition to sustainable energy systems

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/2016/7 – Pathways to sustainable energy
ECE/ENERGY/2018/1 – Pathways to sustainable energy – status report

ECE/ENERGY/2019/1 – Pathways to sustainable energy: Accelerating
energy transition in the ECE region

The extrabudgetary project “Pathways to Sustainable Energy” (the project) is an important vehicle for understanding the gaps that exist in meeting the energy-related objectives of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda) and the opportunities that countries in the region of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) have to close the gaps.

(a) Pathways to Sustainable Energy: Presentation of results and recommendations

On this occasion, the Committee will be informed of the results and key insights of the first phase of the project, which began in early 2017. Remarks will include policy recommendations for member States, explore global and regional energy challenges, and draw conclusions on where the region is headed.

(b) Discussion with the subsidiary bodies

The subsidiary bodies of the Committee will present their views on project outcomes and, in a moderated, interactive discussion, will touch upon additional considerations including resource management, nexus areas, and social aspects that are often non-quantitative and hence not easily included in a modelling exercise.

The Committee then will be invited to share views about opportunities and limitations of emerging business models and technology innovation and to offer thoughts on disruptive factors, uncertainties and possibilities of response in the context of the project. The reflections will provide valuable input to explore future work of the sustainable energy subprogramme and set the stage for the following high-level policy dialogue with countries.

(c) High-level policy dialogue with countries

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/2019/1 – Pathways to sustainable energy: Accelerating energy transition in the ECE region

Global and local uncertainties surrounding future energy prices and hence energy markets, climate change impacts, international cooperation, geopolitical tensions, and technology development, among many other factors, complicate an accelerated transition. The high-level panel will consider the results of the project in the context of ECE subregional specificities and the role of technologies and innovation in reaching sustainable energy, as there are numerous interpretations of what is “sustainable energy” or what could be a strategic pathway to achieve it.

In connection with the topic, two partners of the sustainable energy subprogramme will present toolkits that they have developed to address energy transition challenges to the Committee for information. This session is offered in the context of joint learning and information exchange with partners and stakeholders and will provide additional context for the Committee’s deliberations. Presentations could be spread over the entire twenty-eighth session period.

Building on the preceding discussions, the Committee will be requested to endorse steps to accelerate progress towards attaining the energy-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) based on different options. Such recommendations could outline the need for future deep dive analyses within the modelling and scenario work, the implementation of an early warning system, and the tracking of progress of energy indicators in line with the 2030 Agenda.

The Committee will be invited to provide guidance on the future direction of its programme of work and an effective and streamlined role of the subsidiary bodies to support desired outcomes to accelerate the delivery of energy for sustainable development and concretise its reputation as a credible and relevant partner. This is especially important with regards to the opportunities and challenges of the fast-paced and unpredictable challenges of the ongoing energy transition in the ECE subregional context.

4. Attaining carbon neutrality in the ECE region

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/2019/2 – Attaining carbon-neutrality in the ECE region by 2050 – a discussion paper about the role of clean fossil fuels in sustainable energy

The commitment to keep global warming to well below two degrees Celsius compared to pre-industrial levels requires decarbonization in all economic sectors and of all potent greenhouse gases. In practice, this implies modernization of the energy sector with a focus on coal and finding innovative solutions for energy - and therefore carbon-intensive - industries like steel, cement or transport towards a green economy and low-carbon society.

Many countries have started to shift efforts towards carbon- or climate-neutral concepts as fossil fuels will continue to play an important role for ECE member States in the short- and medium terms.² The session will provide the opportunity for the Committee to take a position on the role that fossil fuels will play in the context of carbon-neutrality in the region and provide recommendations to the United Nations Development System on options that allow a swift shift towards carbon-neutral concepts.

Two panels comprised of international thought leaders and experts from selected expert groups will share views in a moderated discussion. The panels are a joint undertaking by the subsidiary bodies to reflect the holistic nature of the energy system and to explore potential partnerships for enhanced capacity building and sharing of experiences.

(a) Modernization of energy infrastructure and “just” transition

While it can be expected that decarbonization efforts in all economic sectors will create new opportunities and employment, it will have disruptive effects on countries, high-carbon regions and energy intensive industries. Fears of job losses, disruptive structural and cultural changes, economic decline, and negative political implications influence the debate more strongly than the benefits of a low-carbon transition.

A multistakeholder panel will discuss the value of a “just” transition as an integrated approach to sustainable development, which brings together social progress, environmental protection and economic success into a framework of democratic governance. Panellists will present effective “just” transition strategies and discuss the deep structural shift that is ongoing. The shift has implications not just for the involved industries and installations but for their workers, their communities and their regions. The panel will make recommendations regarding the future work of the sustainable energy subprogramme.

(b) Decarbonising electricity

Electricity lies at the heart of both opportunities, solutions and threats to the entire system. A multistakeholder panel comprised of international experts will discuss the role of electricity in achieving the 2030 Agenda through all aspects of decarbonising the power system. The discussion will include remarks on the importance of clean fossil fuels in a carbon-neutral society, power market design and flexibility towards a growing share of renewable energy and the importance of financing clean energy projects.

The focus of the discussion will be on the need to support the transition of countries and sectors and examine ways to decarbonise the power sector, investments to a cleaner electricity system for enhanced decarbonisation and grid resiliency. This has to be seen in the broader context of an economy as a whole, as choices must be economically and socially acceptable for countries and affected regions.

² Carbon neutrality should not be confused with zero-, low- or negative carbon efforts. The term refers to achieving net zero CO₂ emissions by balancing carbon emissions with carbon removal (often through carbon offsetting) or simply eliminating carbon emissions altogether (the transition to a “post-carbon economy”).

5. Sustainable resource management

The solution to many sustainable development challenges passes through finding and implementing appropriate solutions across sectors and technologies, especially in sustainable energy, which underlies not only all other SDGs but underpins also economic development and quality of life aspirations of countries. Further it is clear that a move towards a low-carbon society will require the responsible use of natural resources in the ECE region and will have geopolitical consequences. For the energy revolution, access to critical raw materials and rare earth minerals is fundamental, as is building on existing technologies and adapting them for future needs.

Three panels comprised of international thought leaders from selected subsidiary bodies will share views on the role of gas pathways, sustainable resource management, circular economy and efficiency. The panels are a joint undertaking by the subsidiary bodies to reflect the holistic nature of the energy system and to explore potential partnerships for enhanced capacity-building and sharing of experiences.

(a) Gas pathways to 2050 and the interplay with renewable energy

The commitment to address global warming also implies a rapid mastering of growing atmospheric concentrations of methane and the role these concentrations play in climate change. Managing methane emissions across the gas value chain will strengthen the role of natural gas (including compressed and liquified natural gas) and renewable gases and their carriers (biogas, biomethane, other decarbonized gases, hydrogen, methanol, ammonia, etc.) in the energy mix.

The discussion will focus on possible pathways for gas to 2050 and its role to support renewable energy. Experts will deliberate the interlinked model between gas-electricity-renewable energy. Outcomes from the workshop on the improved understanding on the role of natural gas in achieving the 2030 Agenda, preceding the Committee session, will be reported.

(b) Managing resources in a carbon constrained world

Many low-carbon technologies require vast amounts of critical raw materials. Energy efficiency, renewable energy, battery storage, nuclear energy, and carbon capture and storage all need critical raw materials. It will be essential to understand the geopolitics of current production and supply of critical raw materials and to explore widening the supply base if energy security is to be assured. It will also be necessary to consider the socio-economic, environmental and technological issues that are related to the production and supply of critical raw materials.

Experts will deliberate issues like sustainable resource management and geopolitics, how to improve the efficiency in the production and consumption in creating the services required for sustainable development and climate change, and how to create framework conditions in ways that the capital market can finance.

(c) Groups of Experts on Cleaner Electricity Systems and Gas and Expert Group on Resource Management: Mandates and work plans

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/2019/7 – Work plan of the Group of Experts on Cleaner Electricity Systems for 2020-2021

ECE/ENERGY/2019/10 – Work plan of the Group of Experts on Gas for 2020-2021

ECE/ENERGY/2019/11 – Work plan of the Expert Group on Resource Management for 2020-2021

ECE/ENERGY/2019/15 – Specifications for the application of the United Nations Framework Classification for Resources to Solar Energy

ECE/ENERGY/2019/16 – Specifications for the application of the United Nations Framework Classification for Resources to Wind Energy

ECE/ENERGY/2019/17 – Updated United Nations Framework Classification for Resources

In this session, the Chairs of three Groups of Experts will report on the implementation of their respective work plans for 2018-2019, Bureaux work and the main developments since the twenty-seventh session. The Committee will be asked to approve the requests for extended mandates and future work plans for 2020-2021.

(d) Efficiencies, cities and circular economy

With the rate of urbanization increasing across the ECE region, cities will become increasingly a major focus for the delivery of SDGs. Therefore, the sixty-eighth session of the Economic Commission for Europe focused on smart sustainable cities as drivers for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Along the same lines, panel discussions will focus on practical examples that demonstrate the benefits of integrated planning and comprehensive solutions for smart, sustainable and resilient cities and highlight the importance of the “still” low hanging fruit: energy efficiency in buildings and in industry.

(e) Groups of Experts on Energy Efficiency, Renewable Energy and Coal Mine Methane

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/2019/8 – Work plan of the Group of Experts on Energy Efficiency for 2020-2021

ECE/ENERGY/2019/9 – Work plan of the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy for 2020-2021

ECE/ENERGY/2019/6 – Work plan of the Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane for 2020-2021

ECE/ENERGY/2019/13 – Best practice guidance for effective methane recovery and use from abandoned coal mines

ECE/ENERGY/2019/14 – Best practice guidance for effective methane management in the oil and gas sector: Monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV) and mitigation

In this session, the Chairs of three Groups of Experts will report on the implementation of their respective work plans for 2018-2019, Bureaux work and the main developments since the twenty-seventh session. The Committee will be asked to approve the requests for extended mandates and future work plans for 2020-2021.

The Committee will also be informed of progress related to the Joint Task Force on Energy Efficiency Standards in Buildings with the Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management (previously the Committee on Housing and Land Management) with the participation of ECE Working Party 6³ and will be invited to endorse the amended Terms of Reference for the Joint Task Force on Energy Efficiency Standards in Buildings of the ECE Region for 2020-2021, and endorse the request for an extended mandate for the Task Force for 2020-2021 (see document ECE/ENERGY/2019/8, Annex).

6. Gender and energy

Gender (SDG 5) has become an integral part of activities at the United Nations. Peace, economic development, and social justice are not possible without gender equality and women’s equitable representation in decision-making. In this context, the Committee underscored the importance of advancing work on gender in energy and in its last session

³ The Working Party on Regulatory Cooperation and Standardization Policies (WP.6) encourages increased regulatory coherence in specific sectors that have a critical impact on sustainable development and promotes greater resilience to natural and man-made hazards.

requested an agenda item on gender at this session, which invites the Committee to share perspectives on gender mainstreaming in energy-related activities.

7. Regional outreach and collaboration activities

(a) Regional advisory services and outreach activities

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/2019/18 – Report on regional advisory services in sustainable energy

The Committee will receive an update of regional advisory services since its last session. The report back will include reference to cooperation with other stakeholders.

(b) Extrabudgetary and UN Development Account projects

The Committee will receive an update of extrabudgetary projects and projects under the United Nations Development Account as well as other stakeholders since its last session.

(c) International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development

The Committee will be consulted on the preparations for the Tenth International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development to be hosted by Thailand in Bangkok on 7-8 October 2019, back-to-back with the second session of the Committee on Energy of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN ESCAP).

8. Future work of the Committee on Sustainable Energy

(a) Review of subprogramme performance and planning

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/2019/3 – Draft programme of work of the sustainable energy subprogramme for 2020

ECE/ENERGY/2019/12 – Draft rules of procedure of the Committee on Sustainable Energy

The Committee will be invited to provide guidance on the future direction of its programme of work and an effective and streamlined role of the subsidiary bodies to support desired outcomes to accelerate the delivery of energy for sustainable development and concretize its reputation as a credible and relevant partner.

The Committee had been informed in its last session that at the Seventy-second Session of the General Assembly Member States had approved the change from a biennial to an annual budget period on a trial basis from the beginning of 2020 onwards. In this context, the Committee is requested to adopt the proposed Draft programme of work of the sustainable energy subprogramme for 2020 and to recommend submission to the ECE Executive Committee (EXCOM) for subsequent approval.

The Committee will have the opportunity to reflect on Draft rules of procedure prepared in accordance with the Guidelines on procedures and practices for ECE bodies adopted by the Economic Commission for Europe. These are submitted for discussion and guidance, so they can be refined for adoption at the twenty-ninth session of the Committee.

(b) Approval of documents

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/2019/4 – Provisional calendar of meetings for 2020

ECE/ENERGY/2019/5 – Revised publication plans for 2019 and 2020 and draft publication plan for 2021

The Committee will be requested to note or approve a range of documents to support the implementation of mandated areas of work and to recommend their submission to EXCOM for subsequent approval if required.

The Committee will be invited to agree to the provisional calendar of meetings for 2020 and document ECE/ENERGY/2019/5, which contains changes to the already approved 2019 and 2020 publication plans and the draft publication plan for 2021.

(c) Any other business

Member States may raise any other issues under this agenda item.

(d) Adoption of the report and close of the meeting

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/123 – Report of the Committee on Sustainable Energy on its twenty-eighth session

The Chair will summarize the significant decisions, conclusions and recommendations taken by the Committee.

The Committee will be invited to adopt its report based on a draft prepared by the secretariat.

III. Provisional timetable

**Wednesday,
25 September
2019**

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|-------------|--|
| 10.00-10.30 | 1. Opening and adoption of the agenda.
2. Matters related to the Committee on Sustainable Energy.
(a) Election of officers. |
| 10.30-13.00 | 3. High-level segment: Accelerating and deepening the transition to sustainable energy systems.
(a) Pathways to Sustainable Energy: Presentation of results and recommendations.
(b) Discussion with the subsidiary bodies. |
| 13.00-15.00 | <i>Speakers' lunch (by invitation only)</i>

3. High-level segment: Accelerating and deepening the transition to sustainable energy systems (cont.).
(c) High-level policy dialogue with countries. |
| 18.00-20.00 | <i>Reception (subject to funding)</i> |

**Thursday,
26 September
2019**

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|-------------|--|
| 10.00-13.00 | 4. Attaining carbon neutrality in the ECE region.
(a) Modernization of energy infrastructure and “just” transition.
(b) Decarbonizing electricity. |
| 13.00-15.00 | <i>Lunch break</i> |
| 15.00-18.00 | 5. Sustainable resource management.
(a) Gas pathways to 2050 and the interplay with renewable energy.
(b) Managing resources in a carbon constrained world.
(c) Groups of Experts on Cleaner Electricity Systems and Gas and Expert Group on Resource Management: Mandates and work plans. |

**Friday,
27 September
2019**

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| 10.00-12.00 | 5. Sustainable resource management (cont.).
(d) Efficiencies, cities and circular economy.
(e) Groups of Experts on Energy Efficiency, Renewable Energy, and Coal Mine Methane: Mandates and work plans. |
| 12.00-13.00 | 6. Gender and energy. |
| 13.00-15.00 | <i>Lunch break</i> |
| 15.00-15.45 | 7. Regional outreach and collaboration activities.
(a) Regional advisory services and collaboration activities. |

(b) Extra-budgetary and UN Development Account projects.

(c) International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development.

15.45-18.00

8. Future work of the Committee on Sustainable Energy.

(a) Review of subprogramme performance planning.

(b) Approval of documents.

(c) Any other business.

(d) Adoption of the report and close of the meeting.
