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Economic Commission for Europe**Committee on Sustainable Energy****Twenty-ninth session**

Geneva, 25-27 November 2020

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Opening and adoption of the agenda**Annotated provisional agenda for the twenty-ninth session¹**

To be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, starting at 11 a.m. on Wednesday, 25 November 2020.

I. Provisional agenda

1. Opening and adoption of the agenda.
2. Organisation of the Committee on Sustainable Energy twenty-ninth session.
 - (a) Election of officers.
 - (b) Implications of COVID-19 for future meetings.
3. Strategic review of the sustainable energy subprogramme.
 - (a) Rethinking energy: Considerations from the six subsidiary bodies.
 - (b) Implications for work of the Committee on Sustainable Energy and the sustainable energy subprogramme.
 - (c) Ways of working.
4. Carbon neutrality as a pathway to sustainable energy.
 - (a) Pathways to sustainable energy.
 - (b) Framework on carbon neutrality.
 - (c) Next steps and future phases.
5. Action agenda for the Economic Commission for Europe.

¹ Delegates attending meetings at the Palais des Nations are requested to register online at <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=55060>, 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.



- (a) International Centres of Excellence.
 - (b) International decade of methane management.
 - (c) High-performance buildings initiative.
 - (d) United Nations Framework Classification for Resources and sustainable resource management.
 - (e) Key messages and policy recommendations for the Economic Commission for Europe.
6. Future work of the Committee on Sustainable Energy.
- (a) Preparations for the thirtieth anniversary of the Committee on Sustainable Energy.
 - (b) Review of subprogramme performance and planning.
 - (c) Approval of documents.
 - (d) Any other business.
 - (e) Adoption of the report and close of the meeting.

II. Annotations

1. Opening and adoption of the agenda

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/132 – Annotated provisional agenda for the twenty-ninth session

The theme of this session is “Pursuing carbon neutrality to advance the energy transition”.

The provisional agenda is based on decisions taken by the Committee on Sustainable Energy (the Committee) at its twenty-eighth session (ECE/ENERGY/123) and on progress made since then in implementing the 2019-2020 programme of work. A detailed timetable for the session can be found in section III, an update will be posted on the website² should it become necessary.

2. Organisation of the Committee on Sustainable Energy twenty-ninth session

(a) Election of officers

The Committee will be invited to elect nominated Vice-Chairs as appropriate.

(b) Implications of COVID-19 for future meetings

The Committee will be invited to discuss meeting modalities of future meetings and decisions requiring in-person presence in the light of the current and possible future pandemics or other disruptions of normal procedures.

3. Strategic review of the sustainable energy subprogramme

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/2020/12 – Strategic review of the ECE sustainable energy subprogramme

ECE/ENERGY/2020/5 – Draft rules of procedure for the Committee on Sustainable Energy

² <https://www.unece.org/energy/se/com.html>

The twenty-seventh session of the Committee set in motion a consultation process regarding the Committee's work in response to shifting needs. The twenty-eighth session allowed the Committee to exchange views about possible consequences of the ongoing energy transition and the role that the Committee and its six subsidiary bodies could play. This session invites the Committee to conclude these reflections.

(a) Rethinking energy: Considerations from the six subsidiary bodies

It will be important for the Committee to obtain alignment among member States on its vision for the future and the pathway to the agreed destination. The six subsidiary bodies of the Committee will present their views on document ECE/ENERGY/2020/12 including nexus activities, joint projects, and policy recommendations for member States.

(b) Implications for work of the Committee on Sustainable Energy and the sustainable energy subprogramme

The Committee will be invited to provide guidance on the future direction of its work.

(c) Ways of working

Over the past two sessions, the Committee has been reconsidering its procedures, structures and activities to deliver more compelling outcomes. There is an express desire for procedures that allow swifter decision-making to increase the sub-programme's impact.

The Committee will be invited to discuss and approve the Draft rules of procedure set forth in document ECE/ENERGY/2020/5. The document was prepared following a request by the Committee at its twenty-seventh session and renewed at its twenty-eighth session. The objective of the document is to clarify i) the relationship between the Committee on Sustainable Energy and its subsidiary bodies; ii) the role of the respective Bureaux and nomination process; iii) decision making when not in session; and iv) decision making in case of disagreement. This discussion must be seen in the light of COVID-19 travel restrictions and the need for decision making without physical presence (see also agenda item 2(b)) and will conclude the morning session on the strategic review.

4. Carbon neutrality as a pathway to sustainable energy

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/2019/1 – Pathways to Sustainable Energy: Accelerating Energy Transition in the ECE Region

ECE/ENERGY/2020/1 – Policy recommendations from Pathways to Sustainable Energy

ECE/ENERGY/2020/8 – Hydrogen – an innovative solution to carbon neutrality

ECE/ENERGY/2020/9 – Carbon neutrality through synergies between gas and renewable energy

ECE/ENERGY/2020/10 – Pathways to Sustainable Energy - Policy recommendations from the Expert Group on Resource Management

ECE/ENERGY/GE.5/2020/8 – Framework for attaining carbon-neutrality in the ECE region by 2050

ECE/ENERGY/GE.5/2020/7 - Technology brief: Carbon capture, utilization and storage

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. Many countries have already started to shift efforts towards carbon

neutrality as a first step to implement the Paris Climate Agreements.³ The Committee asked its Group of Experts on Cleaner Electricity Systems to present a framework towards carbon neutrality for the region for discussion.

The session will provide the opportunity for the Committee to reflect on findings and recommendations and provide recommendations to the United Nations Development System on options that allow a swift shift towards carbon neutrality.

(a) Pathways to sustainable energy

The Committee will be invited to adopt policy recommendations from the project Pathways to Sustainable Energy (ECE/ENERGY/2020/1, see also document ECE/ENERGY/2019/1) and to recommend steps for future phases, as requested by the Executive Committee of the ECE at its one hundred and eighth meeting on 16 December 2020 (EXCOM/CONCLU/108).

(b) Framework on carbon neutrality

The Committee will be invited to discuss the proposed framework on carbon neutrality that will be the basis for future work on the topic (ECE/ENERGY/GE.5/2020/8). The focus will be on the need to accelerate the energy transition of countries and sectors. The framework has to be seen in the context of an economy as a whole, as choices must be economically and socially acceptable and lead to the attainment of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development.

(c) Next steps and future phases

This interactive and moderated discussion will allow to draw conclusions and recommend priority and nexus areas for both approaches for enhanced capacity building and sharing of experiences, in particular at a subregional and expert group level.

5. Action agenda for the Economic Commission for Europe

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/2020/12 – Strategic review of the ECE sustainable energy subprogramme

In February 2020, ECE member States officially designated Promoting circular economy and sustainable use of natural resources in the ECE region as the cross-cutting theme for the high-level segment of the sixty-ninth session of the ECE. This segment will take place on 20 April 2021 at the Palais des Nations and is expected to gather ministers and deputy ministers from the countries of the region to exchange best practices on circular economy and to chart a course for its expanded deployment. The Committee has an opportunity to report to the parent body on its ongoing work and to suggest actions that could be proposed as draft decisions for consideration by the ECE. The Committee will be invited to agree on such decisions about the following themes towards a circular carbon economy:

(a) International Centres of Excellence

(b) International decade of methane management

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/2020/11 – Effective actions to reduce methane emissions

(c) High-performance buildings initiative

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/GE.5/2020/6 – The role of ICT in enabling high-performance buildings and smart, sustainable cities

³ 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").

ECE/ENERGY/GE.6/2020/4 – Updated framework guidelines for energy efficiency standards in buildings

(d) United Nations Framework Classification for Resources and sustainable resource management

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/2020/7 – Draft revised ECOSOC decision regarding the United Nations Framework Classification for Resources

ECE/ENERGY/2020/10 – Pathways to Sustainable Energy – policy recommendations from the Expert Group on Resource Management

(e) Key messages and policy recommendations for the Economic Commission for Europe

This interactive and moderated discussion will allow the Committee to draw conclusions and make recommendations to the ECE on energy and resource efficiency for a circular carbon economy.

6. Future work of the Committee on Sustainable Energy

(a) Preparations for the thirtieth anniversary of the Committee on Sustainable Energy

Preparations for the thirtieth anniversary of the Committee will begin early in 2021. The Committee will be invited to make recommendations and set expectations for this event.

(b) Review of subprogramme performance and planning

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/2020/2 – Draft programme of work of the sustainable energy subprogramme for 2021

In December 2017, the General Assembly approved the change from a biennial to an annual budget period on a trial basis from 2020 onwards (resolution 72/266). The Committee will be invited to provide guidance on the future direction of the programme of work of the sustainable energy subprogramme 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 draft programme of work of the sustainable energy subprogramme for 2021 follows the annual format introduced from 2020, with amendments reflecting General Assembly resolution 74/251 adopted in December 2019.

In this context, the Committee is requested to adopt the proposed Draft programme of work of the sustainable energy subprogramme for 2021 (ECE/ENERGY/2020/2) and to recommend submission to the Executive Committee of the ECE for subsequent approval.

(c) Approval of documents

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/2020/3 – Provisional calendar of meetings for 2021

ECE/ENERGY/2020/4 – Revised publication plans for 2020 and 2021 and draft publication plan for 2022

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 the Executive Committee of ECE for subsequent approval if required.

The Committee will be invited to agree to the provisional calendar of meetings for 2021, a revised publication plans for 2020 and 2021 if required and a draft publication plan for 2022.

(d) Any other business

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/2020/6 – Report on regional advisory services in sustainable energy

ECE/ENERGY/GE.6/2020/3 – Draft industrial energy efficiency action plan

ECE/ENERGY/GE.6/2020/5 – Pathways to Sustainable Energy – policy recommendations from the Group of Experts on Energy Efficiency

ECE/ENERGY/127 - Towards sustainable renewable energy investment and deployment: Trade-offs and opportunities with water resources and the environment

The Committee will have the opportunity to listen to a range of topics not yet covered in previous discussions of this session. Such topics might include considerations from its subsidiary bodies resulting from the week of meetings held on 22-25 September 2020, e.g.:

The Group of Experts on Energy Efficiency has a number of requests specified in documents ECE/ENERGY/GE.6/2020/3-5. The Committee will be asked to extend the mandate of the Task Force on Industrial Energy Efficiency for 2021-2022 and to endorse the policy recommendations arising from the discussions of the Group of Experts on Energy Efficiency.

The Group of Experts on Renewable Energy wishes to make reference to nexus activities with the UNECE Environment Division on a tool-kit on sustainable renewable energy investments (see document ECE/ENERGY/127).

The Group of Experts on Cleaner Electricity Systems wishes to set the stage for its next activities on financing clean energy infrastructure.

The regional advisor wishes to report briefly on activities.

Member States may raise any other issues under this agenda item, including information related to extrabudgetary projects and projects under the United Nations Development Account as well as other stakeholders since its last session.

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

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/133 – Report of the Committee on Sustainable Energy on its twenty-ninth 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 November 2020**

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| 11.00-11.30 | 1. Opening and adoption of the agenda.
2. Matters related to the Committee on Sustainable Energy. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Election of officers. (b) Implications of COVID-19 for future meetings. |
| 11.30-13.00 | 3. Strategic review of the sustainable energy subprogramme. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Rethinking energy: Considerations from the six subsidiary bodies. (b) Implications for work of the Committee on Sustainable Energy and the sustainable energy subprogramme. (c) Ways of working. |
| 13.00-15.00 | <i>Break</i> |
| 15.00-17.00 | 4. Carbon neutrality as a pathway to sustainable energy. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Pathways to sustainable energy. (b) Framework on carbon neutrality. (c) Recommendations for policy makers. (d) Next steps and future phases. |

**Thursday,
26 November 2020**

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| 11.00-13.00 | 5. Action agenda for the Economic Commission for Europe. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) International Centres of Excellence. (b) International decade of methane management. (c) High-performance buildings. (d) United Nations Framework Classification for Resources and sustainable resource management. (e) Key messages and policy recommendations for the Economic Commission for Europe. |
| 13.00-15.00 | <i>Break</i> |
| 15.00-17.00 | 6. Future work of the Committee on Sustainable Energy. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Preparations for the thirtieth anniversary of the Committee on Sustainable Energy. (b) Review of subprogramme performance planning. (c) Approval of documents. (d) Any other business. |

**Friday,
27 November 2020**

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| 15.00-17.00 | 6. Future work of the Committee on Sustainable Energy (cont). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (c) Approval of documents. (d) Any other business. (e) Adoption of the report and close of the meeting. |
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