

**Economic and Social Council**Distr.: General
19 July 2016

Original: English

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

Geneva, 28–30 September 2016

Items 9 of the Provisional agenda

How can the Committee best respond to the needs of member States going forward?**Report on Regional Advisory Services in Sustainable Energy****Note by the secretariat****I. Introduction**

1. This paper presents the 2015 and first half of 2016 activities under the regular programme of technical cooperation (RPTC), which is an integral part of the Sustainable Energy Programme of Work. The RPTC, established by the General Assembly in its resolution 58 (I) in 1946, serves to support developing countries, least developed countries, countries with economies in transition and countries emerging from conflict in their capacity-development efforts. Those efforts are geared towards achieving internationally agreed development goals and the outcomes of United Nations conferences and summits, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The programme's broad objective is to support and advance processes aimed at developing the capacity of Governments, through both individuals and institutions, to formulate and implement policies for sustainable economic and social development. The sharing of experiences across countries and regions, the use of national expertise from the beneficiary countries to the extent possible, and the building of knowledge networks to facilitate continued exchange and assistance and promote sustainability are characteristic of the programme.

2. The RPTC enables the United Nations Secretariat to offer Member States access to the diverse global and regional specialized development expertise and knowledge readily available within the programme's implementing entities, of which the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) is one. The ECE's capacity-development activities draw substantively from the normative and analytical work and respond to the policy guidance and programmes of action agreed through intergovernmental mechanisms. This process enables developing countries to benefit from both the knowledge acquired through that work and from the experiences of different geographic regions, allowing for the sharing and exchange of innovative and good practices. Of equal importance is the

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contribution that the capacity-development work brings to the normative and analytical activities and, ultimately, to the support provided to the intergovernmental dialogue. To implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, countries need to integrate sustainability in national planning, policy, budgets, law, and institutions. They will require integrated institutions that are effective and human resources equipped with the skills and capacities.

3. The funding for the regional advisory services comes from Section 21 of the regular budget, and from extra-budgetary resources, donor countries and countries with economies in transition. Due to limited staff resources, activities continue to be focused on a limited number of countries taking into account their priority areas for development, government support, as well as the availability of extra-budgetary financing. The objectives, activities, budget, expected accomplishments and impacts, and indicators of achievement for 2014–15 and 2016–17 are shown in Annex 1.

4. During 2015 and the first half of 2016, the RPTC supported different activities and projects implemented by the Sustainable Energy Division (SED) and promoted these on-going activities and experiences in countries of South-East Europe, Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. The programme assisted national officials and experts of these countries in developing programmes and projects to facilitate implementation of energy policies and strategies; and helped to plan and implement programmes for capacity and institution-building.

II. Specific Activities in 2015

5. Workshop on implementation of the United Nations Framework Classification for Fossil Energy and Mineral Reserves and Resources 2009 (UNFC-2009) including renewable energy for Central Asian participants. The Sustainable Energy Division (SED) of ECE in cooperation with the ECE Expert Group on Resource Classification organized a one-day workshop on UNFC-2009 with a focus on Central Asia and the application of UNFC-2009 to renewable energy in Geneva, 28 April 2015. The event was targeted at representatives from government institutions from both ECE and non-ECE member countries, industry, international organizations, professional associations and companies dealing with regulations, evaluation, classification, exploration, exploitation and investment in energy and mineral resources. The workshop served to build the capacity of the representatives of the Central Asia economies on how to apply UNFC-2009 and its generic specifications in practice. Additionally, in view of the importance of renewable resources in the region, the experience and expertise of the Central Asian representatives was shared with the experts responsible for developing the renewable specifications for UNFC-2009. The workshop also offered a valuable networking opportunity for the representatives of Central Asia and strengthened their active involvement in the work of the Expert Group on Resource Classification. Details of the Workshop, the presentations and final report are available on the ECE website¹. Advisory mission to Ukraine for an assessment of the draft "Concept of the new Energy Strategy of Ukraine until 2020". The Sustainable Energy Regional Adviser travelled to Kiev at the invitation of Ukraine's parliamentary Committee on Fuel and Energy to present SED's comments on the draft "Concept of the new Energy Strategy of Ukraine until 2020." The Concept had been sent to SED in January 2015, and comments were submitted in February 2015. The Regional Adviser also met with experts of the Razumkov Centre, who drafted the Concept, and other Ukrainian energy specialists from non- governmental organizations (NGOs) and the private sector.

¹ <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=35413#/>

6. Strengthening national capacity of countries with economies in transition for the effective implementation of the Sustainable Energy for All (SE4All) Initiative. In conjunction with the 5th International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development, a series of workshops related to the SE4All initiative were organized, and the RPTC supported participation by experts from Central Asia, the Caucasus, Eastern Europe, and South-East Europe:

- (a) Training Course on Business Planning for Renewable Energy Investment Projects;
- (b) Workshop on Energy Efficiency for Sustainable Cities;
- (c) Workshop on Status and Best Practices on Energy Efficiency;
- (d) Workshop on Access to Energy in Remote Areas;
- (e) Workshop on Energy Efficiency in Multi-unit Residential Buildings: Challenges and Solutions in Residential Energy Efficiency in Eastern Europe.

7. A capacity building workshop on “Strengthened national capacity of countries with economies in transition to apply best practices in clean coal power plant technologies” was held in Geneva, 29 October 2015. The workshop on clean coal power plant technology was conducted in collaboration with the US Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI). Experts agreed in the conclusions of the workshop on the importance of improving power plant efficiency for economic and sustainability benefits, whilst observing that this is only an initial step on the pathway to low-carbon electricity production from coal. Low-carbon solutions such as carbon capture, use and storage and flexible operation of power plants in support of variable renewable generation technology are essential to decarbonize the electricity system whilst continuing to use fossil fuels. At the subsequent meeting of the Group of Experts on Cleaner Electricity Production from Fossil Fuels, the experts recommended that the recommendations from the workshop and stakeholder consultations be considered in its 2016–2017 work plan.

8. A workshop “Critical Element of the Green Bridge Initiative: Advanced Fossil Fuel Technologies” was held in Astana, Kazakhstan from 9 to 10 March 2016. The Workshop was organized by ECE, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Kazakh Ministry of Energy, General Electric and KAZENERGY. The Workshop was attended by 60 participants from government, industry, research centers, academia and NGOs from Kazakhstan, Japan, Russia, Switzerland, United Kingdom, and United States of America, as well as representatives from international agencies.

9. A workshop was organized in Geneva from 19 to 20 April 2016, to explore the different perspectives on sustainable energy. Energy underpins most of the sustainable development goals, and the energy sector plays a critical role in finding solutions for both sustainable development and climate change mitigation. There is as yet no clear view of the starting point or how to achieve these important objectives. Divergent economic development, resource availability and energy mixes are being reflected in national energy strategies and thus set different priorities how to achieve the overarching goals. Countries have not yet found a common definition of “sustainable energy” nor agreed on an expedient pathway to achieve it. This conundrum is particularly relevant for the ECE region with its highly diverse membership. Energy experts from the region were invited to join the workshop alongside with energy modelling experts to explore approaches to develop sustainable energy scenarios for the future. The event was part of a larger ongoing initiative which will lead to the identification of adaptable policy pathways. It shall support the development of knowledge and capacities of policy makers in developing national energy policy making.

10. A second workshop on UNFC-2009 implementation including renewable energy was held in Geneva, 26 April 2016, with similar results to those shown for paragraph 5.

III. Future Work Orientation

11. For the remainder of 2016, the RPTC will support a workshop on "Strengthening national capacity of countries with economies in transition for the effective implementation of the Sustainable Energy for All (SE4All) Initiative" and another on capacity-building for sustainable use of coal and delivering on the SDGs.

12. The Regional Adviser post has been vacant since February 2016. The immediate task has been recruitment of a new Regional Adviser on Energy who can continue to respond to the specific needs and priorities of countries with economies in transition in strategic areas of sustainable energy development, such as rational and efficient use of energy; energy security; analysis of new developments affecting energy demand and supply in the short and medium-term; pricing policies and security of supply; restructuring of the energy sector; energy infrastructure, including interconnection of electric power networks; normative activities in the energy field; and renewable sources of energy.

13. Assistance will be provided to identify the needs in further development of the energy sectors of economies in transition, assisting national experts to prepare plans, programmes and projects to facilitate the implementation of their energy strategies, providing assistance in capacity and institution-building and in the realization of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

14. Special emphasis will be given to energy efficiency investments, training on project financing and management, small and medium-sized company start-ups, including energy services companies (ESCO), utilization of new environmentally clean energy technologies, networking and information exchange, energy efficiency standards, and the development of business contacts.

Annex

Implementing entity: ECE, Sustainable Energy Division		Budget summary (thousands of United States dollars)		
Relationship to the biennial programme plan for the period 2016 -2017: programme 17, subprogramme 5		2012-2013	2014-2015	2016-2017
		expenditure	appropriation	estimate
<i>Objective:</i> To strengthen the countries in the region in improving access to affordable, clean and economically sustainable energy for all, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions and the carbon footprint of the energy sector in the region	General temporary	308.2	556.1	473.2
	Consultants	17.0	–	–
	Travel of staff	23.6	63.1	32.6
	Participants in seminars	39.2	26.2	24.9
	Total	388.0	645.4	530.7
<i>Expected accomplishments</i>	<i>Indicators of achievement</i>	<i>Activities/outputs/projects</i>		
(a) Improved technical capacity of stakeholders on sustainable energy issues, in particular: energy efficiency, cleaner electricity production from fossil fuels, renewable energy, energy-relevant resource classification, and natural gas	Number of institutions affirming that capacity-building activities provided by ECE contributed to strengthened regional economic cooperation on sustainable energy issues	The subprogramme aims at supporting member States to implement the Sustainable Energy for All initiative, contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions arising from energy production and use, enhance performance of energy industries and increase the efficiency of management of energy and mineral resources. The programme will also contribute to the post-2015 agenda and related Sustainable Development Goals. In order to achieve these objectives, the subprogramme will implement the following activities:		
	2012-2013: 11			
	Estimate 2014-2015: 12			
(b) Strengthened capacity of ECE member States to establish norms and standards on sustainable energy	Target 2016-2017: 15	(a) Provide policy advice on elaboration of sustainable energy policies, strategies, and programmes, drawing on the Sustainable Energy Division's expertise and experience; (b) Organize capacity-building activities aimed at strengthening the sustainability of the production, transmission and consumption of energy;		
	(i) Number of countries implementing ECE norms and standards on sustainable energy			
	2012-2013: 11			
	Estimate 2014-2015: 12			
	Target 2016-2017: 14			

*Implementing entity: ECE, Sustainable Energy Division**Budget summary (thousands of United States dollars)*

(ii) Number of activities to support global dissemination of United Nations Framework Classification for Fossil Energy and Mineral Reserves and Resources

2012-2013: –

Estimate 2014-2015: 2

Target 2016-2017: 4

(c) Develop networks of experts and policymakers to promote sustainable energy technologies.

Regular programme of technical cooperation resources will be leveraged by Development Account and extrabudgetary resources.

The subprogramme will further strengthen partnerships with the United Nations system and international organizations, the Global Environment Facility, the agencies of the World Bank Group, the Black Sea Trade and Development Bank, the Eurasian Economic Commission, the Commonwealth of Independent States Executive Committee, the Asian Development Bank, Energy Charter Secretariat, IEA, the International Renewable Agency, European Commission, and other relevant national, regional and global organizations, as well as with the private sector.

Output summary (participants)

	<i>Actual 2012-2013</i>	<i>Estimate 2014-2015</i>	<i>Estimate 2016-2017</i>
Advisory services	5	6	13
Seminars/workshops	7 (402)	2 (120)	4 (250)
Field project	–	1	3
Total	12	9	20

Impact summary

During the biennium 2014-2015, the subprogramme will organize two capacity-building workshops, undertake six advisory missions as well as implement one field project to strengthen institutional and human capacity of countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia to formulate and implement sustainable energy policies.

During the biennium 2016-2017, the subprogramme is expected to achieve the following:

(a) Improved understanding of challenges in the energy sector, and the benefits of the attainment of goals of the Sustainable Energy for All initiative;

(b) Improved capacity to achieve a fuller integration of energy operations and infrastructure in the region;

(c) Strengthened capacity of Governments to review, develop and implement national sustainable energy action plans.

It is envisaged that advisory missions and workshops will benefit 250 national experts.