

## **Progress Report of the Subsidiary Bodies of the Committee on Sustainable Energy and the Regional Advisor**

### **Group of Experts on Energy Efficiency**

#### **Mandate and objectives of the Group of Experts on Energy Efficiency:**

Annex V of the Executive Committee decision on the Terms of Reference of the Committee on Sustainable Energy and Mandates and Terms of Reference of its subsidiary bodies (ECE/EX/2013/L.15) mandates the Group of Experts on Energy Efficiency to carry out concrete, results-oriented activities with the following objectives: 1) In line with the "Sustainable Energy for All" initiative of the United Nations Secretary-General, ECE should focus on activities that help significantly improve energy efficiency in the region, thus contributing to climate change mitigation efforts; (2) Strengthening regional cooperation in energy efficiency, with a view to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The mandate is approved until December 2015, with the possibility of extension.

#### **List of Bureau countries:**

The following countries nominated members of the Bureau: Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bulgaria, Croatia, Germany, and Turkey. Nomination from Denmark is expected. Elections of the Bureau will take place at the 1<sup>st</sup> session of the Group of Experts on 17-18 November 2014.

#### **Partners:**

Copenhagen Centre on Energy Efficiency (C2E2); Energy Charter Secretariat; International Finance Corporation (IFC); International Partnership for Energy Efficiency Cooperation (IPEEC); Institute for Environmental Sciences, University of Geneva (Switzerland); International Energy Agency (IEA); United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP); United Nations Foundation (UNF).

#### **Main projects, deliverables, and activities in 2014:**

- Draft Work Plan of the Group of Experts on Energy Efficiency for 2014-2015 – September 2014
- Informal Preparatory Meeting for the first session of the Group of Experts on Energy Efficiency – 1 September 2014
- First session of the Group of Experts on Energy Efficiency – 17-18 November 2014
- Review of relevant studies/analyses to establish a baseline of energy efficiency in the ECE region – October-November 2014
- Matrix of best practices that lists "low hanging fruit" measures, including successful high-impact policy measures, which can help countries of the region to significantly improve energy efficiency – October-November 2014
- Implementation of the UN Development Account Project Promoting Energy Efficiency Investments for Climate Change Mitigation and Sustainable Development (jointly with the other UN Regional Commissions) – until December 2014
- Analysis of National Case Studies on Policy Reforms to Promote Energy Efficiency Investments – draft October 2014, publication – December 2014
- Inter-regional Workshop on Energy Efficiency Investment Projects Pipeline – 23-24 April 2014
- Fifth International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development (with Joint Statement of the Executive Secretaries of the UN Regional Commissions) – 4-7 November 2014

**Impact, output, implementation:**

- International Training Courses on Business Planning for Energy Efficiency Projects held under the auspices of the UN Development Account Project Promoting Energy Efficiency Investments for Climate Change Mitigation and Sustainable Development led to preparation of 27 energy efficiency projects from 16 countries of UNECE and ESCAP regions. Eight projects had secured financing from various sources (equity, commercial loans, soft loans, grants, government funding, international financing institutions and mezzanine financing) and other projects are in various stages of applying for financing for their implementation.
- National case studies serve as examples of policy reforms that lead to energy efficiency improvements and can be used as examples of best practices by other countries. The publication is presented to the Bureau in its discussions on 29 and 31 October 2014.
- The Group of Experts on Energy Efficiency has the potential to serve as a platform to exchange experiences and best practices to significantly improve uptake of energy efficiency in the UNECE region. It can assist countries in developing national action plans on energy efficiency. Collaboration with other international organizations, with Groups of Experts on Renewable Energy and on Cleaner Electricity Production from Fossil Fuels can bring synergies in assisting countries to improve their energy efficiency and reach the energy efficiency objective of the SE4All Initiative. Particularly promising is cooperation with the Copenhagen Centre on Energy Efficiency on Energy Efficiency Accelerators. Developing energy efficiency standards that can be accepted throughout the UNECE region is another promising area of activity in the long term.

**Challenges or next steps or open questions that the Group of Experts would like to share with the Committee on Sustainable Energy:**

- Uncertainty regarding the Work Plan which has to be approved by the Group of Experts, then by the Committee on Sustainable Energy, and finally by EXCOM.
- Engaged involvement of experts and government officials from across the UNECE region both for the Bureau and for the expert group itself.
- Additional resources, including extrabudgetary, are needed to implement the ambitious activities and reach the goals that are included in the draft Work Plan.

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## **Group of Experts on Cleaner Electricity Production from Fossil Fuels**

### **Mandate and objectives of the Group of Experts on Energy Efficiency:**

Annex II (item III) of the Executive Committee decision on Terms of Reference of the Committee on Sustainable Energy and Mandates and Terms of Reference of its subsidiary bodies (ECE/EX/7) mandates the Group of Experts on Cleaner Electricity Production from Fossil Fuels to carry out concrete, result-oriented activities that significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions from electricity production from fossil fuels.

### **List of Bureau countries:**

Czech Republic, Kazakhstan, Poland, Russia, Turkey, Ukraine, and United States.

### **Partners:**

United States Energy Association, IEA Clean Coal Centre, others.

### **Main projects, deliverables, and activities in 2014:**

- 10<sup>th</sup> session of the Group of Experts and the related stakeholder workshop
- Prepared a draft survey of CCS: landscape, recent developments and stakeholders
- Assisting UNFCCC in assessing CCS technologies by preparing a communication to UNFCCC on the use of CCS in reducing greenhouse gas emissions: Continued progress on the recommendations to the UNFCCC on how CCS in cleaner electricity production and through enhanced oil recovery could be used in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- Assessed the efficiency of the existing fleet of conventional power plants in the UNECE region: baseline analysis of the efficiency of fossil fuel-fired power plants in the UNECE region.

### **Impact, output, implementation:**

- Recommendations to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change on how carbon capture and storage in cleaner electricity production and through enhanced oil recovery could be used in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- To be completed after the 10<sup>th</sup> session.

### **Challenges or next steps or open questions that the Group of Experts would like to share with the Committee on Sustainable Energy:**

- Extrabudgetary funds required for the implementation of the Work Plan and related capacity-building activities.
- Broader participation by UNECE member States in the substantive activities of the Group of Experts.

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## **Group of Experts on Renewable Energy**

### **Mandate and objectives:**

The Group of Experts on Renewable Energy is mandated until December 2015, with a possibility of extension, to carry out concrete, results-oriented activities in the work areas and with the objective mentioned below (ECE/EX/2013/L.15, Annex V of the UNECE Executive Committee decision on the Terms of Reference of the Committee and the Mandates and Terms of Reference of its Subsidiary Bodies).

The objective of the Group of Experts is “to focus on activities that help significantly increase the uptake of renewable energy in the region and that help achieve the objective of access to energy for all in the ECE region, In line with the “Sustainable Energy for All” Initiative of the United Nations Secretary General”.

The key areas of work are related to regulatory and policy dialogue and sharing of best practices on various renewable energy sources, including biomass, with a view to increasing the share of renewables in the global energy mix.

### **List of Bureau countries:**

The following countries nominated candidates for the election of officers which will take place during the 1st Session of the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy on 18-19 November 2014:

Azerbaijan, Croatia, Germany, Poland and Bulgaria. Other candidacies are expected.

### **Key Stakeholders:**

Taking into account that all activities of the UNECE on energy should have a clear demonstrable value added and be coordinated with and complementary to the work of other relevant international actors without duplicating their work or mandates (Appendix II of the Outcome of the review of the 2005 reform of ECE, E/2013/37, E/ECE/146), cooperation is undertaken with UN-Energy and its members, including the UN Regional Commissions, International Energy Agency (IEA), International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) and Renewable Energy Policy Network for the 21st Century (REN21), Energy Community, Central European Initiative (CEI), international financial institutions, private sector, professional societies and associations, NGOs, academia, and individual experts.

### **Key deliverables and activities in 2014:**

- Informal preparatory/ brainstorming meetings in Geneva and Paris with selected experts from member States and key experts
- Draft Work Plan of the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy for 2014-2015;
- Report on selected international actors on renewable energy in the ECE Region;
- MoU signed in NY with IRENA;
- October-November : Informal paper on status of renewable energy in the UNECE region based on a report finalized in September/ October by GIZ consultants;
- October-November : Informal paper on Access to energy services in the ECE region
- October-November : Initial matrix of key areas for best practice policies
- 18 November 2014: Project proposal developed and presented with REN21 for a status report 2015 (November) on renewable energy in the UNECE region, 18 November 2014
- 19 November: MoU with REN21 under development and expected to be signed in Geneva at the meeting of the Group of Experts;

### **Impact of implementation:**

The UNECE Group of Experts on Renewable Energy was mandated by the UNECE Executive Committee on 4 December 2013. Its first session will take place on 18-19 November 2014. The Draft Work Plan 2014-2015 was prepared in close consultation and

guidance of the Bureau of the Committee on Sustainable Energy and candidates of the Bureau of the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy. The consultative preparatory work and initial deliverables are intended to support the consensus building process towards a work plan which allows a complementary role and defines a niche for the Group of Experts to work at concrete results-oriented activities on a demand-driven basis. Through this process, the Group of Experts will facilitate the dialogue of representatives from governments, financial institutions, international organizations, private companies and other major stakeholders to point out, in one side, what has not worked up to now to significantly increase the uptake of renewable energy and, on the other side, to identify best practices and experiences that can be made available to develop and deploy renewables in the right way. The exchange and dissemination of best practices, high-impact measures and procedures will be of help for an energy transition towards significantly increasing use of renewable energy, with a view to establishing ECE standards for renewable energies in the long-term.

**Challenges and next steps:**

- The current work plan still needs to be approved by the Group of Experts, and subsequently by the Committee on Sustainable Energy and the Executive Committee.
- A broad representation of countries in the Bureau will be essential for an effective functioning and guidance of the Group of Experts. The constituency of the Group of Experts needs to be built in the coming months to develop and contribute to but also benefit from the activities and challenges undertaken by the Group of Experts.
- Fund raising of additional resources, in particular extra-budgetary funds, will be a *conditio sine qua non* to implement the activities proposed in the draft work plan and to be in a position to provide a tangible contribution to increase the uptake of renewable energy in the UNECE region.

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## Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane

### **Mandate and objectives of the Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane:**

Annex V of the Executive Committee decision on the Terms of Reference of the Committee on Sustainable Energy and Mandates and Terms of Reference of its subsidiary bodies (ECE/EX/2013/L.15) mandates the Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane (CMM) to carry out concrete, result-oriented activities with the objective to promote the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from coal mines by means of activities that may help the recovery and use of methane in order to reduce the risks of explosions in coal mines. The principal area of work of the Group of Experts on CMM is best practice guidance for effective drainage, recovery and usage of coal mine methane. The mandate is approved until December 2015, with the possibility of extension.

### **List of Bureau countries:**

Poland, Russian Federation, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States.

### **Partners:**

Association of Donbass Mining Towns (Ukraine); Central Mining Institute (Poland); China Coal Information Institute; Environmental Protection Agency (United States); Global Methane Initiative (United States); International Organization for Standardization (ISO); International Labour Organization; the United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change (UNFCCC) secretariat; the Ministry of Energy (Russian Federation); National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health—Office of Mine Safety and Health Research (United States).

### **Main projects, deliverables, and activities in 2014:**

- Group of Experts on CMM continued its activities according to the agreed work plan. To this end, the Group of Experts established close collaboration with the Governments of Poland, the Russian Federation, and the United States who all provided direct or in-kind contribution to the Group's work.
- The Group continued its fruitful collaboration with the Global Methane Initiative (GMI) and other stakeholders. On 22 October 2014 the Group of Experts on CMM held a joint meeting with the GMI's Coal Subcommittee. As a result, the activities of the Group of Experts are felt in the world beyond the ECE region, in particular in China, Colombia, India and Mongolia, who all expressed a keen interest in the Group's work.
- The 9<sup>th</sup> session of the Group of Experts on CMM was held on 23 October 2014. The session reviewed the progress in the Group's work plan implementation, which consists of the following five activities.
- Activity A: Electronic dissemination of Best Practice Guidance for Effective Methane Drainage and Recovery in Coal Mines. The translations the Best Practice Guidance for Effective Methane Drainage and Recovery in Coal Mines into Spanish and Mongolian have been finalized. The Group of Experts has also agreed that the Best Practice Guidance should be translated into additional languages, such as Korean, Turkish, and Vietnamese.
- Activity B: Update and further development of Best Practice Guidance for Effective Methane Drainage and Recovery in Coal Mines. The Group of Experts has reviewed the recommendations of the Task Force on further development of the Best Practice Guidance and agreed on the changes proposed. The Group of Experts has also requested that the Task Force on further development of the Best Practice Guidance

continue its work. In this regard, the Group of Experts has agreed to invite ECE member States to consider the possibility of providing the needed extrabudgetary funds.

- Activity C: Prepare proposals for case studies, where appropriate and financed by extrabudgetary resources, on the application of best practice guidance in specific coal mines in different regions of the world.
- The Group of Experts has reviewed the current framework for cases studies and agreed to somewhat modify its structure. The Group of Experts continued to review and discuss the extrabudgetary project "Application of Best Practices in Specific Coal Mines", funded by the Russian Federation. In this regard, the Group of Experts has in principle agreed that the main deliverable of the project should be a detailed case study on the application of best practices at a reference coal mine, which would demonstrate how the principles outlined in the Best Practice Guidance are implemented at operating coal mines around the world.
- Activity D: Facilitate establishment of International Centre of Excellence on Coal Mine Methane. The Group of Experts has recommended that the proposed International Centre of Excellence on CMM should be a specialist centre tasked to support capacity-building activities and dissemination of best practices in economically viable methane abatement and utilization, and environmentally responsible methane management. To this end, the Group of Experts has agreed to accept an offer from Poland to host an International Centre of Excellence on CMM at the Central Mining Institute in Katowice. The Group of Experts has instructed the secretariat to initiate, in collaboration with the Government of Poland, the necessary legal and practical steps towards establishing the International Centre of Excellence on CMM in Poland. The Group of Experts has further requested that the Task Force continue to look into the possibility to expand the geographic and substantive scope of future International Centres of Excellence on CMM, in the spirit of the Decision 222/2011 of the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations.
- Activity E: Continue to provide advice to UNFCCC (on the matters related to ACM0008) and to other international, national and regional market-based coal mine methane emission reduction mechanisms and coal mine methane related standards. The Group of Experts has continued its multi-year collaboration with the Global Methane Initiative's Coal Sub-committee and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change secretariat. The Group has also discussed potential areas of cooperation with the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and its Technical Committee (TC) 263 Coalbed Methane and with the International Labour Organization (ILO).

**Impact, output or anything meaningful to say about the implementation:**

The Group of Experts on CMM is the only intergovernmental body in the world that deals with the management of methane from coal mines. The group is focused on the technical challenge of the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from coal mines through recovery and use of methane. This activity may also help reduce the risks of explosions in coal mines. In this regard, there are relatively few UNECE member States that face CMM challenges (those with underground coal exploitation), but their interest is deep and genuine. There is a strong interest for the Group's work outside the UNECE region, in particularly in East and South Asia.

**Challenges or next steps or open questions that the Group of Experts would like to share with the Committee on Sustainable Energy:**

- The biggest challenge that the Group of Experts faces is funding. Since the inception the Group of Experts has struggled with establishing extra-budgetary funding that will allow

the group to vigorously pursue its goals. Thus far, all of the funding has come from one donor country, and more specifically through the US Environmental Protection Agency. The Group of Experts needs and would appreciate assistance from the Secretariat to identify other potential donors. The group is working hard to meet the goals of its approved work plan. The process of drafting and agreeing the activities and wording of the work plan was an arduous task. The task was made even more so by the fact that all the funding for the group is extra-budgetary and none of that funding has come from the member states most concerned about the legitimacy of the Group of Experts and its mission. The Group of Experts hopes to see the secretariat take control and streamline this process out of respect for the fact that this group is largely comprised of dedicated volunteers concerned with reducing emissions of methane to the atmosphere while concomitantly preventing catastrophic explosions in coal mines.

- The Group of Experts has made great strides utilizing a small budget and the voluntary work of its members, producing important documents and coordinating training sessions in a number of countries. However, it is widely felt among the members of the group that the Sustainable Energy Committee has not paid attention to the group's accomplishments nor has it embraced it as an equal partner among the other groups in the committee. It was noted with some amount of dismay that the 2014 meetings were scheduled to be held separately from the Committee on Sustainable Energy, which makes it difficult for the Group's members to attend other functions and for the Chair of the Group of Experts to participate in the extended Bureau. Group of Experts understands that there is a focus on renewable energy, but this focus ignores the fact that the majority of the countries in the ECE are coal consumers, and more than a few are producers. Reducing methane emissions to the atmosphere by employing best practices for effective drainage and use of coal mine methane and ventilation air methane at coal mines is by definition sustainable. These practices comprehensively address the social, economic and environmental aspects of capturing and using an otherwise wasted and dangerous gas. For this reason we hope the committee will include our group in discussions during the 2015 Sustainable Energy Committee week.

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## Expert Group on Resource Classification

### **Mandate and objective:**

The Expert Group on Resource Classification is mandated until December 2019 to carry out concrete results-oriented activities (a) to (h) below related to the United Nations Framework Classification for Fossil Energy and Mineral Reserves and Resources (UNFC). The objective of the Expert Group is classification of energy and mineral reserves and resources.

- Electronically disseminate UNFC to all major stakeholders;
- Finalizing the generic specifications to make UNFC operational;
- Develop ideas on how UNFC could apply to and integrate renewable energy by end-2013;
- Establish and maintain a Technical Advisory Subgroup to conduct on-going maintenance and periodic updates to UNFC in light of on-going technological developments including in the field of carbon capture and storage;
- Explore and develop other applications of UNFC, including to injection projects, in particular for storage of carbon dioxide;
- Invite and facilitate development of case studies on a voluntary and extra-budgetary basis, using the developed specifications and guidelines if any, to assess the suitability of applying UNFC to individual deposits of fossil energy and mineral resources;
- Encourage, drawing exclusively on extra budgetary resources, the development of education programmes on UNFC, using in particular the capabilities of industry professional societies;
- Develop further specifications and guidelines for UNFC recognizing that it is useful that they be tailored to meet, to the extent possible, the needs of applications pertaining to global energy and mineral studies, government resource management functions, corporate business processes and financial reporting standards.

**List of Bureau countries:** Norway, Russian Federation, Turkey, United States, and Nigeria.

### **Key Stakeholders:**

UNFC has been designed to meet the needs of governments, industry, the financial reporting sector and international organizations responsible for energy and mineral studies. Cooperation is undertaken with representatives of all four sectors, including but not limited to: UNECE and non-UNECE governments, UN regional commissions, UN Statistics Division, International Atomic Energy Agency, International Renewable Energy Agency, International Seabed Authority, World Bank, international organizations (including International Energy Agency), private sector, professional societies and associations covering solid minerals, uranium, petroleum and renewables, NGOs, academia, and individual experts.

### **Key deliverables of Work Plan for 2013-2014:**

- UNFC-2009 finalized and disseminated electronically in 2013 and 2014.
- Generic specifications for UNFC-2009 finalized and system operational since end-2013.
- Final Uranium Bridging Document submitted for endorsement by the Committee in November 2014.
- Generic specifications for application of UNFC-2009 to renewable energy resources drafted and issued for public comment June-September 2014.
- UNECE Memorandum of Understanding with the International Geothermal Association for development of geothermal-specific specifications signed September 2014.
- Technical Advisory Group operational in February 2014.
- Specifications for application of UNFC-2009 to carbon dioxide storage projects under development.

- UNFC-2009 case studies to solid minerals, uranium and petroleum undertaken in 2013 and 2014.
- Guidelines for application of UNFC-2009 to uranium and thorium projects under development.
- Guidelines on social and environmental issues under development.
- Education and outreach strategy continues to be implemented with UNFC-2009 presented globally on average more than once a week.

#### **Impact of implementation:**

UNECE's work on resource classification is a niche area. The Expert Group on Resource Classification convenes a wide range of stakeholders worldwide who would otherwise not necessarily work together on a common goal – development and implementation of a global resource management system. Now that UNFC is operational and global roll-out has started there are increasing requests for national workshops, technical advice, and financial support to participate in Expert Group meetings and workshops, and presentations on UNFC at conferences. The finalization of the Bridging Document between the IAEA and NEA Uranium “Red Book” Classification and UNFC is a significant step in the development of the system. New areas of application of the UNFC are being requested, for example to groundwater resources, polymetallic nodules/seabed minerals and landfill. These requests demonstrate the robust and flexible nature of the Framework Classification i.e. that with development of the appropriate specifications and guidelines, UNFC can have a wider range of applications than originally envisaged. Going forwards governance of the UNFC will be critical, since stakeholders and users will need the assurance that the system will be properly maintained and updated.

#### **Challenges and next steps:**

- Voluntary contributions need to be increased or at a minimum maintained if the Expert Group is to undertake its work and sustain the momentum needed. This requires time and effort from the UNECE secretariat – currently only 50% of one professional staff member is dedicated to this activity. A resourcing strategy for the Expert Group also needs to be developed and potential sources of extrabudgetary funding identified.
- Due to the global and broad reaching nature of the work, the capability of the secretariat is challenged to: service the Expert Group, its Bureau and six sub-groups; respond to requests for information and technical advice; organize workshops; update web pages; identify speakers for conferences globally.
- A number of countries globally have adopted or implemented UNFC of 1997. There are a number of significant differences between UNFC-2009 and UNFC of 1997 which are posing challenges for these countries in updating to the new system. Capacity building is needed to demonstrate to these countries how the move to UNFC-2009 can best be made. The Expert Group does not have the capacity to undertake such work (ideally national workshops) at this time.
- Social and environmental issues, in particular social licence to operate, are higher profile issues than when the UNFC was first being developed. The Expert Group has recognized that more guidance is needed in the UNFC on these issues. Development of such environmental and social guidance for UNFC-2009 is a sensitive issue and care is needed to ensure only high-level guidance is prepared and without duplicating existing material.
- Application of UNFC to renewable resources has been identified by member States as a priority area of work for the Expert Group. Development of documentation to apply UNFC to renewable energy resources is extremely challenging since nothing similar exists. The Expert Group is breaking new ground, in particular with regard to bioenergy, hydro, solar and wind, hence the work is proving more time consuming than originally anticipated.

- The Expert Group needs to focus on global roll-out and testing of the UNFC. It is only through testing and use that the system can be improved and better meet the needs of its stakeholders. Global outreach requires time, experts and funding.
- Cooperation with other UN regional commissions is extremely challenging. There are member countries from all the regional commissions that are interested in the UNFC but engagement with the secretariats is difficult since all have limited or no expertise in the area of resource classification. Ideally dissemination of UNFC should be coordinated through the Commissions but this is currently not the case.

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## Group of Experts on Gas

### **Mandate and objectives of the Group of Experts on Gas:**

Annex VII of the Executive Committee's decision on Terms of Reference of the Committee on Sustainable Energy and Mandates and Terms of Reference of its subsidiary bodies (ECE/EX/2013/L.15) mandates the Group of Experts on Gas to provide a forum for multi-stakeholder dialogue on ways to promote the sustainable and clean production, distribution, and consumption of gas in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe region. The areas of work of the Group of Experts are policy dialogue and exchange of information and experiences among UNECE member States on gas-related issues of regional relevance, including the role of gas in the global energy mix, and the relation between natural gas and the environment. Concrete activities that member States agreed for the Group of Experts included studies, delivered in a timely way, on the sustainable and clean production, transport, and use of gas, including on issues that emerge from natural gas market studies carried out in the past, and methods of preventing gas losses and leakages during production and distribution. The mandate is approved until December 2017, with the possibility of extension.

### **List of Bureau countries (or active members):**

Azerbaijan, Hungary, Russian Federation, Spain.

### **Partners:**

Columbia University (United States); The Department of Energy (United States); the United States Energy Association (provides a Bureau member), European Network of Transmission System Operators for Gas (provides a Bureau member), ENAGAS (Spain); EON (Germany); Eurogas; International Gas Union (also provides a Bureau member), International Group of Liquefied Natural Gas Importers (GIIGNL); Hungarian Energy and Public Utility Regulatory Authority; Gubkin Russian State University of Oil and Gas (Russian Federation); Marcogaz; Society of International Gas Tanker and Terminal Operators (SIGTTO); Natural & Bio Gas Vehicle Association (NGVA Europe).

### **Main projects, deliverables, and activities in 2014:**

- The Bureau of the Group of Experts held two conference calls: the first one on 26 September 2014 and the second one in the end of October 2014. The Bureau focused on assembling the four Task Forces needed to carry out the four activities defined in the Group's Work Plan. The Bureau also discussed the preparation for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Group of Experts on Gas. The Chairman and two Vice Chairs of the Group of Experts on Gas will participate in the substantive discussions during the 23<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Committee on Sustainable Energy.
- The 2<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Group of Experts on Gas is planned for 20-21 January 2015. The Session will review the progress of the Group's work plan implementation, which consists of the following four activities:
- Activity A: Best Practice Guidance to Reduce Gas Leaks in the Gas Value Chain. The Group is in the process of preparing a survey of gas leakage rates along the value chain, i.e., in gas production, transport, distribution and use in the ECE member States. The assessment will be presented at the Group's 2<sup>nd</sup> Session in January 2015. The first step of this activity is assembling a Task Force under the guidance of one of the Vice Chairs of the Group's Bureau. The Task Force is now working on an outline of a Draft Best Practice Guidance on Reducing Gas Leakage Rates and performance benchmarking on gas leakage rates across the ECE region that will be presented at the Group's 2<sup>nd</sup> Session in January 2015.

- Activity B: Best Policy Practices on the Role of Natural Gas in Significantly Increasing the Uptake of Renewable Energy in the ECE Region and Helping Achieve the Objective of Access to Energy for All in the ECE Region. The Group is now assembling a Task Force under the guidance of one of the Bureau Vice Chairs. The Task Force will work in close collaboration with the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy, which is expected to take the lead in this exercise by identifying the communities in the ECE region with no access to modern energy services. The Group of Experts on Gas will provide the assessment of the economic and technical feasibility for natural gas to support renewables providing energy access throughout the ECE region, assessment of the systemic consequences of renewable energy uptake and economic analysis of natural gas in a context of green policies. The first concrete deliverables of Task Force B are expected in early 2015.
- Activity C: Best Practice Policy Guidance for Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG). The Group has assembled a Task Force on LNG. The first deliverable of its work—a comprehensive assessment of trends in LNG will be presented in January 2015 on the Group's 2<sup>nd</sup> Session. This activity is a result of the previous LNG work of both the Group of Experts on Gas and its predecessor, the Working Party on Gas. A Draft Comprehensive Assessment of Trends in LNG is expected in April 2015, while the Best Practice Policy Guidance for LNG is expected to be approved by the Group in January 2016.
- Activity D: Removing Barriers to the Use of Natural Gas as a Transportation Fuel. The Group has assembled a Task Force on this activity. The Group has established close contacts with the UNECE Working Party on Pollution and Energy (GRPE) and its Task Force on Liquefied Natural Gas Vehicles (TF-LNG). The principal deliverable of this work, the Recommendations on Removing Barriers to the Use of Natural Gas as a Transportation Fuel is expected to be finalized by November 2016 and published in April 2017.

#### **Challenges:**

- The 1<sup>st</sup> inaugural Session of the Group of Experts on Gas was held on 15 April 2014. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Session is planned for 20-21 January 2015, thus in 2014 the Group of Experts on Gas had only nine months between the annual Sessions. Due to this lack of time and delay of the 1<sup>st</sup> Session Report adoption by the member States until September 2014 the Group of Experts on Gas needs to work at an accelerated pace to succeed in time.
- The working relationships between the Group of Experts on Gas and the UNECE Gas Centre are still not fully established. The 20<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Gas Centre Executive Board—if goes ahead as planned, back-to-back with the 2<sup>nd</sup> session of Group of Experts on Gas in January 2015—may provide an opportunity to re-build mutual trust and create the needed synergies between the Group of Experts on Gas and the Gas Centre.

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## Update on the activities of Regional Adviser, Sustainable Energy Division

*Consultations in Washington, DC, USA; 30 September – 2 October, 2014*

From 30 September to 2 October, 2014, during a trip to Washington, DC, United States, the Regional Adviser held meetings at the UN Foundation and Edison Electric Institute. He also participated at the United States Energy Association's 7<sup>th</sup> Energy Supply Forum.

The Regional Adviser held discussions on issues of mutual interest at the UN Foundation. Topics included: possibility of joint fundraising efforts; UN energy summit in NYC in Sept 2014; present status of the UN Foundation and its cooperation with other NGOs and UN agencies and functions, including UNECE and UN Energy; energy efficiency issues on UN Foundation's and Sustainable Energy Division's (SED) agenda; participation of representatives of UN Foundation in SED activities as experts.

The Regional Adviser also held discussions at the Edison Electric Institute (EEI). Topics included: EEI's possible participation in the activities of the groups of experts, EEI participation in the 5<sup>th</sup> International Forum in Tunisia; investments in UNECE region made by US-based utilities.

On 2 October 2014, the Regional Adviser participated in the *USEA's 7<sup>th</sup> Energy Supply Forum*, which was focused on current developments in US energy industries, with important implications for the rest of UNECE region, such as: role of infrastructure for the energy sector, comparative perspective on the use of clean coal technologies, and the international implications of US shale gas supply.

*Workshop "Strengthening of National Capacities for Urban Planning, Housing, Energy Efficiency and Disaster Risk Reduction in Armenia;" 13-16 October, 2014*

On 13-16 October 2014, the Regional Adviser, together with a delegation from UNECE's Housing and Land Management Unit, co-hosted a workshop in Armenia titled "Strengthening of National Capacities for Urban Planning, Housing, Energy Efficiency and Disaster Risk Reduction." In addition to UNECE, other co-organizers included: Ministry of Urban Development of the Republic of Armenia, UNDP, UN Habitat, and IFC.

The event generated much publicity as it brought together 86 participants, including government officials, international public servants, private consultants, bankers, and experts from think tanks. It also stimulated exchange of opinions among three government agencies of Armenia: Ministry of Urban Planning, Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources, and Ministry for Emergency Situations.

In addition to participants from Armenia, also present were participants from Belarus and Bulgaria.

A special segment of the agenda was dedicated to the topic of energy efficiency in buildings. In his speeches at the workshop, the Regional Adviser emphasized the critical role of general public's historical experience with improving thermal insulation in buildings, obtained during the energy crisis in the early 1990s, as one factor capable of retaining long-term focus on the topic of energy efficiency. The Regional Adviser also stressed the importance of managing generational change in government agencies in countries in transition, with the focus on retaining and developing knowledge and skills. As an example of a good practice in knowledge management, Regional Adviser described US Energy Agency's learning and knowledge retention programs administered by the Office of Learning and Workforce Development.

*Reducing greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuel-fired electricity production; 20 October, 2014*

The Regional Adviser sponsored the participation of delegates from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Ukraine in the workshop and stakeholder meeting *Reducing greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuel-fired electricity production*, in Geneva, on 20 October 2014. Some participants of the workshop also took part in 10th Session Group of Experts on Cleaner Electricity Production from Fossil Fuels on 21 October, Joint Meeting of UNECE and the Coal Subcommittee of the Global Methane Initiative on 22 October and in the 9th Session Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane on 23 October 2014.

The head of delegation from Kazakhstan made a presentation titled *Coal as Part of the National Path to Energy Independence*.

During targeted advisory engagements, the Regional Adviser discussed the following topics with sponsored participants: application of CCS technologies and cost of electricity; public outreach and communication as a determining factor in the future of CCS; deployment of renewable energy sources in Central Asia; role of regional commercial and development banks in financing projects in energy efficiency and renewable energy; evolution of national energy portfolios in Central Asian states; role of coal and renewable sources in national energy portfolios of Central Asian and other UNECE countries in comparative perspective; possible investments in high-efficiency, low emissions technologies for coal-fired power stations in Central Asia; deployment of coal bed methane technologies in Central Asia.