



# Economic and Social Council

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## Economic Commission for Europe

Committee on Sustainable Energy

Group of Experts on Renewable Energy

Fourth session

Geneva, 2–3 November 2017

### Report of the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy on its fourth session

#### I. Introduction

1. The fourth session of the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy (GERE) was held on 2–3 November 2017.

#### II. Attendance

2. The meeting was attended by 59 experts from the following United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) member States: Azerbaijan, Belarus, Czech Republic, Georgia, Germany, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Portugal, Russian Federation, Serbia, and Ukraine.

3. Representatives of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), International Energy Agency (IEA), International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), also participated.

4. The meeting was also attended by representatives of non-governmental organizations, private sector and academia, as well as independent experts.

#### III. Adoption of the agenda (agenda item 1)

*Documentation:* ECE/ENERGY/GE.7/2017/1 – Annotated provisional agenda.

5. In accordance with the Commission's rules of procedure, the first item of the provisional agenda is the adoption of the agenda.

GE.17-20878(E)



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6. The provisional agenda as contained in ECE/ENERGY/GE.7/2017/1 was adopted without amendment.

#### **IV. Tracking progress of renewable energy development (agenda item 2)**

*Documentation:* ECE/ENERGY/GE.7/2017/3 – Renewable Energy Status Report 2017 – Key findings: from bottlenecks to opportunities.

ECE/ENERGY/2016/7 – Pathways to sustainable energy

7. The delegates discussed key findings from the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) Renewable Energy Status Report 2017 jointly prepared with the Renewable Energy Policy Network for the 21st Century (REN21), in close cooperation with the International Energy Agency (IEA). Data from the report also contributed to other tracking processes, in particular the Global Tracking Framework (GTF), the Global Tracking Framework: ECE Progress in Sustainable Energy Report, as well as to the Committee on Sustainable Energy overseen project “Pathways to Sustainable Energy”.

8. The secretariat presented key findings from the REN21 ECE Renewable Energy Status Report, the GTF and ECE’s regional GTF report, and how these initiatives contribute to the formulation of different sustainable energy scenarios. Information provided included a discussion on the potential risks of different choices but also opportunities for renewable energy, and energy in general, to effectively contribute to sustainable development.

9. The Group of Experts:

10. Noted with appreciation the results achieved to close data and information gaps through the issuing of the ECE Renewable Energy Status Report 2017 jointly prepared with REN21, in close cooperation with IEA, and from disseminating key findings through specific outreach activities, hard talks and matchmaking events.

11. Agreed to continue the work of tracking the renewable energy progress and understanding its key findings, from bottlenecks to opportunities, as part of its future work and to work with the Committee on Sustainable Energy on issues related to tracking progress on sustainable energy within the ECE region as requested.

12. Recommended to prepare a ECE Renewable Energy Report for the entire ECE region including the full spectrum of renewable energy technologies, depending on availability of funding.

13. Expressed gratitude to the Government of Germany, notably the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy (BMWi), for supporting the issuing and dissemination of the second edition of the ECE Renewable Energy Status Report and encouraged future engagement for an edition 2019 with key partners along these lines.

14. Took note of the ECE contribution to track sustainable energy progress in the region, from the REN21 ECE Renewable Energy Status Report 2017 launched in Astana, to the contribution to the Global Tracking Framework and its ECE regional report.

15. Took note of the relevance of the Committee overseen-project “Pathways to Sustainable Energy” in linking the work of the subsidiary bodies. It agreed to contribute to the delivery of the project by providing renewable energy related inputs and recommendations to the development of policy and technology options and pathways. It further agreed to nominate a dedicated champion within the Group to coordinate the inputs and represent the Group at project-related events, subject to funding. It further expressed commitment to integrate project related policy themes to the Group’s events in the ECE

region (for example future Hard Talk events) to provide feedback and content to the project outputs.

16. Requested the Secretariat to explore how to promote dissemination and education of the value of consensus-based International Standards and Certification Systems for accelerating the uptake of renewable energy technologies, depending on availability of funding and in cooperation with key players.

## **V. Best practices on how to increase the uptake of renewable energy (agenda item 3)**

*Documentation:* ECE/ENERGY/GE.7/2017/4 – Policy dialogue addressing barriers to increase renewable energy uptake.

17. The delegates discussed the link between policy measures and market conditions to boost renewable energy investments and share the successful experience of ECE “Hard Talks” undertaken in Georgia, Ukraine and Azerbaijan. to strengthen the dialogue among major players on what is needed to change to invest in sustainable energy. Key recommendations from recent “Hard Talks” were discussed to identify required policy changes to overcome political, legal, regulatory, technical barriers and take advantage of untapped renewable energy potential in the ECE region.

18. In relation to the project RE-UPTAKE implemented by Dena (German Energy Agency) for the Group of Experts, delegates shared information on successful practices to develop and implement policies and measures. This included the consideration of useful experiences gained from more advanced countries in the field of renewable energy deployment.

19. The Group of Experts:

20. Recognized with appreciation the work done in the implementation of the Work Plan 2016–2017 to facilitate the exchange of information, best practices and lessons learned, in particular on renewable energy policies.

21. Took note of the document “ECE/ENERGY/GE.7/2017/4 – Policy dialogue addressing barriers to increase renewable energy uptake” and noted with appreciation the on-going work by Dena to exchange best practices and experiences to overcome barriers and take advantage of existing opportunities, facilitating a constructive renewable energy policy dialogue in the ECE region.

22. The Group of Experts recognized the efforts of IRENA to accelerate the uptake of renewable energy in South East Europe and Central Asia through targeted activities in areas of: long-term renewable energy planning, renewable energy support schemes, integration of variable renewable energy into the grid, socio-economic benefits of renewable energy, strengthening renewable energy frameworks, and access to financing; and emphasized importance of collaboration of regional and international partners in this regard.

23. Pointed out its role to enhance the dialogue between governments and business to increase significantly the deployment of renewable energy, in particular to promote renewable energy investments through so called “Hard Talks” in selected countries on policy, normative and institutional measures and matchmaking services to identify, develop, promote and implement investment projects, according to its Work Plan.

## **VI. Integration of renewable energy in future sustainable energy systems and cross-cutting collaboration (agenda item 4)**

*Documentation:* ECE/ENERGY/2017/15 – Specifications for the application of the United Nations Framework Classification for Fossil Energy and Mineral Reserves and Resources 2009 (UNFC-2009) to Bioenergy Resources

ECE/ENERGY/GE.7/2017/5 – Benefits of transboundary cooperation in water-energy nexus for renewable energy development.

24. The delegates discussed the need to engage in cross-cutting activities on the transition of the energy sector with a focus on renewable energy to be implemented in cooperation with the other Groups of Experts overseen by the Committee on Sustainable Energy, as well as other intergovernmental bodies of ECE, e.g. on water, environment, forestry, public-private partnerships and transport.

25. The delegates considered, inter alia, the relevance of the water-energy-food-ecosystems nexus approach in the deployment of renewable energy. The delegates then discussed the importance of estimating and classifying renewable energy resources in a representative, coherent and consistent manner for the renewable energy industry and its stakeholders and investors.

26. The Group of Experts:

27. In line with the request by the Committee on Sustainable Energy, expressed the intention to deepen the collaboration with the Group of Experts on Energy Efficiency on improving energy efficiency in deploying renewable energy sources. Along the same line, a strengthened collaboration to enhance uptake of renewable energy is also recommended for other subsidiary bodies, in particular the Group of Experts on Gas, the Group of Experts on Cleaner Electricity Production from Fossil Fuels, and the Expert Group on Resource Classification on the application of the United Nations Framework Classification for Resources (UNFC) to renewable energy.

28. Requested the secretariat to explore how to integrate other sectors and synergies into energy policies and investment plans. The work will concentrate at the beginning on the nexus between renewable energy generation and the sustainable use and protection of water resources and the environment.

29. Invited the Expert Group on Resource Classification to extend application of the UNFC to include Marine Energy resources and to undertake this work in close cooperation with the Group of Experts.

## **VII. Promotion of renewable energy investments (agenda item 5)**

*Documentation:* ECE/ENERGY/GE.7/2017/3 – Renewable Energy Status Report 2017 – Key findings: from bottlenecks to opportunities.

30. The delegates discussed one of the key findings of the REN21 ECE Renewable Energy Status Report 2017 and related to the on-going decline of renewable energy investments in the 17 considered countries in South East and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, Central Asia and the Russian Federation. The delegates paid special attention to key issues and priorities to unblock the renewable energy potential, overcome obstacles and boost investments.

31. The delegates discussed obstacles, opportunities and priorities to support market conditions and the need to build capacities to identify, develop and promote bankable

renewable energy projects in ECE countries, in particular in South East and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia.

32. The delegates were informed about the EBRD experience in financing renewable energy in the Caucasus and Central Asia. IEA pointed out key characteristics of the current renewable energy market and future perspectives. IRENA presented their renewable energy project facilitation tools, including the Project Navigator which assists in the preparation of bankable projects, and the Sustainable Energy Marketplace which is created to facilitate project developers' access to financing.

33. The Group of Experts:

34. Recommended to use key findings from the ECE Renewable Energy Status Report 2017 to promote renewable energy investments through enhanced dialogue among stakeholders, technical assistance and training programmes in member States at their request and upon availability of resources.

35. Expressed gratitude to the European Commission, through the European Union Technical Assistance Facility for Sustainable Energy, for the Matchmaking facility on renewable energy investments, jointly organized with ECE within the Eighth International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development held in Astana, Kazakhstan in June 2017.

36. Requested the secretariat to further explore the possibility to develop a renewable energy platform or support mechanism to promote renewable energy projects. This tool is intended to provide technical assistance and training programmes, in collaboration with other key partners, in particular by using existing IRENA's tools for project development and access to financing, in member States at their request and upon availability of resources. The Group of Experts recognizes its advocacy role for the establishment of international centres for technology and investments in countries of the region.

## **VIII. International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development, follow-up actions for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (agenda item 6)**

*Documentation:* ECE/ENERGY/2017/2 – Eighth International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development: Building on Regional Cooperation.

ECE/ENERGY/2016/7 – Pathways to sustainable energy.

ECE/ENERGY/GE.7/2017/3 – Renewable Energy Status Report 2017 – Key findings: from bottlenecks to opportunities.

37. Discussed the outcome of the Energy Ministerial Conference and the Eighth International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development held in Astana on 11-14 June 2017, including the challenges and potential solutions for its implementation, and ways to translate the declaration into concrete actions as it relates to renewable energy and its role in achieving the energy-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular the renewable energy target as part of SDG7.

38. Presented information on the ECE contribution to tracking sustainable energy progress in the region, in particular in the ECE Renewable Energy Status Report 2017, the World Bank reports Readiness for Investments in Sustainable Energy (RISE), Global Tracking Framework (GTF), and its ECE regional report "Global Tracking Framework: ECE Progress in Sustainable Energy". The latter report builds upon the ECE regional profile within the 2017 GTF report, which provides analysis on the progress within the three SEforALL pillars – renewable energy, energy efficiency and energy access. The

secretariat presented information on the project “Pathways to Sustainable Energy” overseen by the Committee on Sustainable Energy, which links the work of its Groups of Experts and seeks to explore how countries can attain sustainable energy in the future. With the overall objective to engage in a policy dialogue, the project applies modelling tools in order to derive a set of sustainable energy scenarios and adaptive policy pathways.

39. The Group of Experts:

40. Expressed its appreciation to the Government of Kazakhstan for hosting the Eighth International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development and the Energy Ministerial Conference.

41. Took note of the recommendations outlined in document ECE/ENERGY/2017/2 “Eighth International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development: Building on Regional Cooperation” and discussed at the twenty-sixth session of the Committee on Sustainable Energy, and will support the steps for their implementation (Annex I, para. 3) with particular attention to (b) accelerating the uptake of renewable energy, as reflected in the draft programme of work for the ECE sustainable energy subprogramme for 2018 as in document ECE/ENERGY/2017/11.Rev.1.

42. Asked the secretariat to explore with Ukraine the possibility to organize the fifth session of the Group of Experts within the 9th International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Energy hosted in 2018 in Kiev.

## **IX. Work Plan of the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy for 2018–2019 (agenda item 7)**

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/2017/4–ECE/ENERGY/GE.7/2017/6 – Work Plan of the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy for 2018–2019.

43. The Chair outlined the main accomplishments of the Group of Experts in implementation of the Work Plan of the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy for 2016–2017 and presented the main activities of the Work Plan of the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy for 2018–2019. The delegates discussed concrete ways and means to implement these activities and achieve the objectives of the Work Plan in the coming two years.

44. The Group of Experts:

45. Noted that it had delivered on the concrete activities of the mandate and work plan for 2016–2017 and reported achievements and key milestones at the twenty-sixth session of the Committee on Sustainable Energy. It recommended to focus the twenty-seventh session of the Committee on Sustainable Energy on a renewable energy related matter.

46. Noted with appreciation that the Committee approved the request of the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy for extension of its mandate until 31 December 2019 and the Work Plan of the Group of Experts for 2018–2019 with a possibility of extension.

47. Requested the secretariat to explore possible ways and means to develop an umbrella programme or specific projects to be submitted for consideration and possible funding by potential donors and partner organizations.

## **X. Election of Officers (agenda item 8)**

48. The Group of Experts elected Ms. Biljana Trivanović (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Ms. Isabel Cabrita (Portugal), Mr. Georgy Ermolenko (Russian Federation), and Mr. Miloš Banjac (Serbia) as vice chairs for two years.

49. The Bureau of the Group of Experts has the following members: Mr. Nazir Ramazanov (Azerbaijan) as chair, and Mr. Andrei Miniankou (Belarus), Ms. Biljana Trivanović (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Mr. Laszlo Horvath (Croatia), Ms. Margalita Arabidze (Georgia), Mr. Oliver Frank (Germany), Mr. Ramazan Zhampiissov (Kazakhstan), Ms. Isabel Cabrita (Portugal), Mr. Georgy Ermolenko (Russian Federation), Mr. Miloš Banjac (Serbia), Mr. Valeriy Pysarenko (Ukraine), Mr. Paolo Frankl (International Energy Agency), Mr. Gurbuz Gonul (International Renewable Energy Agency), Ms. Christine Lins, (Renewable Energy Policy Network for the 21st Century), and Ms. Maria Michela Morese (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) as vice chairs.

## **XI. Other business (agenda item 9)**

50. No issues were raised under this item.

## **XII. Dates of the next meeting (agenda item 10)**

51. The fifth session of the Group of Experts is tentatively scheduled to take place on 30 October – 1 November 2018, Kiev or Geneva. The Group of Experts proposed that its meetings may take place in venues outside Geneva.

## **XIII. Report of the meeting (agenda item 11)**

52. The report of the meeting was adopted, including conclusions and recommendations, subject to any necessary editing and formatting.

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