

UN Special Project for Economics of Central Asia (SPECA)

PROTOCOL of the fourth session of the Project Working Group SPECA (PWG-Energy) on Rational and Efficient Use of Energy and Water Resources of Central Asia (Bishkek, April 5-6, 2000)

General Comments

1. The fourth session of the Project Working Group – Energo was held on April 5-6, 2000 in Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic. Bishkek hosted delegations from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, representatives of UN ECE/ESCAP. Representatives of OSCE, CAPC, IASF, USAID, Agency of the International Ecology Fund, Tacis, UNDP, Swiss Coordination Office and the Embassy of Russian Federation were observers at this session. Delegations from Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan did not attend the session. The list of participants is enclosed (Attachment 1.)
2. National Coordinator of the SPECA Project, First Vice Prime Minister of the Kyrgyz Republic, Mr. Silaev B.I. participated in the session. In his introductory speech he underlined that development of regional cooperation including rational and efficient use of energy and water resources is one of the fundamentals of the policy of Kyrgyzstan. The President's SPECA Project is an institutional basis for the most active interaction in this field with all countries of the Central Asian Region.
3. Delegation from Kyrgyzstan takes part in the work of all Project Working Groups of the SPECA Project. Though at the moment issues of boundary crossing are of high priority in the work of PWG-Transport and Simplification of the Procedures on Crossing Boundaries - long-term issues of development and modification of transport infrastructure should be taken into consideration. The role of this PWG as an independent forum in consideration of mutual claims and recommendations of participating countries on transit issues seems to be very promising. Kyrgyzstan will take an active part in the selection of investment projects for transport sector in the course of the work of this PWG.
4. Kyrgyzstan welcomes the decision of Tajikistan to conduct in April 2001 International Economic Conference on Tajikistan in the context of the Central Asian Region as a part of SPECA Project. Draft Medium-Term Strategy of Structural Reforms in Tajikistan which will be submitted for consideration of the conference is of interest for Kyrgyzstan. In September 2000, at the next session of the PWG-Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan will make comments on this matter and probably will put forward proposals on bilateral relations with Tajikistan.
5. Mr. Silaev expressed his regrets that the work of the SPECA Project Working Groups of Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan is being delayed.

6. Mr. Silaev believes that approval of the programs of three operating PWGs makes a proper basis for completion of the organizational period of the SPECA Project, adoption of its policy and beginning of its implementation.
7. Kyrgyzstan regards the resolution of UN General Assembly on funding of the joint ECE/ESCAP project “Rational and Efficient Utilization of Energy and Water Resources in Central Asia” very highly. This UN project which implies development of resources of all five Central Asian republics will contribute significantly to the work of the PWG-Energy. Implementation of the project should attract attention of countries and business communities which might provide potential support to SPECA.
8. In the opinion of the National Coordinator, interaction between international organizations on the issues of the PWG – Energy has potential for development. Under the auspices of the President’s SPECA Project it is expedient to coordinate international operations on utilization of transboundary waters and energy resources in the region. Strategic cooperation on water and energy resources in the region planned by OSCE and coordination of implementation of the UNDP initiative “Transboundary Rivers Basins” proposed by the United States could become part of the PWG-Energy.
9. The Group has significant potential to present and analyze mutual claims, comments and recommendations on interaction on energy and water issues made by CAR countries. Given the increased political sensibility of these issues organization of neutral forum for consideration of mutual claims could facilitate decision-making process and prevent conflict situations. The systematic analysis of these claims and development of proposals on their comprehensive regulation could become an important trend in the work of the PWG-Energy.

Speech of Mr. Silaev B. is in Attachment 2.

10. Mr. Pranesh Chandra Saha, Director of the Department of Energy Resources, read out the welcoming message of the ESCAP Executive Secretary, Mr. Adrianus Mui. ESCAP will provide support to SPECA, especially in part of implementation of the UN Project “Rational and Efficient Use of Energy and Water Resources in Central Asia” funded from the UN Development Account.
11. SPECA Coordinator in UN ECE, Regional Advisor Mr. Tsyba P. made a review of the current status of the SPECA Project with the focus on progress made by PWG-Kazakhstan (Transport and Simplification of the Procedure of Crossing Borders) and PWG-Tajikistan (International Economic Conference on Tajikistan in the context of the Central Asian Region.) He also briefed on the status of the UN Project on Water and Energy Resources in Central Asia, funded from the UN Development Account.

Discussion

12. Representatives of SPECA-participating countries made reports on the status of their fuel-energy and water resources. The following attendees took part in the discussion: Mr. Ramazanov A., Chairman of the Committee on Water Resources

of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment; Mr. Petrov G., First Deputy Head of “Barki Tochik” of Tajikistan; Mr. Koshmatov B., Director of the Department of the Water Resources of the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources of the Kyrgyz Republic; Mr. Utegulov, Director of the Department of Electricity and Solid Fuel of the Ministry of Energy, Industry and Trade of Kazakhstan; Mr. Mateev, Director of the State Energy Agency under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic and Ms. Kasymova, a main specialist of the SEA; Mr. Giniatullin R., Deputy Chairman of the Executive Council of IASF; Mr. Bil Tucker, Resident Advisor of the USAID “Energy Sector Reform” Project; Mr. Gorm Bang-Andersen, Tacis Project Manager in Kyrgyzstan and representatives of UN ECE/ESCAP.

13. In the course of the discussion the idea of using the opportunities of the President’s SPECA Project to coordinate the activities of all international organization operating in Central Asia in the areas of energy and water resources was supported. It was stressed that it is quite possible to provide interdependence and synergism in regional cooperation on water and energy resources among UN, OSCE, UNDP, IASF, EPIC, Tacis, USAID.
14. In this respect an agreement was reached on conducting consultations and discussions on development of an interaction mechanism between the PWG-Energy and IASF in April or May 2000.
15. A proposal was put forward to make an inventory of existing bilateral and multilateral intergovernmental agreements on water and energy resources and models of interaction among CAR countries suggested by international organizations. Conclusions made by experts of participating countries will be grounds for determining optimal ways of regional cooperation on water and energy resources.
16. Participants supported the proposal to make an assessment of national positions on establishment of a water-energy consortium of the CAR countries and to submit recommendations for consideration at the next session of the PWG - Energy.
17. A proposal was made to make an inventory of national and regional databases on water and energy resources.
18. Participants expressed their concern on non-attendance of representatives of Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. Absence of representatives of these countries made it impossible to fully ensure a regional approach to solution of common energy and water problems. Attendees asked the Government of Kyrgyzstan to inform these countries on the results of the session work and to express recommendation to take part in preparation and conducting of future sessions of Project Working Groups.
19. Regional ECE Advisors Mr. E. Nadezhdin, Mr. B. Bosnjakovich and Mr. P. Chandra Saha, the Director of the Department of Energy Resources, presented to participants the UN project on rational and efficient use of energy and water resources in Central Asia approved by ESCAP. The project will be funded from the UN Development Account. It is expected that approval of the project by

Regional Committees and UN Central Institutions will be received by May 2000. Experts shared opinions on working experience, professional profile and deadlines for completion of project stages. Participants approved ECE/ESCAP proposals and expressed their readiness to cooperate under the project.

20. Participants agreed that the preparation for the UN project should begin before the final approval is received.

Fifth Session of the WPG-Energy

21. The fifth session of the PWG-Energy will be held in Bishkek on November 14-15, 2000.

22. Draft Agenda for the fifth session of the PWG-Energy:

- 1) Approval of the Agenda
- 2) Overview of the results of the UN Project implementation
- 3) Overview of existing bilateral and multilateral intergovernmental agreements and models of cooperation on water and energy resources in Central Asia (Report of experts group)
- 4) Status and outlook of future developments for the energy consortium of CAR countries (Report of experts group)
- 5) Condition of national and regional databases on water and energy resources in the region (Report of the PWG Chairman)