

ANNEX

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE AD HOC GROUP OF EXPERTS ON COAL MINE METHANE

(adopted 31 January 2006)

The Ad Hoc Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane, an intergovernmental body launched in December 2004 to specifically support the activities of the Ad Hoc Group of Experts on Coal in Sustainable Development in the area of coal mine methane (CMM), is established for a period of two years by the Committee on Sustainable Energy. The Ad Hoc Group of Experts will carry out, under the Committee's guidance, activities related to development and profitable recovery and use of CMM and abandoned mine methane (AMM), with a specific focus on the three pillars of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental – recovery and use of CMM otherwise emitted mitigates climate change, improves mine safety and productivity, and generates revenues and cost savings.

The tasks of the Ad Hoc Group of Experts are:

- (a) to promote and provide support where applicable to the UNECE extrabudgetary project on "Development of Coal Mine Methane Projects in Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)". This project, which is financed by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) and the UN Foundation, will run for three years commencing in 2005;
- (b) to seek to facilitate financing of CMM projects in Central and Eastern Europe and the CIS, including through actively engaging in a dialogue with the international finance community to understand their needs and the barriers to funding of CMM projects in this region;
- (c) to provide a forum for exchange of information and experience on ongoing activities in the area of CMM development and for enhanced collaboration and cooperation thereof;
- (d) to identify and seek to mitigate the problems associated with the creation of incentives for CMM recovery;
- (e) to establish a clear link between the economic benefits and the mining of gassy coal seams based on the safe drainage and use of the gas, and to facilitate this through the establishment of a dedicated Task Force with membership from the technical, business and regulatory communities;
- (f) to explore opportunities for the CMM sector, in particular in UNECE member States with economies in transition, to participate in and benefit from the various public and private greenhouse gas emissions markets;
- (g) to identify any significant new developments affecting CMM, in particular in UNECE member countries; and
- (h) to seek to strengthen inter-agency cooperation and to cooperate and collaborate with all stakeholders, including other governmental and non-governmental organizations and the business community/private sector, in order to realise the above objectives.