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Item 8(d) of the provisional agenda

Matters related to future work of the Committees

Update on regional advisory services

Note by the secretariat

I. Introduction

Documentation: ECE/EX/7 - Decisions on Matters relating to the Committee on Sustainable Energy.

1. In the Decisions on Matters related to the Committee on Sustainable Energy, the Executive Committee of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe established Programme of work of the Sustainable Energy subprogramme for 2014–2015 and Terms of Reference of the Committee on Sustainable Energy and its Subsidiary Bodies requiring the Sustainable Energy Committee to monitor and coordinate the work of its subsidiary bodies and, where possible, to seek opportunities to consolidate and streamline the activities of these bodies. In view of this mandate, this paper reviews the work of the Regional Adviser, which is an integral part of the Sustainable Energy Programme of Work.

2. The main responsibility of the Regional Adviser on Sustainable Energy is to promote subregional cooperation and strengthen inter-state collaboration and partnerships among countries in Western, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia (as well as other countries of the ECE region) in order to more fully integrate the energy systems and infrastructure of countries at the sub-regional and regional level. In his duties, the Regional Adviser provides Government officials with expertise and advice on energy issues, promotes capacity and institution-building aimed at increasing the overall efficiency of the energy sector, and advocates for effective energy policies.

3. During its 22nd session, the Committee on Sustainable Energy requested the Secretariat that future technical cooperation and regional advisory services in the field of sustainable energy be provided on a demand-driven basis, contributing to the implementation of agreed ECE best practices or standards (including in the areas of

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renewable energy, energy efficiency, resource classification and Coal Mine Methane) and with the objective to assure access to renewable energy for all those in the ECE region who at present have no access to energy.

II. Advisory services in 2014

4. Although during the entire year 2013 and until May 2014 the position of the Regional Adviser remained vacant, the ECE Sustainable Energy Division continued providing Regional Advisor's services to member States.

5. On 1–3 April 2014, ECE Sustainable Energy Division held a capacity building exercise in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, as a result of which national experts from the Ministry of Energy and Industry of Kyrgyzstan deepened their practical understanding of the water-wind power nexus.

6. On 23–24 April 2014, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission (ESCAP) and ECE held the Inter-regional Workshop on Energy Efficiency Investment Projects Pipeline in Bangkok, Thailand. The event was organized under the Promoting Energy Efficiency Investments for Climate Change Mitigation and Sustainable Development global project, supported by the United Nations Development Account. The key objectives of the project included assistance to project developers in preparing financially sound and bankable project proposals and promotion of policies that support energy efficiency investments. The workshop reviewed the investment project pipeline in the two regions, provided financial analysis of select projects, and looked into the experience of financial institutions that offer energy efficiency financial instruments.

7. During the review period, Sustainable Energy Division's staff members continued cooperation with the Energy Power Council of the CIS countries (EPC CIS). On 25 April 2014, the Memorandum of Understanding between ECE and EPC CIS was signed. The signing took place during the 45th meeting of the EPC CIS, in Baku, Azerbaijan. The findings of the completed ECE project on enhancing synergies in the CIS national programmes on energy efficiency had also been presented.

8. The Regional Adviser assumed duty in May 2014. From 14–18 July 2014, he held talks at the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources of Armenia, Ministry of Urban Planning of Armenia, Ministry of Energy of Georgia and the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia aimed at providing ad hoc advisory services with the focus on renewable energy and energy efficiency in buildings. The meetings were coordinated with the Housing and Land Management Unit of the ECE Economic Cooperation, Trade, and Land Management Division. These meetings prepared the ground for a workshop on sustainable housing planned for mid-October 2014, and launched a process that will allow the Regional Adviser to develop relationships with key stakeholders in member States in order to identify country needs and capacity gaps in the energy sector

III. Future work orientation

9. The Regional Adviser shall continue responding to specific needs and priorities of the region's countries in line with the initiative of the United Nations General Secretary "Sustainable Energy for All" (SE4ALL) and "A Global Action Agenda" aimed at the implementation of the SE4ALL initiative. A special emphasis shall be put on transition toward the development of low-carbon technologies by supporting new business models, improved access to electricity through off-grid, micro- and mini-grid solutions, supporting the development of renewable energy portfolios that are suitable for specific countries,

networking and information exchange, promotion of energy efficiency standards, and the development of professional networks.

10. The Regional Adviser shall expand his role of a dialogue facilitator, at various levels, aimed at discussing sustainable energy trends to accelerate the identification and transfer of best practices. In order to nurture a positive human resources framework for sustainable energy, Regional Adviser will bring together state and non-state stakeholders from developing and developed countries, to combine their vision and expertise in different fields. The Regional Adviser shall help member States expand the scope of their engagement with state agencies in other ECE member countries, state agencies in other countries, as well as with international organizations, Non-Governmental Organizations and charitable foundations from around the world. As a matchmaker, catalyst and fundraiser, the Regional Adviser will advocate education and training for sustainable energy in the ECE region and enable inclusive networks that involve member countries with advance experience in sustainable energy, funders and those states that have needs and require assistance.

11. The Regional Adviser should liaise with Groups of Experts and build on established collaboration with other ECE divisions whose work has an energy-related dimension. This includes, but is not limited to, technological, financial and organizational innovation, sustainable housing and infrastructure, and the development of collaborative efforts in energy involving state institutions and the private sector.

12. The Regional Adviser shall continue cooperation with United Nations agencies and international organizations, in particular with the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, UN ENERGY, United Nations Regional Commissions, the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, International Renewable Energy Agency, The World Bank Group, Commission of the European Union (EC), EurAsEC Integration Committee Secretariat, Electric Power Council of CIS, CIS Executive Committee, Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC), the Regional Network for the Efficient Use of Energy and Water Resources (RENEUER), Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Interstate Commission on Sustainable Development of Central Asia (ICSD), the Energy Community Secretariat, the Energy Charter Treaty Secretariat, and other sub-regional, regional and global organizations.
