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Economic Commission for Europe

Committee on Sustainable Energy

Thirtieth session

Geneva, 22-24 September 2021

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Opening and adoption of the agenda

Annotated provisional agenda for the thirtieth session¹

To be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, and online starting at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, 22 September 2021.

I. Provisional agenda

1. Opening and adoption of the agenda.
2. Election of Officers.
3. High-level Segment – Country Commitments on Energy in the Context of the United Nations High-level Dialogue on Energy.
4. Strategic review of the sustainable energy subprogramme.
5. Pathways to sustainable energy.
6. Follow-up to the 2021 session of the Economic Commission for Europe.
7. Future work of the Committee on Sustainable Energy.
 - (a) Results of independent assessment of sustainable energy subprogramme partnerships;
 - (b) Regional advisory services in sustainable energy;
 - (c) Programme of work for 2022 and recommendations on key components of the programme of work for 2023;
 - (d) Approval of documents.
8. Any other business.
9. Adoption of the report and close of the meeting.

¹ Delegates attending meetings at the Palais des Nations are requested to register online at <https://indico.un.org/event/35308/>, if possible at least three weeks prior to the session. On the day of the meeting, for those participating in person, delegates are requested to present themselves at least 45 minutes prior to the start time at the Pass and Identification Unit of the United Nations Office at Geneva Security and Safety Section, located at the Pregny Gate, 14, Avenue de la Paix, opposite the Red Cross Building (see map on the Energy Division's website) for the issuance of an identification badge. Registration is open every work day at the Pregny Gate from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

II. Annotations

1. Opening and adoption of the agenda

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/136 – Annotated provisional agenda for the thirtieth session

The theme of this session is “Concrete Actions to Attain Energy for Sustainable Development”.

The provisional agenda is based on decisions taken by the Committee on Sustainable Energy (the Committee) at its twenty-ninth session, decisions taken by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) at its sixty-ninth session and on developments since those sessions.

2. Election of Officers

The Committee will be invited to elect its Chair and Vice-Chairs as appropriate.

3. High-level Segment – Country Commitments on Energy in the Context of the United Nations High-level Dialogue on Energy

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/2021/17 – United Nations Economic Commission for Europe member States delivering the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement - A Commitment Trifecta

ECE/ENERGY/2021/18 – Achieving Sustainable Development Goal 7 in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Region - Status and Progress

ECE/ENERGY/2021/24 – Voluntary commitments of United Nations Economic Commission for Europe member States on sustainable energy

The thirtieth session of the Committee takes place in the days following the High-level Dialogue on Energy² convened by the United Nations Secretary-General. The General Assembly, through resolution 74/225, invited the Secretary-General, with the support of the relevant United Nations system entities, to convene a high-level dialogue in 2021 to promote the implementation of the energy-related goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda) in support of implementation of the United Nations Decade of Sustainable Energy for All (2014-2024), including the global plan of action for the Decade, and the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. The High-level Dialogue on Energy in 2021 will be the first global gathering on energy held under the auspices of the General Assembly since the UN Conference on New and Renewable Sources of Energy that was held in Nairobi, Kenya, in 1981. The dialogue presents a historic opportunity to provide transformational action in the first years of the Decade of Action to deliver the Global Goals and to support the implementation of the Paris Agreement. Countries will report on the commitments they made at the High-level Dialogue on Energy.

The Committee has pursued activities in the areas of methane management, high-performance buildings, and sustainable resource management. Country commitments in these three areas, as set forth in the document “ECE member States delivering the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement - A Commitment Trifecta” (ECE/ENERGY/2021/17), would deliver concrete, near-term outcomes and, longer-term, achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement.

² <https://www.un.org/en/hlde-2021/page/hl-dialogue>

4. Strategic review of the sustainable energy subprogramme

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/2021/16 – Thirtieth session of the Committee on Sustainable Energy - Looking back and peering forward
ECE/ENERGY/2021/4 – Revised strategic review of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe sustainable energy subprogramme

The work of ECE on sustainable energy is designed to improve access to affordable energy for all and help reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and the carbon footprint of the energy sector in the region. ECE is working to reconcile the reality of fossil fuels' share of the energy mix with the need to address climate change while supporting sustainable development, enhance integration of the region's energy markets, and facilitate the transition to a sustainable energy system.

The ECE region needs to accelerate attainment of its member States' commitments and objectives on sustainable energy. In terms of deciding on specific courses of action for the sustainable energy sub-programme to pursue, the Committee considers that the work and its outcomes must reflect United Nations' scale, scope, role, and values in terms of: impact, political relevance, visibility, power to inspire, reputation, attractiveness for resourcing, resource efficiency, nexus contributions, and gender benefits.

The revised strategic review of the ECE sustainable energy subprogramme (ECE/ENERGY/2021/4) sets forth ECE's strategic approach on energy. The subprogramme's mission is to help its member States meet their commitments to the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement. The intent is to address the region's challenges and objectives with products and activities that deliver measurable, concrete results in the near term but with enduring impact. The strategic review was prepared jointly by the Chairs of the Expert Groups and the Bureau of the Committee on Sustainable Energy. It has gone through an extended consultation process among member States and is presented to the Committee for consideration.

5. Pathways to sustainable energy

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/2021/5 – Pathways to sustainable energy programme concept note
ECE/ENERGY/2021/15 – Considerations for draft position on attaining carbon neutrality in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe region

The pathways to sustainable energy project was conceived to contribute to climate change mitigation and sustainable development by helping countries of the ECE region deploy energy policies that support their commitments and by improving their understanding of the perspectives, objectives and actions of other countries. Keeping global temperature rises well below 2°C while attaining sustainable development will require reducing net GHG emissions while securing access to affordable energy services.

The pathways to sustainable energy programme concept note (ECE/ENERGY/2021/5) sets forth the concept for the next phases of the pathways programme. The pathways programme comprises two inter-related sets of activities: (a) deep dives on ECE sub-regions, including assessments of specific opportunities and challenges, testing strategic options, capacity building, and further development of an early warning system; and (b) achieving carbon neutrality by optimal deployment of relevant technology.

The concept note provides needed contextual background for the ECE Executive Committee as funding proposals under the pathways programme are presented for approval. The document is presented to the Committee for information and to solicit support from member States for the range of elements presented in the concept note.

6. Follow-up to the 2021 session of the Economic Commission for Europe

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/2021/25 – A call to action on methane management
United Nations Secretary-General’s Policy Brief on Transforming Extractive Industries for Sustainable Development³

The Committee will be invited to review and discuss how to operationalize decisions relevant to the sustainable energy subprogramme that were taken at the sixty-ninth session of the Economic Commission for Europe (Geneva, 20-21 April 2021) (E/ECE/1494⁴). At its sixty-ninth session, the Economic Commission for Europe:

(a) Endorsed the best practice guidance on abandoned mine methane, recommended it be disseminated widely, and proposed to the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) that it recommend application of the best practice guidance worldwide. ECOSOC should pronounce on this by September 2021;

(b) Endorsed the updated United Nations Framework Classification for Resources (UNFC), recommended it be disseminated widely, and proposed to ECOSOC that it recommend application of the updated UNFC worldwide. ECOSOC should pronounce on this by September 2021;

(c) Invited the Committee to pursue diligently further work on the role of natural gas, hydrogen, carbon capture, use, and storage, high-efficiency, low emissions technology, and management of anthropogenic methane emissions in the transition to a carbon neutral economy;

(d) Requested the Committee and the Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management to undertake dissemination, education and research, consultation, and engagement among stakeholders on high-performance buildings and to support member States in further developing and deploying normative instruments to improve energy efficiency in buildings;

(e) Requested the Committee to continue studying how best to address efficient use of energy resources, and in this regard the impact of subsidies as well as carbon pricing options;

Each of these topics will be presented through interactive panels to consider the best avenues for operationalising the decisions taken by the Commission at its sixty-ninth session:

- Subsidies and Carbon Prices
- Methane Management
- High-Performance Buildings
- A Global Framework for Sustainable Resource Management.

(f) Requested the relevant Sectoral Committees and bodies reporting directly to the Executive Committee, and their subsidiaries, to consider how to enhance the impact of relevant existing ECE instruments in order to foster circular and more resource efficient approaches, including by proposing ways to identify, assess and fill gaps in governance and good practices;

(g) Invited these subsidiary bodies to replicate and scale up existing approaches that facilitate broad and effective use of the appropriate instruments, including through capacity building and knowledge-sharing activities; Further invited these subsidiary bodies, as appropriate, to consider developing proposals in their respective programmes of work, including possible collaboration across subprogrammes, for impactful and measurable solutions that promote a circular economy and the sustainable use of natural resources and that can facilitate attaining the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

³ <https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2021-05/SG%20Policy%20Brief%20Extractives%20NOemb.pdf>

⁴ https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2021-05/E_ECE_1494_e_Final.pdf

(h) Further requested that these subsidiary bodies implement this decision without affecting their core mandate and activities carried out under each sectoral committee, and subject to available resources;

(i) Invited the secretariat to collaborate with other international organizations and regional economic integration organizations, including the European Union towards the development of a harmonized approach to measuring progress towards circularity including greater resource efficiency;

(j) Also requested the secretariat to further promote partnerships related to a circular economy and the sustainable use of natural resources, including with the United Nations system, other international organizations, non-governmental organizations, academia and the private sector, to explore opportunities for synergies to broaden the use of relevant ECE instruments;

(k) Requested the secretariat to submit relevant inputs from its work, both subprogramme-specific and cross-sectoral, on promoting a circular economy and the sustainable use of natural resources to overarching international initiatives, such as the Decade for Action on the SDGs (2020–2030); the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021–2030); and the Decade of Sustainable Energy for All;

(l) Encouraged timely implementation of the voluntary initiatives submitted by member States to the Commission session, to further accelerate the transition to a circular economy and the sustainable use of natural resources, and further encourages member States who have not done so yet to consider taking concerted action in this regard;

(m) Requested the secretariat to present a progress report on the work of the Commission on the promotion of a circular economy and the sustainable use of natural resources for consideration at its seventieth session.

The Committee also will be invited to discuss potential new high-level themes for future sessions of the Commission.

7. Future work of the Committee on Sustainable Energy

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/2021/14 – Responding to the challenges of a just transition in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe sustainable energy subprogramme

ECE/ENERGY/2021/19 – Decarbonizing transport with natural gas - draft policy recommendations

ECE/ENERGY/2021/20 – Attaining carbon neutrality - The role of hydrogen

ECE/ENERGY/2021/21 – United Nations Resource Management System - Guiding principles and structure

Whereas the document “ECE member States delivering the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement - A Commitment Trifecta” (ECE/ENERGY/2021/17) focuses on near-term actions that would have appreciable consequences for attainment of the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement, there are longer-term initiatives that would underpin an enduring transition to sustainable energy, including preparing a hydrogen economy, ensuring a just transition, and pursuing carbon neutrality as an intermediate step. A series of interactive panels will explore alternative approaches to a sustainable energy future:

- Electricity as a Driver for Transformation of Energy
- Electrons and Molecules
- Hydrogen economy
- Energy and Resources as Services
- Just Transition

- Carbon capture, use, and storage
- Investing in low carbon energy.

The Committee will be invited to consider how best to embrace these topics in the subprogramme going forward.

(a) Results of independent assessment of sustainable energy subprogramme partnerships

A review of ECE collaboration with the United Nations and other partners in delivering on energy for sustainable development was undertaken in 2020.⁵ The purpose of the evaluation was to review the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of ECE collaboration with UN and external partners from 2016-2020 in delivering on energy for sustainable development.

The results of the independent assessment will be presented to the Committee. The results of the evaluation are expected to contribute to a long-term vision for collaboration to strengthen the breadth and depth of impact of the sustainable energy subprogramme's activities.

(b) Regional advisory services in sustainable energy

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/2021/6 – Report on regional advisory services in sustainable energy

The Regional Advisor will report briefly on regional advisory services in sustainable energy, as well as extrabudgetary projects and projects under the United Nations Development Account.

(c) Programme of work for 2022 and recommendations on key components of the programme of work for 2023

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/2021/1 – Draft programme of work of the sustainable energy subprogramme for 2022

ECE/ENERGY/30/2021/INF.1 – Outline of key components of the programme of work of the sustainable energy subprogramme for 2023

The secretariat will present the draft programme of work for 2022 (ECE/ENERGY/2021/1). This document is based on the ECE proposed programme budget for 2022 (A/76/6 (Sect.20)) which was reviewed by the ECE Executive Committee in December 2020 and submitted for consideration by the 76th session of the UN General Assembly. The programme of work document reflects the annual budget format presented in 2020 in line with General Assembly resolution 72/266, with enrichments reflecting General Assembly resolutions 74/251 adopted on 27 December 2019 and 75/243 adopted on 31 December 2020. Delegates will be invited to adopt the programme of work and recommend it to the ECE Executive Committee for approval.

At its meeting on 5 March 2021, the Executive Committee adopted a document entitled "Sequential review of the proposed programmes of work of ECE subprogrammes" (document 2021/8). In line with the sequential review procedure, the Committee will be invited to consider the "Outline of key components of the programme of work of the sustainable energy subprogramme for 2023" (ECE/ENERGY/30/2021/INF.1) and provide recommendations on these components, as necessary. Those recommendations which are agreed by the Committee and included in its decisions will be reflected in the proposed programme plan of the sustainable energy subprogramme for 2023.

(d) Approval of documents

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/2021/2 – Provisional calendar of meetings of the sustainable energy subprogramme for 2022

⁵ http://staging2.unece.org/net4all.ch/fileadmin/DAM/OPEN_UNECE/03_Evaluation_and_Audit/Evaluation_Reports-with_SPs/05-SustainableEnergy/SP5_2020_Eval_Report.pdf

ECE/ENERGY/2021/3 – Revised publication plans for 2021 and 2022 and draft publication plan for 2023

ECE/ENERGY/2021/7 – Work plan of the Expert Group on Resource Management for 2022-2023

ECE/ENERGY/2021/8 – Work plan of the Group of Experts on Cleaner Electricity Systems for 2022-2023

ECE/ENERGY/2021/9 – Work plan of the Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane for 2022-2023

ECE/ENERGY/2021/10 – Work plan of the Group of Experts on Energy Efficiency for 2022-2023

ECE/ENERGY/2021/11 – Work plan of the Group of Experts on Gas for 2022-2023

ECE/ENERGY/2021/12 – Work plan of the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy for 2022-2023

ECE/ENERGY/2021/13 – Proposal to change the name, mandate and terms of reference of the Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane

ECE/ENERGY/GE.4/2021/2 – Report of the sixteenth session of the Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane

ECE/ENERGY/GE.8/2021/2 – Report of the eighth session of the Group of Experts on Gas

ECE/ENERGY/GE.3/2021/2 – Report of the twelfth session of the Expert Group on Resource Management

ECE/ENERGY/2021/22 – Supplementary Specifications for the Application of the United Nations Framework Classification for Resources to Petroleum

ECE/ENERGY/2021/23 – Supplementary Specifications for the Application of the United Nations Framework Classification for Resources to Minerals

The Committee will be requested to note or approve a range of documents to support the implementation of mandated areas of work and to recommend their submission to the Executive Committee of ECE for subsequent approval if required.

The Committee will be invited to endorse the renewal of the mandates of the Groups of Experts on Cleaner Electricity Systems, on Coal Mine Methane, on Energy Efficiency, on Gas and on Renewable Energy for the period 2022-2023 with the possibility of extension.

The Committee will be invited to agree to the provisional calendar of meetings for 2022, the revised publication plans for 2021 and 2022 and a draft publication plan for 2023.

8. Any other business

Member States may raise any other issues under this agenda item.

9. Adoption of the report and close of the meeting

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/137 – Report of the Committee on Sustainable Energy on its thirtieth session

The Chair will summarize the significant decisions, conclusions and recommendations taken by the Committee.

The Committee will be invited to adopt its report based on a draft prepared by the secretariat.

III. Tentative timetable

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Agenda Item</i>	
Wednesday, 22 September 2021	10.00–10.15	1	Opening and adoption of the agenda
	10.15–10.30	2	Election of officers
	10.30–12.00	3	High-level Segment – Country Commitments on Energy in the Context of the United Nations High-level Dialogue on Energy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ECE member States delivering the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement - A Commitment Trifecta ○ Voluntary commitments of ECE member States on sustainable energy
	12.00–12.30	4	Strategic review of the sustainable energy subprogramme
	12.30–13.00	5	Pathways to sustainable energy
	13.00–15.00	<i>Break</i>	
	15.00–18.00	6	Follow-up to the 2021 session of the Economic Commission for Europe <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Methane management ○ High-Performance Buildings ○ A Global Framework for Sustainable Resource Management
	Thursday, 23 September 2021	10.00–13.00	6
		7	Future work of the Committee on Sustainable Energy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Just Transition
13.00–15.00		<i>Break</i>	
15.00–18.00		7	Future work of the Committee on Sustainable Energy (cont.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Electricity as a Driver for Transformation of Energy ○ Carbon capture, use, and storage ○ Investing in low carbon energy
Friday, 24 September 2021		10.00–13.00	7
	13.00–15.00	<i>Break</i>	
	15.00–17.15	7	Future work of the Committee on Sustainable Energy (cont.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Results of independent assessment of sustainable energy subprogramme partnerships (b) Regional advisory services in sustainable energy (b) Programme of work for 2022 and recommendations on key components of the programme of work for 2023 (d) Approval of documents
	17.15–17.30	8	Any other business
	17.30–18.00	9	Adoption of the report and close of the meeting