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Economic Commission for Europe

Committee on Sustainable Energy

Group of Experts on Renewable Energy

Eighth session

Geneva, 5-6 October 2021

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Adoption of the agenda

Annotated provisional agenda for the eighth session

to be held in Geneva, starting at 10:00 on Tuesday, 5 October 2021¹

I. Provisional agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda.
2. Opening remarks.
3. Election of officers.
4. Tracking progress and exchange of experiences on how to increase the uptake of renewable energy.
5. Cross-cutting and inter-sectoral cooperation to integrate renewable energy into energy systems.
6. Work Plan for 2020-2021 and 2022-2023.
7. Roundtable on financing decarbonization of energy system in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe region
8. Roundtable on technology interplay and innovation: the potential for hydrogen in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe region
9. Dates of the next meeting.
10. Other business.
11. Adoption of the report and close of the meeting.

¹ Delegates attending meetings at the Palais des Nations are requested to register online (<https://forms.office.com/r/VsWsNN6FVU>), if possible, at least two weeks prior to the session. On the day of the meeting, 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 the map on the Energy Division's website) for the issuance of an identification badge. Registration is open every workday at the Pregny Gate from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.



II. Annotations to the provisional agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/GE.7/2021/1 – Annotated provisional agenda.

In accordance with the rules of procedure of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), the first item of the provisional agenda is the adoption of the agenda.

2. Opening remarks

The Chair will deliver opening remarks, including reflections on the challenging situation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the impact on the activities of the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy (Group of Experts). This session of the Group of Experts will be delivered jointly with the Group of Experts on Cleaner Electricity Systems and will be co-Chaired by the Chair of the Group of Experts on Cleaner Electricity Systems. The joint session will be part of the 11th International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development.

3. Election of officers

During its seventh session in 2020, the Group of Experts elected for two years the representative of Ukraine as its Chair and representatives of Albania, Armenia, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Germany, Kazakhstan, Russian Federation, and Serbia as Vice-Chairs, and invited representatives from the International Energy Agency (IEA), the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), the Renewable Energy Policy Network for the 21st Century (REN21), and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to participate in the Bureau for two years.

Following the request for additional nominations received prior to the eighth session, the Group of Experts will elect Bureau members that have newly been nominated to serve until the end of 2023.

4. Tracking progress and exchange of experiences on how to increase the uptake of renewable energy

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/GE.7/2018/3 – Perspectives for renewable energy in the ECE region.

ECE/ENERGY/2019/1 – Pathways to sustainable energy – Status Report.

Providing affordable, reliable, sustainable and clean energy remains a key challenge for the whole world, and the ECE region is no exception. While the countries of the Caucasus, Central Asia, Europe and North America are united in their goal of accelerating the development and implementation of renewable energy projects, the status and progress of market development is not homogenous across the region.

Despite the fact that a number of promotion schemes are in place across the region, ultimately the uptake of renewable energy depends on market access and the effective implementation of these schemes.

Within this context, delegates will be invited to exchange experiences, good practices and discuss key findings and implications for the Group of Experts and the ECE region.

The International Energy Agency (IEA), the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), the Renewable Energy Policy Network for the 21st Century (REN21), the German Energy Agency (dena) and other relevant organizations are invited to contribute directly or indirectly with their work to dedicated discussions on the progress made in the renewable energy development of the ECE region.

Taking into account preliminary findings of the new version of the REN21 UNECE Renewable Energy Status Report under preparation, the delegates will consider the progress made in the uptake of renewable energy and the subsequent needed policy options from the perspective of renewable energy.

In addition, the experience on what is needed to overcome bottlenecks from recent Renewable Energy Hard Talks through an open dialogue among stakeholders, including through inter-sectoral coordination and cooperation with relevant organizations, will be presented and discussed by participants. In this context, delegates will be invited to share successful practices to develop and implement policies and measures to overcome political, legal, regulatory and technical barriers while taking advantage of untapped renewable energy potential. Delegates may also convey preliminary expressions of interest to organize Hard Talks in their countries.

5. Cross-cutting and inter-sectoral cooperation to integrate renewable energy into energy systems

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/GE.7/2021/4 – Overview of Benefits and Challenges for Governments applying UNFC to Renewable Energy Projects and Resources

The target of increasing the renewable energy uptake for ECE countries requires an integrated approach and multi-stakeholder dialogue to achieve higher renewable energy shares within future energy systems. This includes an improved understanding of renewable energy resource characteristics and availability as well as the strengthening of policy, institutional, normative and regulatory frameworks.

The study titled “Overview of Benefits and Challenges for Governments applying UNFC to Renewable Energy Projects and Resources”, jointly prepared by the Renewable Energy Working Group of the Expert Group on Resource Management (EGRM) and GERE experts will be presented and discussed.

Renewable energy plays a strong role in helping to achieve better management of resources within the water-energy-food-ecosystems nexus. The role of renewable energy in promoting the nexus approach will be specifically considered, as well as links to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the implications for climate change mitigation.

Delegates will be requested to present their experience and views on how to better integrate renewable energy into energy systems, in particular on the interlinkages and synergies between renewable energy and natural gas and cleaner electricity production.

Delegates will be invited to consider possible follow-up activities in applying UNFC to Renewable Energy Projects and Resources.

Delegates will be invited to consider an integrated and holistic approach in the deployment of renewable energy and to discuss the implementation of possible joint inter-sectoral work, including from the water-energy-food-ecosystems nexus perspective, and taking into account the role of renewable energy in a decarbonized energy system.

Following the recommendation of the Committee on Sustainable Energy on energy sub-programme's Strategic Review and Pathways Programme, delegates will discuss how to engage, within the scope of the expertise of the Group of Experts, in the joint work with other subsidiary bodies on transition of the energy sector in line with international agreements and in support to the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

6. Work Plan for 2020-2021 and 2022-2023

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/2021/12 – Work Plan of the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy for 2022-2023.

Since the end of 2014, the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy has been implementing concrete activities to help significantly increase the uptake of renewable energy in the region.

According to its Terms of Reference, the Group of Experts focuses on activities related to a) regulatory and policy dialogue and b) sharing of best practices on various renewable energy sources with a view to increasing the share of renewables in the global energy mix.

The Group of Experts will discuss its activities over 2020-2021 and the status of implementation of the Work Plan for 2020-2021 (ECE/ENERGY/2019/8).

The Chair will present the Work Plan of the Group of Experts for 2022-2023 (ECE/ENERGY/2021/12) approved by written procedure and submitted to the Committee on Sustainable Energy for consideration at its thirtieth session (Geneva, 22-24 September 2021). The Group of Experts will be invited to discuss its Work Plan for 2022-2023 and elaborate on concrete steps for its implementation.

7. Roundtable on financing decarbonization of energy system in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe region

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/GE.7/2021/3 – Renewable Energy Financing and Investment in selected United Nations Economic Commission for Europe member States

This roundtable will be delivered jointly by the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy and the Group of Experts on Cleaner Electricity Systems. It will also be supported by the Expert Group on Resource Management. Energy transition in the ECE region requires both private and public financing across all zero- and low-carbon technologies. Strengthening international cooperation is necessary to facilitate access to clean energy research and technologies, including renewable energy, energy efficiency, nuclear energy and advanced and more environmentally friendly fossil-fuel technologies, and promote investments into modernization of energy infrastructure and clean energy technologies. Recommendations from this session will create the basis for further multi-stakeholder dialogue on financing decarbonization of energy system across the ECE region.

ECE member States have defined quantitative goals to achieve SDG7 and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. However, many countries lag behind in terms of reaching specific targets, including those for renewable energy, within the agreed timeframes. In particular, attracting investment is a major challenge in many countries of the region, even with the existence of support schemes and policies aimed at the advancement of renewable energy as well as promoting low carbon technologies.

The Group of Experts has been considering key issues and prioritizing discussions focusing on overcoming obstacles to renewable energy uptake and boosting renewable energy investment in the region. Towards this aim, an open multi-stakeholder exchange – “Hard Talks” - among political decision makers, governmental officials, project developers, investors and technology providers is facilitated to promote dialogue between the public and private sector and to identify solutions to improve the investment climate in the renewable energy sector and cooperation opportunities.

A series of “Renewable Energy Hard-Talks” took place in a number of countries, namely Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Serbia, and Ukraine, between 2016-2019, while new Hard-Talks are foreseen in other countries in 2021, including in Albania, Serbia, Georgia and Kazakhstan.

In addition and as instrumental to recent Hard Talks, a study will be presented to participants on “Renewable Energy Financing and Investment in selected ECE member States”, which provides a comprehensive, up-to-date overview of financing mechanisms and investment activities in four ECE member states: Albania, Georgia, Kazakhstan and Serbia.

Delegates will be invited to discuss the relationship between policy measures and market conditions in the process of increasing renewable energy investments, while also sharing successful experiences stemming from recent ECE Hard Talks (see more at: <https://www.unece.org/energy/welcome/areas-of-work/renewable-energy/unece-ren21-hard-talks.html>) and considering key findings from the recent study.

8. Roundtable on technology interplay and innovation: potential of hydrogen in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe region

This session will be delivered jointly by the Group of Experts on Cleaner Electricity Systems and the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy. It will also be supported by the Group of Experts on Gas. The three Groups of Experts have been implementing activities on hydrogen in the ECE region jointly. This roundtable will discuss clean energy pathways to a rapid shift to a hydrogen economy that will require hydrogen production through electrolysis from both renewable energy and nuclear power as well as fossil fuels with CCS. Recommendations from this session will further shape hydrogen-related activities at ECE.

The delegates will be invited to discuss possible ways of promoting hydrogen production, in particular the role that can be played by renewable energy and how hydrogen can increase the uptake of renewable energy.

9. Dates of the next meeting

The seventh session of the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy is scheduled to take place in Geneva on 6-7 October 2022, unless the Group of Experts decides otherwise.

10. Other business

At the time the provisional agenda was prepared, there were no issues to be raised under this item.

11. Adoption of the report and close of the meeting

The Group of Experts will be invited to adopt its report based on a draft prepared by the secretariat, then the Chair will close the meeting. Draft conclusions and recommendations presented in the draft report will be circulated to participants and Geneva Permanent Representative Missions at least ten days before the start of the meeting.

III. Tentative timetable

<i>Time</i>	<i>Agenda item</i>
5 October 2021	
10:00	Item 1: Adoption of the agenda
10:05	Item 2: Opening remarks
10:15	Item 3: Election of officers
10:30	Item 4: Tracking progress and exchange of experiences on how to increase the uptake of renewable energy.
13:00	<i>Break</i>
15:00	Item 5: Cross-cutting and inter-sectoral cooperation to integrate renewable energy into energy systems.
16:30	Item 6: Work Plan for 2020-2021 and 2022-2023
17:00	<i>End of the day</i>
6 October 2021	
10:00	Joint opening remarks (GERE-CES)
10:30	Item 7: Roundtable on financing decarbonization of energy system in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe region

13:00	<i>Break</i>	
15:00	Item 8:	Roundtable on technology interplay and innovation: potential of hydrogen in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe region
16:00	Item 9:	Dates of the next meeting
16:15	Item 10:	Other business
16:30	Item 11:	Adoption of the report and close of the meeting
17:00	<i>End of the session</i>	
