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**Economic Commission for Europe****Committee on Sustainable Energy****Thirty-first session**

Geneva, 21-23 September 2022

Item 11(b) of the provisional agenda

**Looking ahead: Future work of the Committee on Sustainable Energy:****Approval of documents****Final mandate and terms of reference of the Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane and Just Transition****Prepared by the Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane and Just Transition****I. Introduction**

1. At the thirtieth session of the Committee on Sustainable Energy (22-24 September 2021, Geneva), the Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane (CMM) made a request to change its name, mandate and terms of reference. The request was prompted by:

(a) requests of the Committee on Sustainable Energy to its subsidiary bodies, and the Group of Experts on CMM in particular, to focus on just transition, integrated methane management and carbon neutrality;

(b) discussions at workshops organized by the Group Experts and other events at which the Group of Experts has participated on modernization of the coal industry, the future of the coal industry, just transition, and/or mine closure and repurposing;

(c) requests of workshop and meeting participants for support from the Group of Experts; and

(d) the need and urgency expressed by United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) member States to deliver on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

**II. The Committee's request for clarification**

2. At its thirtieth session, the Committee on Sustainable Energy approved the change of name of the Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane to Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane and Just Transition and also approved the change of mandate and terms of reference of the Group as contained in document ECE/ENERGY/2021/13. At the same time, the Committee requested that the Group of Experts consider the suggested clarifications in its mandate and terms of reference and submit a revised version to the thirty-first session of the Committee (ECE/ENERGY/137, para. 79).

3. Subsequently, the Executive Committee of ECE endorsed the Committee's decisions to approve the request of the Group of Experts to change its name and mandate at its meeting on 26 January 2022 (ECE/EX/2022/L3 para 3. (d)).

### **III. Final mandate and terms of reference of the Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane and Just Transition**

4. Following the Committee's request, the Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane and Just Transition discussed, at its seventeenth session (21-22 March 2022, Geneva), the proposed clarifications, accepted them, and made the necessary amendments reflecting the Committee's recommendations to the text of its mandate and terms of reference.

5. The Committee is invited to take note of the requested action taken by the Group of Experts and of the final mandate and terms of reference of the Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane and Just Transition as contained in this document. The text that the Group of Experts agreed on reads as follows:

#### **A. Mandate**

6. The mandate of the Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane and Just Transition (the Group of Experts) is to promote efficient environmentally sustainable transition of industries along the coal value chain ensuring the reduction of associated greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and social equity of the process through substantive, results-oriented activities that may help the recovery and use of methane in order to reduce the risks of explosions in coal mines in the context of climate change mitigation and to contribute to sustainable development, including the support of communities, local economies and the environment in the just transition process (ECE/ENERGY/GE.4/2022/2, para. 19).

#### **B. Areas of Work**

7. The areas of work of the Group of Experts are:

(a) Reduction and management of methane emissions through for example recovery and use of methane from active, closed, and/or abandoned coal mines aimed at reducing the risks of explosions, mitigating climate change, and supporting sustainable development;

(b) For those countries or regions/states that choose to cease coal mining and related activities, offering support on request on preparation of coal mines and coal mining regions and communities for mine closure and reorientation of the local economies; and

(c) Environmentally sustainable transition and repurposing of mines and existing mining infrastructure and facilitating development of new profiles of economic activity and business models that preserve social cohesion and cultural heritage of the affected localities (ECE/ENERGY/GE.4/2022/2, para. 19).

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