

Committee on Sustainable Energy

Minutes of the Bureau call from 05 April 2022

The full recording and transcript are available and accessible to all participants in Teams. If you accepted the original meeting invitation you can go there directly for additional details.

Participants:

Chair: Jürgen Keinhorst (Germany)

Vice-Chairs: Admir Softić (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Olga Yudina for Alexey Kulapin (Russian Federation), Emily Grubert (United States), Chokan T. Laumulin (Kazakhstan)

Bureau Members ex officio: Ray Pilcher, Francisco de la Flor, Stefan Buettner, David MacDonald, Jim Robb, Kostiantyn Gura

Observers: Lea Bigot (Germany); Carlos Moreno Carrero and Laura Lapeña Martinez (Spain); Damegul Kabiyeva (Kazakhstan); and Sergio Garribba (Italy);

UNECE Secretariat: Scott Foster, Denise Mulholland, Charlotte Griffiths, Branko Milicevic, Michal Drabik, Igor Lityunvik, Merwan Paris, Nadejda Khamrakulova, Gianluca Sambucini, Harikrishnan Tulsidas

Minutes of Meeting

The Chair welcomed participants and invited a new nominee to the Bureau, Dr. Chokan T. Laumulin, to introduce himself. The Bureau adopted the agenda proposed and the Chair proceeded to lead discussion on each of the eight agenda topics.

1. Recall decisions taken

The Chair opened the session with an introductory statement on the war in Ukraine, referring in particular to the positions of the UN Secretary General and the UNECE in this regard. He referred to the need to make adjustments in terms of working methods and priority setting due to the war context.

Upon invitation from the Chair, the Director of the Sustainable Energy Division, Scott Foster, summarized that there were two decisions taken at the last meeting of the UNECE Executive Committee (EXCOM), [ECE/EX/2022/L.6](#) and [ECE/EX/2022/L.7](#). L7 dealt directly with the Forum of Mayors and does not affect the COMMITTEE. L6 calls for all the committees and subsidiary bodies to take account of the ongoing invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation in decisions regarding elections to positions of decision making or visibility or related to the funding of projects. The Director reported that the EXCOM has requested a review of all projects that have involved funding from the Russian Federation. EXCOM is expected to take a decision as to whether any projects should be put on pause or stopped, potentially affecting the activities of the Committee.

The Chair of the EGRM solicited guidance as to if or how to proceed regarding the meeting of the expert group on resource classification, scheduled for the week beginning 25 April 2022 because of current tensions that do not appear to be dissipating. After discussion, the Bureau agreed that the EGRM meeting should be postponed to ensure a successful outcome, avoid damaging long-

lasting relationships and continue making progress on the work but through written exchanges. It was discussed that given the ongoing war, the needs and agenda will likely be different than it was before and the Committee should be ready to adapt. Generally, it was agreed that is at the discretion of the leaders of the expert groups whether to hold physical/hybrid meetings in the current situation.

2. Discuss progress on work plan implementation

The Secretariat walked the Bureau through a document, [CSE Activity and Funding Matrix extended 05 April 2022.pdf](#), that was included in the calendar invitation sent to the Bureau. The document provided an update on the implementation status of all the activities underway across the Secretariat in support of each of the Committee's priority areas. The document, as Mr. Foster showed, provided information about recent activities, available levels of funding, identifying where projects were proceeding as planned and where others are still awaiting funding for completion.

It was noted that there is no funding currently available for the following projects, priorities and/or activities and the work would benefit from donor support:

- International Decade for Methane Management,
- Collaboration with key stakeholders on methane,
- Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane and Just Transition,
- Energy and mobility
- Electrons, photons, and molecules
- Carbon pricing and subsidies
- Market Design

3. Look at recent and upcoming activities

In response to the Bureau request at the January meeting, the Secretariat prepared and shared with the bureau a document that described upcoming activities and milestones of the Committee and its expert groups. This document, [SED Calendar of Activities and Events March - June 2022.docx](#), was created to give the Bureau information about what is coming up for their own awareness and so that the Bureau could promote and support the upcoming activities. The secretariat walked through recent events and activities in March such as:

- Unveiling Market Opportunities for Boosting Residential Energy Efficiency and Alleviating Energy Poverty
- Public consultation on the Draft Guidance for Application of UNFC for Minerals and Anthropogenic Resources in Europe to support UNFC implementation
- 17th Session of the Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane and Just Transition
- Technical Side Events: Sustainable Hydrogen Production and Methane Management
- 9th Session of the Group of Experts on Gas

The secretariat described upcoming events and activities, including:

- Early-April 2022: UNECE Task Force on Industrial Energy Efficiency: Driving Forward Industrial Energy Efficiency and Decarbonization (third meeting)
- 11-13 April 2022: Coal Mine Methane session (Methane in the Context of the Transition of the Coal Sector) within the framework of the XXXI School of Underground Mining
- Mid-April 2022: Draft Addressing mental roadblocks to energy digitalization (Final: expected mid-July)
- Mid-April 2022: Draft Digitalizing electricity systems (Final: expected mid-July)

- 25 April 2022: 5th methane Mondays Meeting (Application of UN Framework Classification of Resources to Coalbed Methane)
- 25-29 April 2022: UNECE Resource Management Week 2022, incorporating Expert Group on Resource Management 13th Session (Now to be postponed) incl. launch of the Working Group on Extractive Industries
- 30 April 2022: Life Cycle Assessment of Electricity Options
- 30 April 2022: Technology Interplay under Carbon Neutrality Concept
- Mid-May 2022: Draft Data Analytics in the Utility Sector (Final expected: mid-June)
- Mid-May 2022: Final REN21 UNECE Renewable Energy Status Report 2022

At the next bureau meeting, the Secretariat will report on the status of implementation of the work program.

4. Theme for 31st CSE

The Secretariat walked through a list of potential themes for the 31st session of the CSE for Bureau consideration, including:

1. Tangible Actions to Deliver on the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement
2. Energy Security, Resilience and Climate Change: Tangible Actions to Deliver a Sustainable Energy Future
3. Energy Security, Resilience and Net Zero: Tangible Actions to Deliver a Sustainable Energy Future
4. Energy Security, Resilience and Carbon Neutrality: Tangible Actions to Deliver a Sustainable Energy Future
5. Building a resilient and sustainable energy system in the UNECE region
6. Resiliency: Climate Change, Energy Security and Economic Recovery

Expert group chairs took the floor to express their interest in focusing on addressing energy security, resilience, and the environmental/sustainability goals. Given the current situation in Ukraine, the need for reconstruction when the war is over, the spill-over effects in supply and pricing, and the continuing recovery from Covid, there is a concern that solutions to the nearer term challenges could undermine achievement of the long-term environment and sustainability goals unless they are considered concurrently. The expert group chairs proposed that the Committee take on this topic as the theme for the 31st meeting in September and dedicate a half day or more to discussion on it with a high-level panel. They have already started to outline a paper with some of these topics laid out.

The Bureau agreed with the suggestion and to the theme #3. Energy Security, Resilience and Net Zero: Tangible Actions to Deliver a Sustainable Energy Future. The Bureau also supported cross-expert group collaboration and on the jointly developed paper on energy security, resilience and getting to net zero.

5. Preparations for CSE 31, including Bureau nominations

a. Parliamentary Documents for CSE 31

The Secretariat presented the list of mandatory and proposed parliamentary documents for the 31st session (file sent to the Bureau in advance: [CSE-31 List of proposed parliamentary documents - For Discussion.docx](#)).

The Bureau approved the proposed list of documents:

Mandatory parliamentary documents:

1. Annotated provisional agenda for the thirty-first session
2. Report of the Committee on Sustainable Energy on its thirty-first session
3. Provisional calendar of meetings of the sustainable energy subprogramme for 2023
4. Draft programme of work of the sustainable energy subprogramme for 2023
5. Outline of key components of the programme of work of the sustainable energy subprogramme for 2024 (INF document, English only)
6. Revised publications plans for 2022 and 2023 and draft publications plan for 2024
7. Report on regional advisory services in sustainable energy

Substantive parliamentary documents:

8. Carbon Neutrality in the UNECE Region: Technology Interplay under the Carbon Neutrality Concept
9. Comprehensive and science-based terminology, classification, and taxonomy for hydrogen
10. Considerations for Building a Resilient Energy System in the United Nation Economic Commission for Europe Region: More Secure, More Affordable, More Environmentally Friendly
11. Sustainable management of critical raw materials required for the low-carbon energy transition (subject to confirmation by the EGRM Bureau)
12. Resource as a Service: A catalyst to accelerate the energy transition, safeguarding climate action targets within the circular economy (subject to confirmation by the EGRM Bureau)

The Bureau suggested to add a paper on carbon pricing and subsidies. It was noted that the Secretariat does not have funding or in-house expertise for a paper, especially with the director leaving. The Bureau acknowledged that others are working in this area and welcomed the proposition of getting those experts that have focused and spent lots of time and resources on the topic to engage and potentially produce a paper. **The Bureau agreed that, subject to the Secretariat finding a lead author, there should be an additional paper:**

13. Carbon pricing and subsidies.

The Secretariat will develop and maintain a document status table for the documents approved by the bureau so that the Bureau knows when to expect drafts.

b. Agenda development

The Secretariat presented a draft agenda to the Bureau for their initial reaction.

Overview of the UNECE Sustainable Energy Week, Palais des Nations, Geneva, 19-23 September 2022
(Theme TBD)

18th Session of the Group of Experts on Cleaner Electricity Systems and 31st Session of the Committee on Sustainable Energy

(Hybrid meeting: in person and online via Zoom)

Italics = Proposed substantive documents

<i>Monday 19 September</i>	<i>Tuesday 20 September</i>	<i>Wednesday 21 September</i>	<i>Thursday 22 September</i>	<i>Friday 23 September</i>
<p>10.00-18.00 <u>Group of Experts on Cleaner Electricity Systems</u></p> <p>10.00-13.00</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening and Plenary <p>15.00-18.00</p>	<p>10.00-18.00 <u>Group of Experts on Cleaner Electricity Systems</u></p> <p>10.00-13.00</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <p>15.00-18.00</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <p><u>GECEs- ends</u></p>	<p>10.00-21.00 <u>Committee on Sustainable Energy (CSE) 31st session</u></p> <p>10.00-13.00</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Opening – <i>something on tangible results achieved to date</i> ○ High-level Segment – Energy Security, Resilience, and Climate Change <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Energy security paper</i> ○ Carbon Neutrality/Pathways project/report ○ Discussion among countries about activities/goals/progress, priorities <p>15.00-18.00</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Deliverables under 2022 priorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Achieving Superior performance in buildings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ High-Performance Buildings Initiative ○ Country presentations on projects supported by UN ○ <i>Digitalization?</i> <p>18.00 – 21.00 Reception?</p>	<p>10.00-18.00 <u>Committee on Sustainable Energy (CSE) 31st session cont.</u></p> <p>10.00-13.00</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Deliverables under 2022 priorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Modernizing Resource Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Global Framework for Sustainable Resource Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Sustainable management of critical raw materials required for the low-carbon energy transition</i> ▪ Circular Economy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Resource as a Service: A catalyst to accelerate the energy transition, safeguarding climate action targets within the circular economy.</i> ○ WG on Extractives ○ Enabling a Hydrogen Ecosystem <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Taxonomy/classification</i> ○ Energy & Mobility <p>15.00-18.00</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Deliverables under 2022 priorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Addressing Methane Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Value of International Decade ○ Ensuring a Just Transition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Coal Mine Methane/Just Transition 	<p>10.00-18.00 <u>Committee on Sustainable Energy (CSE) 31st session cont.</u></p> <p>10.00-13.00</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future work of CSE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Subsidies and carbon prices</i> ○ Pathways Next ○ Discussion among countries about activities/goals/progress, priorities ○ Others? <p>15.00-18.00</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future work of CSE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Regional Advisory Services ○ 2023 Programme of Work and recommendations on 2024 PoW key components • Approval of documents • Election of Bureau through the 33rd Session • Adoption of the report and close of the meeting <p>CSE-31 ends</p>

The Bureau noted that, while it was tentative and likely to change, it appeared to reflect the new topic and the other priorities of the Committee and provide some structure. The usual parliamentary procedural processes would need to be reflected, including the election of the Bureau.

c. Bureau nominations

The Secretariat announced that the formal nomination process will start later in April when [the Secretariat puts out an official call for nominations](#). The secretariat reminded the bureau that, at the last meeting of the committee, because of the hybrid nature of the meeting, the Committee was unable to conduct a proper election of the Bureau and, by decision, the mandate of the entire Bureau was carried out to the end of the next session. That meant that those who were nominated at the time were invited to participate actively, but that the election process will have to take place this year with a formal election. The Secretariat has since conducted elections in a hybrid format and is prepared to do so at the 31st CSE session.

The Secretariat shared that it has received a nomination for the Chair from Kazakhstan: Dr Laumulin, who introduced himself earlier.

6. C&Rs for the next Commission meeting

- The Secretariat explained that the next UNECE Commission meeting, scheduled for April 2023, which was initially supposed to be a celebration of the 75th anniversary of ECE and to cover digitalization and circular economy, would have to change its thematic focus taking into account the war in Ukraine. The Bureau discussed the opportunity for

Committee to ensure that CSE priorities come out of our 31st CSE and are reflected in the conclusions and recommendations of the meeting.

7. AOB

- The Bureau agreed that having invitations for bureau meetings in advance would help the Bureau members ensure that their schedules are kept available and welcomed the ambition of creating a consistent schedule. The Bureau requested that the **Secretariat send out invitations for regular meetings from now until the 31st session of the CSE.**
- The Secretariat invited Bureau members to share feedback after the meeting regarding any enhancements they would like to see to the documents tracking implementation status and/or calendars of activities and projects.
- Bureau members inquired as to the plans for finding a new Director to replace Mr. Foster when he retires at the end of May 2022. Mr. Foster indicated that the recruitment process is still underway.

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