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| **WORKING DRAFT version 3** |  | **CSE-32/2023/INF.1** |

**Draft Conclusions and Recommendations**

**of the Committee on Sustainable Energy**

**at its 32nd session**

1. High-level segment: Building resilient energy systems in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe region - Launch of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Platform on Resilient Energy Systems

*Documentation:* ECE/ENERGY/2023/11 – United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Platform on Resilient Energy Systems Work Plan

ECE/ENERGY/2023/12 – Advanced concept for the Platform on Resilient Energy Systems

1. High-level representatives from the following countries […] and international organizations […] delivered statements about their current challenges, needs and priorities related to energy system resiliency in times of uncertainty and global crises. They noted significant obstacles and risks related to ensuring access to affordable, sustainable, reliable and modern energy services.
2. Recalled the conclusion from the discussion at the thirty-first session of the Committee on Sustainable Energy, defining a resilient energy system as the one that reflects potential impacts of climate change on energy supply and demand in its planning and operations; makes an optimal contribution to a country’s social, economic, and environmental development; is able to prevent, withstand and recover quickly from any shocks, including military or climate disaster shocks, which cause disruptions to energy systems; and is decentralized at all levels – regional, state and local – with widely deployed capacities (including reserved capacities) for alternative energy generation and transmission (ECE/ENERGY/143).
3. Further recalled the conclusion from the thirty-first session that a resilient energy system is based on: (i) energy security that ensures energy needed at any time through diversity of supply; (ii) affordability of sustainable energy that reduces the costs of electricity, heating, cooling, and transport while increasing systemic energy efficiency; and (iii) environmental sustainability that lowers the carbon footprint, increases the uptake of renewable energy and enhances efficiency across the energy supply chain in line with the Paris Agreement and the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development.
4. Noted with appreciation the formal document “United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Platform on Resilient Energy Systems Work Plan” (ECE/ENERGY/2023/11) which outlines a number of activities to be implemented by the subsidiary bodies of the Committee and which are also connected to the subsidiary bodies’ Work Plans 2024-2025 to support the energy systems resilience.
5. Recalled that building a resilient energy system requires engaging with all stakeholders to the extent that warrants their ownership of the process and a sense of responsibility for its results. While decarbonization, being a key element of improving resilience of an energy system, will create new opportunities, it may also have disruptive effects on carbon- and energy-intensive industries, as well as on regions, communities, and enterprises that depend on them. Therefore, the Committee called upon the ECE member States to assess social impacts of the transition at the planning phase, so that proper protective and ameliorating mechanisms are developed and relevant policies prepare stakeholders to the new reality put in place. The Committee called upon member States to support the activities related to designing and building resilient energy systems with extrabudgetary resources.
6. Recognized that policymakers across the region are in urgent need of tools that enable them to effectively consider available and reliable information, make informed decisions and manage complex trade-offs to design and build resilient energy systems.
7. Noted with appreciation the “Advanced concept for the Platform on Resilient Energy Systems” (ECE/ENERGY/2023/12) that highlights the unique, timely and innovative proposition of the Platform on Resilient Energy Systems that is based on: (a) an AI-powered tool based on selected and vetted information sources to support tailored and targeted policy and decision-making; (b) a unique forum for information exchange and inclusive multi-stakeholder demand-driven policy dialogues on topical issues, supported by data collection, classification, and policy analysis
8. Noted all the risks, opportunities and overall potential that AI technology can bring to stakeholders, and called on member States to engage in active, cautious but bold, use of innovative tailor-made AI tools that enable them to make informed decisions and design adequate national, regional and international policies to build resilient energy systems taking into account the regioal and county’s specifties.
9. Noted with appreciation the strategic cooperation with a number of international organizations and the contribution of their knowledge base to support and shape the Platform on Resilient Energy Systems. The organizations include the European Investment Bank (EIB), International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), International Energy Agency (IEA), International Telecommunication Union (ITU), Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), World Meteorological Organization (WMO), etc.
10. Called on member States to provide the needed extrabudgetary resources and leadership to support the tools and operations under the Platform on Resilient Energy Systems that address the critical need to build energy system resiliency in the ECE region and that cannot be delivered with existing regular budget resources. Requested the Bureau to report on the progress of all activities of the Platform on Resilient Energy Systems during the thirty-third session of the Committee.
11. Noted the importance and opportunities of addressing gender and intergenerational issues as an integral component of building resilient energy systems in the ECE region. The move to clean energy systems can be transformative for gender equality and help to empower women in the energy sector. Access to affordable, sustainable, safe, and clean energy is a precondition for achieving SDG 5 and for empowering all women and girls. Young people are among those most affected by energy inequalities and climate change hence they have a vested interest in finding solutions. Requested the secretariat to ensure a focus on gender and youth in the work on building resilient energy systems in the ECE region.

3. Delivering on sustainable energy: subprogramme accomplishments since the thirty-first session of the Committee on Sustainable Energy

1. Reviewed the progress to implement the programme of work of the Sustainable energy subprogramme since the thirty-first session and noted the continued relevance of the subprogramme’s activities, particularly related to the strategic priorities of the subprogramme: increase energy system resilience; promote sustainable resource management; support member States in achieving their SDG7 objectives through scaling up renewable energy capacity and improving energy efficiency; enable a hydrogen ecosystem in the ECE region; promote best practices in methane management and reductions; and conceive practices for a just and inclusive energy transition.
2. Noted with appreciation the activities and accomplishments of the Committee and its six subsidiary bodies, particularly in view of the economic, geopolitical, energy, social, supply chain, climate, and environmental challenges the ECE region is facing. Called upon member States to provide resources to support projects and activities that deliver on the Committee’s identified priorities and address the new challenges.
3. Noted with appreciation the accelerated implementation of UNFC globally, in particular in countries of the European Union, thanks to the ongoing extrabudgetary project on “Supporting UNECE member States in the development and implementation of UNFC and UNRMS”.
4. Noted with appreciation the “Policy brief on aligning critical raw materials development with sustainable development” and the contribution of the Expert Group on Resource Management to the 2023 High-level Political Forum in New York.
5. Noted that developing an international hydrogen taxonomy and specifications according to UNFC and UNRMS would provide a common language and a holistic approach for managing hydrogen resources. Further, developing an early warning system for critical minerals and other resources with UNFC and UNRMS would enable countries to make informed decisions and adapt their national action plans accordingly to avoid a shortage of resources, as well as provide a reliable and timely source of information on resource availability, quality, and accessibility. Both activities would be coordinated by the Hydrogen Task Force that reports to the Group of Experts on Gas, in coordination with other expert groups, and align with sustainable development and human rights principles. The Committee called upon member States to support these timely and relevant activities with extrabudgetary resources.
6. Noted with appreciation the launch of technical Task Forces on (a) Methane Emissions Reduction; (b) Just Transition; and, (c) Safe Operations and Closure of Coal Mines under the Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane and Just Transition.
7. Noted with appreciation the technical studies on the transition of the coal mining sector developed by the Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane and Just Transition: (a) The local geological and mining conditions in Albania and Serbia; principle-based guidelines for designing and implementing a programme for an efficient, safe, and environmentally conscious mine closure[[1]](#footnote-2); and, (b) The assessment of coal demand in Tajikistan to 2050 and alternative options for replacing coal in the country’s energy mix[[2]](#footnote-3).
8. Noted with appreciation the outreach activities that the Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane and Just Transition is conducting, including: (a) the success of the Methane Mondays online series; (b) engagement of youth to foster the next generation of energy experts and deliver on just energy transition; (c) securing resources for an extrabudgetary project on *Strengthening national capacities to reduce coal mine methane emissions from active (CMM) and abandoned (AMM) coal mines and to measure and manage methane emissions across the natural gas value chain*; and, (d) the adoption of a draft resolution ([E/RES/2023/18](https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N23/226/64/PDF/N2322664.pdf?OpenElement)) on *Best Practice Guidance for Effective Management of Coal Mine Methane at National Level: Monitoring, Reporting, Verification and Mitigation*, by the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) whereby the Council decided “to invite States Members of the United Nations, international organizations and the regional commissions to consider the possibility of taking appropriate measures to ensure the application of the *Best Practice Guidance for Effective Management of Coal Mine Methane at National Level: Monitoring, Reporting, Verification and Mitigation* worldwide” (p5 E/2023/15/Add.1);
9. Noted with appreciation that the Group of Experts on Cleaner Electricity Systems continued disseminating the findings from the extrabudgetary project on “Enhancing the understanding of the implications and opportunities of moving to carbon neutrality in the UNECE region across the power and energy intensive industries by 2050” implemented in December 2022 and that has been applying the UNECE Carbon Neutrality Toolkit on national and subregional level. The publication on Rebuilding Ukraine with a Resilient, Carbon-Neutral Energy System was launched in June 2023 and the roadmap for the Republic of Moldova and Central Asia region are in preparation. The Committee encouraged member States to apply the UNECE Carbon Neutrality Toolkit[[3]](#footnote-4) with the support of the ECE expert community.
10. Noted with appreciation the efforts by the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy and the outcome of the SDG Fund Project “Addressing the compounded food and energy crisis in Ukraine through innovative technologies and adaptive agricultural practices” that was implemented jointly by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and ECE. Also noted with appreciation the outcomes of the multi-stakeholder dialogue on “Untapped Bioenergy Potential of Ukraine: Comprehensive View of Proper Use. Issues of Energy Security and Food Security” which provides concrete recommendations to promote the role of bioenergy in the future energy system in Ukraine.
11. Noted with appreciation the “Policy brief on advancing power system connectivity in support of SDG7” that was prepared by the Group of Experts on Cleaner Electricity Systems and the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy together with ESCAP’s Expert Working Group on Energy Connectivity and presented at the 2023 High-level Political Forum in New York.
12. Noted with appreciation that the Group of Experts on Gas organized a dialogue on resilient energy systems (Geneva and online, 18 October 2022).[[4]](#footnote-5) The event explored possible interruptions in the gas supply to Europe, rebalancing Europe’s energy gas supplies, and mapping alternative supplies for natural gas, while treating the intertwined challenges of resilience including the security of supply, affordability and environmental sustainability in the context of UN climate agenda.
13. Noted that blending of hydrogen and natural gas (which refers to injecting hydrogen into natural gas pipelines in various proportions) could help creating a hydrogen value chain from practically zero today to an immense and complex future industry. Acknowledged the role of gas infrastructure – pipelines, liquefied natural gas (LNG) tankers and terminals, compressors, and storage – in jumpstarting production, transmission, and consumption of hydrogen.
14. Welcomed the efforts by the Group of Experts on Gas in cooperation with all six Committee susbsidiary bodies, namely the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy and the Expert Group on Resource Management, to streamline hydrogen related activities under the Committee on Sustainable Energy and launch a Hydrogen Task Force (HTF). Noted that setting up HTF reflected consensus among ECE member States that hydrogen is instrumental for a future decarbonized energy system. The Task Force focuses on three main workstreams: (a) sustainable hydrogen standards (including UNFC and UNRMS); (b) hydrogen value chain development; and, (c) synergies with renewable energy sources. HTF will expand the reach of current initiatives to the countries of Central Asia, the Caucasus, and Western Balkans.
15. Took note of activities of the Group of Experts on Energy Efficiency, including those undertaken with the Group of Experts on Cleaner Electricity Systems, as well as other subsidiary bodies of the Committee and other ECE subprogrammes, that support increased systemic efficiency through advancements in economic, technical, and policy research in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
16. Noted the progress of the Group of Experts on Energy Efficiency and the Group of Experts on Cleaner Electricity Systems in addressing aspects of improving electricity system resilience, including through deployment of energy storage options and increasing energy connectivity; assessing the impacts of changing patterns of energy end uses (including integration of e-mobility and other smart assets at the grid edge) on reliability of the energy system, unlocking the potential of energy system efficiency through digitalization including issues related to cybersecurity; reducing the carbon footprint and improving energy performance in the built environment; and the financing conditions and the overall intergovernmental policy environment for integrating the many elements required to effectively address the challenges and risks.
17. Noted with appreciation the work of the Sustainable energy subprogramme focusing on gender issues across all activities. The Committee further noted the role that women can play towards sustainable energy, and reiterated the need to promote gender parity in the programmes of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies and to update on the progress in future sessions.
18. Further noted the work of the Sustainable energy subprogramme to focus on intergenerational issues in the energy sector of the ECE region. The Committee appreciated the establishment of a Resource Management Young Member Group as a working group under the Expert Group on Resource Management during the ECE Resource Management Week 2023 (Geneva, 25-28 April 2023) and the efforts of the Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane and Just Transition role in the 61st United Nations Graduate Study Programme, facilitating a 2-week programme (Geneva, 3-14 July 2023) for international students on “Forging a Just Transition: Towards Green Jobs and Rights-Based Futures”, focused in the coal-mining sectors in Poland and Kazakhstan.
19. Securing access to critical raw materials in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe region: challenges and opportunities

*Documentation:* ECE/ENERGY/2023/13 – Securing Access to Critical Raw Materials in the UNECE Region: Challenges and Opportunities

CSE-32/2023/INF.2 – Policy brief on aligning critical raw materials development with sustainable development

1. Noted that access to critical raw materials (CRMs) is vital for the ECE region to achieve its climate and sustainable development goals and to support the transition to a low-carbon economy and digital society. Various factors, such as geopolitical tensions, environmental impacts, market distortions, and technological changes influence the supply and demand of CRMs. These factors pose significant challenges and risks for the resiliency and sustainability of the CRMs value chain. Policy alternatives that could enhance the resiliency and sustainability of the CRMs value chain include diversifying primary sources, promoting a circular economy, fostering innovation and cooperation, strengthening governance and transparency, and increasing investments (ECE/ENERGY/2023/13). These policies should be aligned with the principles of sustainable development and human rights.
2. Noted that Central Asia has a high potential for CRMs development, as it is rich in natural resources, including renewable energy and CRMs. However, the region faces a number of barriers, including lack of infrastructure, investment, technology, and regulatory frameworks. The region needs to develop national frameworks that are compatible with international standards. UNFC and UNRMS can help Central Asia unlock its potential and upscale green investments in CRMs. These tools can provide a common language and a holistic approach for managing natural resources, including CRMs, sustainably. They can also facilitate data collection, analysis, and reporting, enhancing transparency and accountability.
3. Noted with appreciation the accelerated implementation of UNFC globally, in particular in countries of the European Union, with a focus on the application of UNFC to mineral and anthropogenic resources. Further noted with appreciation the extrabudgetary project funded by the European Commission, “Supporting UNECE member States in the development and implementation of UNFC and UNRMS” (2020-2024), execution of which has facilitated the accelerated implementation of UNFC across Europe and beyond and has resulted in tangible results leading to a potential second phase of the project. Noting the scale of the task to deploy UNFC and UNRMS in the ECE region and beyond and build the required capacity for application at the national level, requested the secretariat to continue its efforts to secure additional extrabudgetary resources.
4. Noted the progress to establish International Centres of Excellence on Sustainable Resource Management (ICE-SRM) in the ECE region and beyond. Further noted the importance of the ICE-SRMs whose establishment is being discussed to provide dissemination, policy support, technical advice and consultation, education, capacity-building and training on UNFC and UNRMS in the ECE region and beyond, and requested an update at the thirty-third session on the ICE-SRMs and on any progress to establish a collaborative network of those centres coordinated by the secretariat and in full compliance with the adopted ECE standards and guidelines. Called upon member States to provide resources to support establishing ICE-SRMs in the ECE region, including in Central Asia.
5. Recognized the importance of the availability of comprehensive social, environmental, and economic data on CRM projects. A critical minerals markets information-sharing initiative with global reach is recommended to address the challenges of data discrepancies, gaps, limited traceability, and poor pricing transparency that affect the availability and sustainability of critical minerals. Such an initiative would support government policymaking, industry business development, and investment flows as well as foster innovation and cooperation among stakeholders. The initiative should align with sustainable development and human rights principles and support the shared aims of a clean energy transition and the SDGs. The Committee requested member State cooperation and extrabudgetary funds to establish the information platform.
6. Noted with appreciation the document on “Securing Access to Critical Raw Materials in the UNECE Region: Challenges and Opportunities” (ECE/ENERGY/2023/13), as well as the “Policy brief on aligning critical raw materials development with sustainable development” that was presented at the High-level Political Forum in New York in July 2023 which highlights the role of CRMs in low-carbon energy transitions, including large-scale deployment of renewable energy and energy storage and points out that the demand for CRMs is expected to increase exponentially in the near future, making sustainable production from primary and secondary (anthropogenic) resources crucial.
7. Noted with appreciation that ECOSOC in its Resolution E/RES/2023/19 adopted on 23 July 2023 recommended UNRMS to be disseminated widely, invited Member States of the United Nations, international organizations and the regional commissions to consider the possibility of taking appropriate measures to ensure the application of the UNRMS Principles and Requirements worldwide. The Committee recognized the potential of UNRMS to facilitate the management of a complex hybrid system of renewable and non-renewable resources, considering their unique features and differences and integrating it with the water-food-energy nexus. Further noted with appreciation, that ECOSOC adopted Resolution E/RES/2023/20 on Economic Commission for Europe Decision I (70): “Request to strengthen the role of the secretariat of the Economic Commission of Europe in supporting member States in building resilient energy systems and modernizing resource management systems”. Called upon member States to support this request during its next stages, namely in the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly which deals with administrative and budgetary matters.
8. Enhancing energy connectivity through technology interplay and regional cooperation in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe region

*Documentation:* ECE/ENERGY/GE.7/2022/3 – Renewable Energy Status Report 2022 - key findings

ECE/ENERGY/GE.5/2023/5 – Transitioning electricity supply systems to net-zero emissions power systems – common principles for reliability of supply

ECE/ENERGY/GE.7/2023/3 – Status of implementation of renewable energy action plans across 17 ECE countries

CSE-32/2023/INF.3 – Policy brief on advancing power system connectivity in support of SDG7

1. Noted that the ECE region needs to fully embrace the concept of cleaner electricity systems and enhance the flexibility of electricity systems to decrease the carbon intensity of electricity production from conventional fossil fuels. This can be achieved through deployment of advanced fossil fuels technologies with high-efficiency, low-emissions (HELE) in the short-term or with carbon capture, use and storage (CCUS) in the long-term as well as through scaling of renewable energy, low-carbon, decarbonised and renewable gases, nuclear power and energy storage solutions.
2. Noted that in addition to cutting the carbon footprint of the existing electricity systems, it is also necessary to address the flexibility of electricity systems to attain decarbonization and resilient electricity systems. A system is deemed as flexible if it is able to respond to demand effectively and manage the intermittency of non-dispatchable renewable energy, such as solar and wind, that is crucial for achieving a zero-carbon electricity grid.
3. Noted the importance of regional cooperation in creating an enabling environment for energy connectivity, of a diverse energy mix based on low- and zero-carbon technology interplay, and of energy trade to ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all in the ECE region, and recognized it as a critical factor to improve the resiliency of the energy system and energy security in the ECE region.
4. Noted with appreciation the cross-sectoral collaboration of the Group of Experts on Cleaner Electricity Systems with the subsidiary bodies of the Committee on Sustainable Energy, namely the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy, the Group of Experts on Gas and the Group of Experts on Energy Efficiency, on improving electricity system reliability amid transformation across the ECE region.
5. Noted that enhancing regional energy connectivity and power trade through a regionally interconnected power grid system is a critical factor to enhance the resiliency of the energy system and the energy security. An integrated and interconnected electricity system can help create a more reliable, affordable and sustainable electricity supply and allow deep energy system decarbonization as well as more effective integration of called renewable energy capacity into the power system.
6. Welcomed collaboration with ESCAP on scaling renewable energy capacity, strengthening the electricity, natural gas and hydrogen networks, and enhancing the regional energy cooperation to design and build resilient energy systems in the countries of common membership, namely in the Caucasus and Central Asia.
7. Further noted the importance of increasing energy system resilience in other ECE programme countries, and called upon member States to support capacity-building activities with extrabudgetary resources.
8. **Promoting systemic efficiencies and digitalization in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe region**

*Documentation:* ECE/ENERGY/2023/14 – Progress report on High-Performance Buildings Initiative

ECE/ENERGY/GE.6/2023/3-ECE/ENERGY/GE.5/2023/3 – Key considerations and solutions to ensure cyber resiliency in the smart integrated energy systems

ECE/ENERGY/GE.6/2023/4-ECE/ENERGY/GE.5/2023/4 –Improving efficiency and reliability of energy systems by means of big data analytics

ECE/ENERGY/GE.6/2023/6 – Advancing energy resilience and decarbonization across the ECE region: unleashing the potential of energy storage and demand-side flexibility

1. Recalled the deliberations at the seventieth session of the Commission held under the cross-cutting theme “Digital and green transformations for sustainable development in the region of the Economic Commission for Europe” and took note of the potential that digital technologies offer in terms of systemic energy efficiency improvements. Digitalization can play an important role in the optimization of the complex energy system. In addition, digitalization and data analytics can, in a smart and real-time way, improve the connectivity of the energy system and enhance systemic efficiencies. This is expected to further reduce the carbon footprint across the energy value chain and pave the way to a sustainable, environmentally sound, and smarter energy future.
2. Recognized that digitalization of the energy system is a complex process with multiple interdependencies across many actors, and that it comes at the cost of new system security requirements and privacy risks, as well as with potential economic disruptions that require robust preventive and corrective measures. Further noticed that digitalization is often a question of knowledge rather than affordability, and thus requires not only building consensus among stakeholders and understanding their accountability in a digitalized energy system, but also fostering of an up-skilled workforce and raising the awareness of energy consumers.
3. Noted with appreciation the efforts of the ECE Group of Experts on Energy Efficiency and its Task Force on Digitalization in Energy in serving as a platform for constructive policy dialogue for cross-industry experts, supporting shaping of the policy agenda by exploring opportunities, assessing challenges, risks, and trade-offs of digitalizing the energy system and addressing the barriers to digitalization in energy from a system-level perspective.
4. Welcomed the contribution of the Task Force on Digitalization in Energy at the seventieth session of the Commission that shaped a dialogue on introducing digitalization as an instrument for enabling a balance between energy security, affordability, and environmental sustainability when challenged by the changing energy landscape. Digitalization in Energy is an enabler of more transparent and harmonized data streams, more accurate load forecasts, more timely market signals, all of which are necessary for more targeted decision-making and addressing of system-wide trade-offs. Encouraged further application of innovative approaches and insight in support of digital and green transformations for sustainable energy development in the ECE region.
5. Also noted with appreciation the activities of the Group of Experts on Energy Efficiency carried out during the intersessional period by the Task Force on Energy Efficiency in Industry and the Joint Task Force on Energy Efficiency Standards in Buildings, including thematic research and content creation and policy advocacy in the respective subject areas, their adaptation to national contexts, and broader communication of findings and policy recommendations by means of organizing, hosting, or being representated at numerous international meetings and events.
6. Took note of the report on progress of the High Performance Buildings Initiative (HPBI) and cooperation activities in advancing energy efficiency standards in buildings in the ECE region. Reconfirmed the relevance of HPBI to the Sustainable energy subprogramme. At the same time, acknowledged the associated resource implications and, also to avoid duplication of activities, seconded the motion to leverage the existing expertise and explore ways to pool efforts with similar programmes or initiatives, including UNEP and its Global Alliance on Buildings and Construction (Global ABC), for the administration of the network of HPBI Centres of Excellence. Requested the secretariat to take action in this regard and keep member States appraised on the progress through the ECE Executive Committee..
7. **Follow up on the seventieth session on the Economic Commission for Europe**

*Documentation:* E/ECE/1503 – Economic Commission for Europe Biennial Report

1. Noted with appreciation that the Group of Experts on Cleaner Electricity Systems, the Group of Experts on Energy Efficiency and the Task Force on Digitalization of Energy contributed to the seventieth session of the Economic Commission for Europe that focused on digital and green transformations for sustainable development in the ECE region.
2. Took note that the Commission at its seventieth session emphasized the need to further strengthen the work of the Commission in support of digital and green transformations for sustainable development in the ECE region within its existing mandate as appropriate and subject to available resources, and that it requested the relevant Sectoral Committees and bodies reporting directly to the Executive Committee, and their subsidiaries, to further explore possible collaboration across subprogrammes and to consider how to enhance the impact of relevant existing ECE instruments, in order to foster digital and green transformations, including by proposing ways to identify, assess and fill gaps in governance and good practices. Called upon member States to support the activities of the Task Force on Digitalization in Energy with extrabudgetary resources.
3. Took note that as a follow-up to the seventieth session of the Commission a number of actionable decisions related to the mandate of the Committee on Sustainable Energy were submitted to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) for consideration. The decisions included: (i) Decision G (70) that requests wide dissemination of the Best Practice Guidance for Effective Management of Coal Mine Methane at National Level: Monitoring, Reporting, Verification and Mitigation; (ii) Decision H (70) that requests appropriate measures to be taken to ensure the application of the United Nations Resource Management System Principles and Requirements globally; and, (iii) Decision I (70) that requests to strengthen the role of the secretariat of the Economic Commission for Europe in supporting member States in building resilient energy systems and modernizing resource management systems. All the decisions were endorsed during the Management Segment of the ECOSOC meeting[[5]](#footnote-6) (New York, 25 July 2023) as Resolutions, namely [E/RES/2023/18](https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N23/226/64/PDF/N2322664.pdf?OpenElement), [E/RES/2023/19](https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N23/226/70/PDF/N2322670.pdf?OpenElement) and [E/RES/2023/20](https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N23/226/76/PDF/N2322676.pdf?O) respectively.
4. Technical assistance, regional outreach and collaboration activities
5. Regional advisory services and collaboration activities

*Documentation*: ECE/ENERGY/2023/4 – Report on regional advisory services in sustainable energy

1. The Committee received an update of regional advisory services since its last session. The report included information on adjusting regional advisory services, including capacity-building and technical assistance activities, to multiple challenges caused by the ongoing geopolitical crises in the ECE region. Field projects under implementation, including those that were developed as a rapid response to these challenges, and ongoing fundraising activities were reported. Based on the demand from programme countries, several studies and capacity-building activities have been implemented and initiated, in particular, in Albania, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Serbia, Tajikistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan.
2. The Committee noted with appreciation the results achieved by the regional advisory services, stressed the importance of regional advisory services and capacity-building activities, particularly under the current circumstances, and requested a report on regional advisory services at its thirty-third session.
3. Extrabudgetary and United Nations Development Account projects.
4. Welcomed with appreciaton two projects funded through the 16th Tranche of the UN Development Account that directly support the UN’s efforts to respond to the triple planetary crisis, which refer to the three main interlinked issues that humanity currently faces: climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss. The projects “Enhancing capacities in the sustainable production, use and reuse of the critical raw materials required for low-carbon transitions” and “Supporting increased energy security and resilience through energy transition” will be implemented by ECE and other Regional Commissions during the period 2023 – 2027.
5. Welcomed the outcomes of the projects funded by the Joint SDG Fund implemented in Georgia (“Strengthening Georgia’s food and energy resilience”) and Ukraine (“Addressing the compounded food and energy crisis in Ukraine through innovative technologies and adaptive agricultural practices”) in which ECE was an implementing partner and supported ECE participation in joint projects with other UN system organizations.
6. Welcomed the progress in implementing the preparation phase of the project “Improving the energy efficiency of the global building supply chain industry and its products to deliver high performance buildings” funded by the International Climate Initiative (IKI) Germany. ECE is leading the team of 13 implementing partners in the project, in which seven beneficiary countries participate: Armenia, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Republic of Moldova, Tajikistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.
7. Looking ahead: Future work of the Committee on Sustainable Energy
8. Review of subprogramme performance and planning

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/2023/1 – Draft programme of work of the sustainable energy subprogramme for 2024

ECE/ENERGY/32/2023/INF.1 – Outline of key components of the programme of work of the sustainable energy subprogramme for 2025

1. The secretariat presented the draft programme of work of the Sustainable energy programme for 2023 (ECE/ENERGY/2023/1). This document is consistent with the ECE proposed programme budget for 2024 (A/78/6 (Sect.20)) which was reviewed by the ECE Executive Committee in December 2022 and submitted for consideration at the 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly. The programme of work document reflects the annual budget format presented in 2020 in line with General Assembly resolutions 72/266, with enrichments reflecting General Assembly resolutions 74/251, 75/243 and 76/245.
2. Adopted the draft programme of work of the Sustainable energy subprogramme for 2024 (ECE/ENERGY/2023/1) and recommended submission to the ECE Executive Committee for subsequent approval. Requested a draft programme of work of the Sustainable energy subprogramme for 2025 for adoption at its next session.
3. Noted and agreed to the proposed modifications to the programme of work for the sustainable energy subprogramme for 2025 (ECE/ENERGY/32/2023/INF.1) and requested the secretariat to reflect the modifications in the proposed programme plan of the Sustainable energy subprogramme for 2025.
4. Welcomed that in preparation for the Global Methane Forum (Geneva, Switzerland, 18-20 March 2024), methane management will be in the focus of the work of the secretariat, the Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane and Just Transition and the Group of Experts on Gas. Further noted with appreciation that the Forum will feature discussions on methane related to ECE’s work and invited member States to actively participate in the Forum.
5. Recalling that proper management of methane emissions from the energy sector is one of the most effective near-term options for addressing climate change, the Committee observed that the up-to-date results of initiatives aiming to effectively reduce methane emissions are failing to deliver on the Paris Agreement targets at least in part due to the fact that the issue of methane reductions has become highly politicized at the national level in some countries and internationally. In that context, the Committee called on member States to undertake efforts to introduce regulations allowing for effective limitation of methane emissions from their energy sectors, and requested the Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane and Just Transition and on Gas to engage more closely with policymakers to familiarize them with the benefits of cutting down methane emissions and present them with policy options to achieve this.
6. Recalling that action on methane requires a solid understanding of emission sources at all levels, the Committee noted that only with reliable emissions data, policymakers can properly evaluate mitigation opportunities and design successful policies to that effect. In that context, the Committee urged member States to undertake efforts to improve the transparency of data on methane emissions from their energy sectors and requested the Groups of Experts on Coal Mine Methane and Just Transition and on Gas to consider developing guidelines to present source level data on publicly available information outlets online.
7. Welcomed with appreciation the lead of the Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane and Just Transition to put the important and timely topic on “just energy transition” in the focus of the work of the Committee in 2024, and requested all subsidiary bodies to engage in this cross-cutting topic and explore joint activities that can contribute to accelerate a just energy transition across the ECE region.
8. Noted that coal, not as a fuel but as a multi-purpose resource, can serve the needs of the emerging clean energy economies, and thus significantly broaden the range of opportunities for just transition strategies, and requested the Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane and Just Transition to consider developing a theoretical framework conceptualizing the role of coal in the green economy and to test its findings through development of a pilot project. The Committee invited member States to engage in that work and to volunteer to host such a project.
9. Noted with appreciation the launch of the project on mapping Albania’s readiness for just transition, including development of a geographic information systems (GIS) database characterising the Albania’s coal mining areas, and requested the Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane and Just Transition to consider developing an index indicating a country’s readiness for just transition.
10. Requested a continued focus on gender and intergenerational issues in all activities of the subprogramme where possible. Further requested that a gender focused agenda item and an intergenerational focussed agenda item be included in the thirty-third session of the Committee.
11. Approval of documents

*Documentation:* ECE/ENERGY/2023/2 – Provisional calendar of meetings of the sustainable energy subprogramme for 2024

ECE/ENERGY/2023/3 – Revised publication plan for 2023 and draft publication plans for 2024 and 2025

ECE/ENERGY/2023/5 – Work Plan of the Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane and Just Transition for 2024-2025

ECE/ENERGY/2023/6 – Work Plan of the Group of Experts on Gas for 2024-2025

ECE/ENERGY/2023/7 – Work Plan of the Expert Group on Resource Management for 2024-2025

ECE/ENERGY/2023/8 – Work Plan of the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy for 2024-2025

ECE/ENERGY/2023/9 – Work Plan of the Group of Experts on Cleaner Electricity Systems for 2024-2025

ECE/ENERGY/2023/10 –Work Plan of the Group of Experts on Energy Efficiency for 2024-2025

ECE/ENERGY/2023/15 – Update on the Hydrogen Task Force and the next steps

1. Recommended the submission of a range of documents to support the implementation of mandated areas of work to the Executive Committee of ECE for subsequent approval if required.
2. Endorsed the provisional calendar of meetings for 2024 (ECE/ENERGY/2023/2) and the revised publication plan for 2023 and draft publication plans for 2024 and 2025 (ECE/ENERGY/2023/3).
3. Endorsed the Work Plans of the six subsidiary bodies of the Committee on Sustainable Energy: Work Plan of the Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane and Just Transition for 2024-2025 (ECE/ENERGY/2023/5), Work Plan of the Group of Experts on Gas for 2024-2025 (ECE/ENERGY/2023/6), Work Plan of the Expert Group on Resource Management for 2024-2025 (ECE/ENERGY/2023/7), Work Plan of the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy for 2024-2025 (ECE/ENERGY/2023/8), Work Plan of the Group of Experts on Cleaner Electricity Systems for 2024-2025 (ECE/ENERGY/2023/9), and Work Plan of the Group of Experts on Energy Efficiency for 2024-2025 (ECE/ENERGY/2023/10).
4. Endorsed the renewal of the mandates of the Groups of Experts on Cleaner Electricity Systems, on Coal Mine Methane and Just Transition, on Energy Efficiency, on Gas and on Renewable Energy for the period 2024-2025 with the possibility of extension.
5. Approved the extension of the mandate of the Joint Task Force on Energy Efficiency Standards in Buildings for 2024-2025 and its Terms of Reference, as contained in ECE/ENERGY/2023/10 (Annex).
6. Election of officers
7. Noted that there are ongoing discussions on harmonizing and modernising the Rules of Procedure of the subsidiary bodies of the Economic Commission for Europe and requested the secretariat to provide an update on implications for the Rules of Procedure of the Committee on Sustainable Energy at its thirty-third session.
8. The Committee elected […]as Vice-Chairs to serve from the end of the thirty-second session until the end of the thirty-fourth session of the Committee, unless current discussions on Rules of Procedure at the level of the Commission would have implications on the Committee on Sustainable Energy.
9. The Chairs of the Committee’s subsidiary bodies are Vice-Chairs of the Committee ex officio (currently […]).

11. Any other business

1. Requested the secretariat to proceed with preparations for the thirty-third session of the Committee on Sustainable Energy in Geneva, 18-20 September 2024, during the Sustainable Energy Week 2024, including a draft agenda, draft report, and all supporting documents necessary for the implementation of the programme of work for the ECE Sustainable energy subprogramme for 2025.
2. Thanked all non-government stakeholders for their continued contributions to the work of the Sustainable energy subprogramme and renewed its wish to involve these stakeholders in its activities and meetings.

12. Adoption of the report and close of the meeting

*Documentation:* ECE/ENERGY/149 – Report of the Committee on Sustainable Energy on its thirty-second session

1. Adopted the report of its thirty-second session (ECE/ENERGY/149) subject to any necessary editing and formatting.

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1. [A study on the geological and mining conditions and development of technical, principle based guidelines for designing and implementing a programme for mine closure in Albania and Serbia, by by Mr. Aleksander Wrana and Mr. Aleksander Frejowski, GIG | UNECE](https://unece.org/sed/documents/2022/12/presentations/study-geological-and-mining-conditions-and-development) (<https://unece.org/sed/documents/2022/12/presentations/study-geological-and-mining-conditions-and-development>) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Assessment of coal demand in Tajikistan to 2050 and the alternative options for replacing coal in the country’s energy mix (<https://unece.org/sed/documents/2023/03/working-documents/assessment-coal-demand-tajikistan-2050-and-alternative>) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. [UNECE Carbon Neutrality Toolkit](https://carbonneutrality.unece.org/) https://carbonneutrality.unece.org/ [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. https://unece.org/info/Sustainable-Energy/Natural-Gas/events/370493<https://unece.org/info/Sustainable-Energy/Natural-Gas/events/370493> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. [2023 Management Segment | Economic and Social Council](https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/2023-management-segment) (<https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/2023-management-segment>) [↑](#footnote-ref-6)