

**Evaluation of project 1819AB**

**Integrated Energy and Water Resources Management in Support of Sustainable Development in South-Eastern Europe and Central Asia (May 2022)**

**Final Progress report as of 31 December 2023**

#	Recommendation	Management response	Responsibility	Target date	Progress
1	<p><b>Preserve and maintain the networks created by the Project: While this may seem obvious, momentum from this project can only be carried forward if beneficiary countries are engaged at a close level and feel that they benefit from membership in this network. Internally, it will help establish UNECE as a serious counterparty on this issue for its member states. External benefits of this will be many, but not least, it will help develop further policy ownership from member nations and could work to enhance better institutional cooperation from line ministries.</b></p>	<p>UNECE accepts the recommendation.</p> <p>UNECE Sustainable Energy Division (SED) will work on maintaining and developing the networks created by the Project in the six beneficiary countries and beyond. Government officials and experts involved in the project implementation will be invited to the events and activities organized by UNECE on the topics related to integrated energy and water resources management, starting with the following meetings in 2022: (1) Annual Sessions of the Committee on Sustainable Energy (September); (2) Annual Sessions of the Expert Group on Resource Management (October); (3) UNECE Workshops related to sustainable resource management (November); and (4) Annual Meetings of the International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development (November).</p>	<p>Harikrishnan Tulsidas, Economic Affairs Officer, SED</p>	<p>31 December 2022</p>	<p><b>Implemented as of 31 December 2022</b></p> <p>Experts from the beneficiary countries actively participated in (1) Annual Sessions of the Committee on Sustainable Energy (21-23 September); (2) Towards COP27: UNECE Regional Forum on Climate Initiatives to Finance Climate Action and the SDGs, 17 October; (3) 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Session of the Expert Group on Resource Management (25 October); (4) COP27 Side Event A global sustainability framework for Critical Raw Materials required for low-carbon transitions (8 November); and (5) events related to the 12<sup>th</sup> International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development (September - November).</p>

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2	<p><b>Continue country-level capacity building: This project has been successful in discussing key areas of potential focus. While there was general appreciation of the work done on this project, there was some expectation from stakeholders interviewed that there should have been a greater element of ‘hands on’ capacity building. However, for this project it was not possible due to the Covid-19 crisis, where the majority of project activities were implemented online. For future projects, UNECE should launch a project with a presentation for all UN Country Teams (UNCT) of the project beneficiary countries and follow up with UNCTs in the process of project implementation. If further technical assistance is needed after the completion of the project, UNECE should work with UNCTs in the countries on providing such technical assistance and/or consider using other resources available internally for this purpose.</b></p>	<p>UNECE accepts the recommendation.</p> <p>i. SED will make all possible efforts to continue country-level capacity building on energy and water resources management in the beneficiary countries, including hands-on training and the development of case studies, through Regular Programme of Technical Cooperation (RPTC) and United Nations Development Account (UNDA) funds as well as through in-kind contributions. In 2022, SED plans to utilize RPTC funds to support Ukraine in producing a report on critical raw materials and holding a national workshop. As part of UNDA Global Initiative towards post-COVID-19 resurgence of the MSME sector, in 2022 SED will support national workshops in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. In 2023, RPTC and UNDA funds availability will be explored to support all the six countries.</p> <p>ii. In all its upcoming projects, SED will keep UN RCOs in the beneficiary countries abreast and will ensure thorough communication and coordination with relevant UNCT members, including by making presentations on the projects to the UNCTs.</p>	<p>Harikrishnan Tulsidas, Economic Affairs Officer, SED</p>	<p>30 June 2023</p>	<p><b>Implemented as of 30 June 2023</b></p> <p>Ukraine has received support under the Regular Programme of Technical Cooperation (RPTC) in 2022 and will continue to receive further assistance under RPTC in 2023. This support has helped Ukraine to strengthen its institutional and regulatory capacities, improve its data collection and analysis, and align its policies and standards with the UNECE norms and conventions. Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan are also receiving support through the United Nations Development Account (UNDA) 14th Tranche Project for post-COVID-19 recovery in Eastern Europe, Western Balkans, Central Asia, the Middle East, and Africa (2022-2025). This project aims to enhance the resilience and sustainability of the countries' socio-economic systems by promoting green and circular economy approaches, fostering innovation and digitalization, and facilitating regional cooperation and integration.</p> <p>SED organized national workshops in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan in 2022 as part of UNDA's Global Initiative towards the post-COVID-19 resurgence of the MSME sector. These workshops provided a platform for dialogue and knowledge exchange among policymakers, private sector representatives, academia, civil society, and international organizations on the challenges and opportunities for MSMEs in the post-pandemic context. The workshops also identified policy recommendations and best practices to support MSMEs' recovery and growth, such as enhancing access to finance, markets, and technology, fostering innovation and entrepreneurship, and improving the business environment.</p> <p>As a part of the triple crisis project, the UNDA 16th Tranche Project on Enhancing Capacities in the sustainable production of critical raw materials required for low-carbon transitions has been approved. The project aims to enhance selected countries' capacity to sustainably produce critical raw materials to achieve sustainable and circular low-carbon transitions. The project will have a strong capacity-building focus, including training workshops, technical assistance, policy advice, and knowledge products. Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan are beneficiaries of the project, which is expected to span four years and start in 2023.</p>

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					<p>The project will contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, especially SDGs 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy), 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure), 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), and 13 (Climate Action).</p> <p>UNECE has effectively coordinated with the UN RCOs in the beneficiary countries to ensure thorough communication and coordination with relevant UNCT members on upcoming projects and initiatives, including through ECE Regional Advisor. This coordination has enabled UNECE to leverage synergies and complementarities with other UN agencies' activities, avoid duplication and overlap, and maximize the impact and sustainability of its interventions. UNECE has also engaged with other regional organizations, such as the European Union, to foster regional cooperation and alignment of policies and standards.</p>
3	<p><b>Enhance focus on gender, vulnerable groups and human rights issues: ECE should in its future activities related to water-energy-climate change-natural disasters nexus address more explicitly gender inequalities and the challenges faced by vulnerable populations, including by strengthening capacity building on gender mainstreaming and leaving no one behind, involving key UN partners such as UN-Women and OHCHR, as appropriate.</b></p>	<p>UNECE accepts the recommendation.</p> <p>In its future activities related to water-energy-climate change-natural disasters nexus, UNECE will try to address more explicitly gender inequalities and the challenges faced by vulnerable groups, including by strengthening capacity building on gender mainstreaming and leaving no one behind, involving key UN partners such as UN-Women and OHCHR, as appropriate. The Women in Resource Management Working Group, part of the Expert Group on Resource Management, will do the following work in 2022 and 2023: (a) Update specifications and guidelines for women and diversity in UNFC and UNRMS; (b) Hold policy dialogue(s)</p>	<p>Harikrishnan Tulsidas, Economic Affairs Officer, SED</p>	<p>31 December 2023</p>	<p><b>Implemented as of 31 December 2023</b></p> <p>The Women in Resource Management Working Group of the Expert Group on Resource Management has achieved remarkable results in advancing gender equality and empowerment in the field of resource management. The group has developed and implemented various activities, such as providing inputs for the UNFC and UNRMS, conducting policy dialogues and case studies, organizing workshops and webinars, creating an online network, and collaborating with key partners. The group has also contributed to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, especially the goals related to gender, energy, and climate. The group will continue its work in 2024 and 2025 as part of the Expert Group Work plan.</p> <p>The RPTC and UNDA projects have made significant strides in addressing gender issues in resource management. The Women in Resource Management Working Group, a network of women engaged in resource management projects was established. This group has played a crucial role in providing inputs for the development of UNRMS principles and requirements, which were published in 2022.</p>

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		<p>on promoting gender participation in resource management; (c) Set-up a network of women engaged in resource management projects; (d) Provide inputs for the development of UNRMS requirements; (e) Conduct case studies and recommendations on mainstreaming gender in resource management in various positions from young professionals to senior leadership, including in the post-COVID-19 recovery.</p>			<p>Policy dialogues aimed at promoting gender participation in resource management and case studies and recommendations on mainstreaming gender in resource management were done and more are being developed. The group is focused on women in various positions, from young professionals to senior leadership.</p> <p>As part of these efforts, the group organized a workshop in March 2023 on “Critical Raw Materials in Vulnerable Geographies: Impact on Women”, and a keynote was delivered at the “International Day of Women in Mining”. The group contributed to the 14th Annual Session of the Expert Group on Resource Management and provided input on promoting gender equality and inclusivity in the energy and resource management sectors. The group organized a “Women in extractive and geoenvironmental activities” session at the VII Symposium on Mineral Exploration in the Mediterranean basin, Iglesias, Sardinia (Italy), October 2023 highlighting the role and achievements of women in resource management.</p> <p>Additionally, an online LinkedIn page has been created to facilitate interactions within the network. The group collaborated with various women-centric professional associations, such as the UN-Women, Society of Petroleum Engineers (SPE), the Women in Earth and Environmental Sciences in Australasia (WoMEESA), the Society of Exploration Geophysicists (SEG), the American Geophysical Union (AGU), and the Society of Women Engineers (SWE).</p> <p>The group will continue its work in 2024 and 2025 as part of the Expert Group Work plan. The group will also conduct reviews, case studies, and policy dialogues on enhancing gender participation and mainstreaming in resource management, covering women in various positions, from young professionals to senior leadership. The group will work under the guidance of the Technical Advisory Group, consult and cooperate with other Working Groups and the UNRMS Sub-group and report regularly to the Expert Group.</p>

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4	<p><b>Mitigate the Project's sustainability risks: UNECE should guide the Governments of the beneficiary countries on how the activities related to UNFC application should be mainstreamed into the operations and programmes of the relevant Ministries. Specifically, the following actions are recommended:</b></p> <p><b>i. Maintain momentum to ensure continuity in the recipient countries by identifying ways to keep stakeholders motivated and engaged in the process and by keeping the issue of the integrated energy and water resource management high on the UNECE strategic and programmatic levels.</b></p> <p><b>ii. UNECE should enhance dialogue and bilateral cooperation with the beneficiary countries aiming at a formal decision by the Governments of these countries to apply the UNFC system. As an initial step, consider supporting enhanced participation of national experts in the activities of the Expert Group on Resource Management.</b></p> <p><b>iii. Water, geology, energy, economy, and ecology interconnectedness needs to be addressed and awareness-raising enhanced through future UNECE projects. To enhance the coherence</b></p>	<p>UNECE accepts the recommendation.</p> <p>i. UNECE will include integrated and sustainable resource management elements at strategic and programmatic levels, in the programme of work of the Committee on Sustainable Energy as well as in the programme of work contained in proposed programme budgets under subprogramme 5: Sustainable Energy, to keep stakeholders motivated and engaged.</p> <p>ii. UNECE will support enhanced participation of national experts of the beneficiary countries in the activities of the Expert Group on Resource Management.</p> <p>iii. Future projects will include a clear strategy for integrated resource management linkages in their Project Documents.</p> <p>iv. Future projects will provide practical examples and consultancy support on the institutional, legal, and technical measures needed to fully implement the UNFC and UNRMS.</p>	<p>Harikrishnan Tulsidas, Economic Affairs Officer, SED</p>	<p>31 December 2023</p>	<p><b>Implemented as of 31 December 2023</b></p> <p>The integrated and sustainable resource management elements are being included in the Expert Group on Resource Management programme of work. UNECE supported enhanced participation of national experts in the development and implementation of UNFC and UNRMS. Future activities will include clear strategies for integrated resource management linkages and will provide practical examples and consultancy support on the institutional, legal, and technical measures needed to fully implement the UNFC and UNRMS.</p> <p>i. UNECE has included integrated and sustainable resource management elements, with a special focus on critical raw materials at strategic and programmatic levels, in the programme of work of the Committee on Sustainable Energy as well as in the programme of work contained in 2024 programme budgets under subprogramme 5: Sustainable Energy.</p> <p>ii. UNECE organized a special session with the participation of national experts of the beneficiary countries in the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Session of the Expert Group on Resource Management, 25-28 April, 2023. (<a href="https://unece.org/info/Sustainable-Energy/UNFC-and-Resource-Management/events/374260">https://unece.org/info/Sustainable-Energy/UNFC-and-Resource-Management/events/374260</a>) Press Release: Central Asia's Resource Management Expertise Can Be Transformed to Support Critical Raw Materials Internationally, say UN experts <a href="https://unece.org/media/sustainable-energy/UNFC-and-Sustainable-Resource-Management/news/378763">https://unece.org/media/sustainable-energy/UNFC-and-Sustainable-Resource-Management/news/378763</a></p> <p>iii. Critical Raw Materials projects from all beneficiary countries were showcased in the Towards COP27: UNECE Regional Forum on Climate Initiatives to Finance Climate Action and the SDGs, October 2022 (<a href="https://unece.org/sustainable-energy/events/forum-climate-financing-CRM">https://unece.org/sustainable-energy/events/forum-climate-financing-CRM</a>). Selected projects were also showcased in the European Regional Forum on "Climate Initiatives to Finance Climate Action and the SDGs", July 2023.</p>

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	<p>of such future UNECE projects, efforts should be made to integrate into the Project Document a clear strategy for linkages with other similar initiatives by defining the nature of these linkages per each relevant activity in the work plan.</p> <p>iv. Future UNECE efforts to strengthen the integrated energy and water resource management should focus on providing the beneficiary countries with practical examples and consultancy support on the institutional, legal and technical measures needed for the full implementation of the UNFC.</p>				<p>iv. UNDA 14<sup>th</sup> Tranche Project Food-Water-Energy nexus support to post-COVID-19 recovery in Eastern Europe, Western Balkans, Central Asia, the Middle East and Africa (2022-2025) provided practical examples and consultancy support on the institutional, legal, and technical measures needed to implement the UNFC and UNRMS fully. The project prepared a report on "Natural Resource Nexuses" and two-page graphic key messages. Case studies on sustainable resource management have been developed. The project supported implementation of the United Nations Environment Assembly resolution 5/12 on environmental aspects of minerals and metals management. The project collaborated with stakeholders on developing a report on knowledge gaps in relation to the environmental aspects of tailings management. Workshops on raw material waste (tailings management) were held in 2023 to identify and compile best practices and knowledge gaps. The report's findings, knowledge, and recommended guidelines on environmental knowledge gaps in tailings management was launched at the Global Intergovernmental Meeting on Minerals and Metals in September 2023.</p> <p>v. Launched a series of dialogues on access to critical raw materials in Central Asia – including at the ECE Sustainable Energy Week in April 2023, 31st session of the Committee on Sustainable Energy in September 2023, and the 3rd Almaty Energy Forum in November 2023. 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 carbon neutral and a digital society. 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). Developed a policy brief on aligning critical raw materials development with sustainable development" that was presented at the UN High-level Political Forum in New York in July 2023.</p> <p>vi. Organized in partnership with the UN Working Group on</p>

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					<p>Transforming Extractive Industries for Sustainable Development side events at the COP 27 Sharm-Al-Sheik, December 2022 on “A global sustainability framework for critical raw materials required for low-carbon transitions” and COP 28 in Dubai, December 2023 on “Responsible and inclusive management of critical energy transition minerals”. A working paper on “Strengthening critical mineral value chains for the energy transitions” was also developed.</p> <p>vii. The Expert Group on Resource Management accelerated implementation of the United Nations Framework Classification for Resources (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 the United Nations Resource Management System (UNRMS)”. At its 130th session the EXCOM has approved the Phase II of the project and the secretariat will continue to build capacities in ECE member States for sustainable management of resources through the application of UNFC and UNRMS.</p> <p>viii. At the request of the Government of Albania, UNECE conducted Assessment of Geothermal Energy Resources in Albania. The study supports the efforts of Albania to develop low-carbon energy sources to address the ongoing climate crisis. A national workshop on Just Transition in Mining Communities and Potential for Development of Geothermal Energy was held in Tirana in June 2023.  <a href="https://unece.org/sed/documents/2023/06/working-documents/report-assessment-geothermal-resources-albania">https://unece.org/sed/documents/2023/06/working-documents/report-assessment-geothermal-resources-albania</a></p> <p>ix. Published the United Nations Resource Management System (UNRMS): Principles and requirements (UNECE Energy Series 74), a new global standard for sustainable and integrated management of natural resources, such as minerals, petroleum, renewable energy, nuclear resources, anthropogenic resources, geological storage and groundwater. UNRMS was endorsed by the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in July 2023 (E/RES/2023/19). UNRMS aims to help countries and</p>

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					<p>companies balance economic development, environmental sustainability and social responsibility in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Paris Agreement. At the 9th Asia-Pacific Energy Ministers' Meeting (APEMM) held in Bangkok, Thailand, on 28-29 October 2023, the Energy Ministers of the region expressed their support for UNRMS in their Ministerial Declaration and invited its application to enhance the sustainability and efficiency of resource management in the Asia-Pacific. 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.</p> <p>x. UNDA 16<sup>th</sup> Tranche Project on Enhancing Capacities in the Sustainable Production of the Critical Raw Materials Required for Low-Carbon Transitions is planned for during 2024-2027. The project's objective is to enhance selected countries' capacity to produce critical raw materials sustainably to achieve sustainable and circular low-carbon transitions. Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan are beneficiary countries of the project.</p>
5	<p><b>Expand and standardize “post-Project” lessons learned and knowledge management: Establish a sustainable platform/workspace for ongoing capture of the Project learning (lessons learned, good practices) and document these for adaptive management and future projects. Ensure adequate documentation of project activities and establish an archival system (SharePoint site) for storing and accessing data and information.</b></p>	<p>UNECE accepts the recommendation.</p> <p>UNECE will save the project outputs on the website for broader dissemination. The project outputs, lessons learned, and good practices will be captured in the SharePoint folder and documented for adaptive management and future projects.</p>	<p>Harikrishnan Tulsidas, Economic Affairs Officer, SED</p>	<p>31 December 2022</p>	<p><b>Implemented as of 31 December 2022</b></p> <p>Project outputs are available on the website for broader dissemination (<a href="https://unece.org/integrated-energy-and-water-resource-management-project-0#accordion_2">https://unece.org/integrated-energy-and-water-resource-management-project-0#accordion_2</a>). All documents such as project outputs, lessons learned, and good practices, are captured in the SharePoint folder and documented for adaptive management and future projects.</p>