



---

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

Geneva, 18-20 September 2024

Item 4 (a) of the provisional agenda

**Technical assistance, regional outreach and collaboration activities:****Regional advisory services and collaboration activities****Report on regional advisory services in sustainable energy****Note by the secretariat****I. Introduction**

1. The regional advisory services in sustainable energy are provided in accordance with the Guidelines of the Regular Programme for Technical Cooperation (RPTC). The programme objective, in the context of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) region, is to support, through the transfer of knowledge and expertise, countries with economies in transition in their efforts to develop the capacity to achieve internationally agreed development goals and the outcomes of United Nations conferences and summits. There are 17 ECE member States<sup>1</sup> and Kosovo<sup>2</sup> eligible to receive regional advisory services. In this context, technical cooperation is a core component of ECE's support to member States for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The regional advisory services complement and reinforce the regular and extrabudgetary programmes.

2. A description of operational activities under the regional advisory services is provided in the document "Report on regional advisory services in sustainable energy" (ECE/ENERGY/2018/9) presented to the Committee on Sustainable Energy at its twenty-seventh session in September 2017.

3. The regional advisory services are in line with the Draft programme of work of the sustainable energy subprogramme for 2024 (ECE/ENERGY/2023/1)<sup>3</sup> and support the work of the subsidiary bodies of the Committee on Sustainable Energy. The Regional Adviser works in close cooperation with colleagues in the Sustainable Energy Division, other ECE Divisions, other UN Regional Commissions, UN Resident Coordinator Offices (RCOs) in eligible ECE member States, organizations of the UN system, and international and national

---

<sup>1</sup> Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Montenegro, Republic of Moldova, Republic of North Macedonia, Serbia, Tajikistan, Türkiye, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan.

<sup>2</sup> In line with the UN Security Council Resolution S/RES/1244 (1999).

<sup>3</sup> <https://unece.org/sed/documents/2023/07/working-documents/draft-programme-work-sustainable-energy-subprogramme-2024>

organizations in support of needs of countries eligible for technical cooperation activities based on demand expressed by countries.

4. During the period under review (September 2023 - September 2024), technical assistance was provided to countries of South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, and Central Asia. Specifically, the Regional Adviser managed the following projects:

(a) United Nations Development Account (UNDA) project “Strengthening energy policies of Countries with Special Needs to build back better from COVID-19,<sup>4</sup>” in which the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) is the lead agency and ECE is an implementing entity (project duration is January 2022 – June 2025);

(b) Extrabudgetary project funded by the Joint Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Fund “Green Finance Facility to improve air quality and combat climate change in North Macedonia,<sup>5</sup>” in which the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Office in North Macedonia is the lead agency and ECE is one of the Participating UN Organizations (PUNO) (started in April 2022); the ECE portion of the project has the title “Improving national capacity on renewable energy (RE) and energy efficiency (EE) technologies for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and households in North Macedonia” (project duration is July 2022 - December 2024 (extended));

(c) Extrabudgetary project funded by the International Climate Initiative (IKI) Germany “Preparation Phase of the project “Improving the energy efficiency of the global building supply chain industry and its products to deliver high performance buildings”,<sup>6</sup> in which ECE was the lead (April-November 2023).

5. The Regional Adviser also supported implementation of the following projects:

(a) RPTC project “Mapping Albania’s readiness for green and just transition in post-coal mining areas” (July-December 2023);

(b) RPTC project “Digitalization in support of energy systems’ transformation in the UNECE region” (May-December 2024);

(c) RPTC project “Supporting electric mobility as enabler of the digital and green transformations in the UNECE region” (May-December 2024).

6. The provision of regional advisory services in the period under review continues to be affected by the consequences of the ongoing geopolitical crises in the ECE region. Advisory missions to countries and in-person capacity-building workshops are now possible. Innovative ways to provide regional advisory services that proved effective and efficient in the previous years continue to be used and explored further. Capacity-building workshops were organized mostly in a hybrid format and proved to be an effective way for knowledge sharing. Engaging consultants for studies requested by eligible countries remains a priority.

## II. Key regional advisory services (September 2023 - September 2024)

7. Outreach and engaging partners have been a focus of efforts of the Regional Adviser in the period under review. Internally at ECE, the Environment Division, the Forests, Land and Housing Division, the Sustainable Transport Division, and the Economic Cooperation and Trade Division were the main partners for joint activities. Externally, it was possible to leverage limited RPTC funds by working actively with and attracting in-kind and/or financial contributions from the following: ESCAP, Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), UNDP, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), UNEP Copenhagen Climate Centre (UNEP-CCC), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United

<sup>4</sup> <https://unece.org/strengthening-energy-policies-countries-special-needs-build-back-better-covid-19>

<sup>5</sup> <https://unece.org/sustainable-energy/regional-advisory-services/improving-national-capacity-renewable-energy-and>

<sup>6</sup> <https://unece.org/sustainable-energy/regional-advisory-services/preparation-phase-project-improving-energy-efficiency>

Nations (FAO), International Labour Organization (ILO), International Organization for Migration (IOM), European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), Passive House Institute (PHI), Institute for Energy Efficiency in Production (EEP), Green Building Alliance (GBA), Habitat for Humanity International, Governments of Albania, Armenia, Georgia, Germany, North Macedonia, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan.

## A. Capacity-building activities

8. In the period under review, capacity-building activities were organized both independently and in conjunction with field projects and studies. This section of the report presents information on independent workshops and capacity-building activities related to studies.

9. The Regional Adviser supported a colleague from the Sustainable Energy Division in organization of the workshop “Knowledge Sharing on Resource Classification and Estimation”<sup>7</sup> in Tbilisi, Georgia on 11-12 October 2023. The workshop was organized by ECE jointly with the National Agency of Mineral Resources (LEPL) and the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia (MoESD). It was attended by 40 participants of which 16 women. The objective of the workshop was sharing knowledge and experience on different resource classification and estimation options, with the focus on the United Nations Framework Classification for Resources (UNFC), its basic elements, application to mineral resources (primary and secondary), and the status of its implementation in Europe. The Workshop contributed to the ongoing discourse surrounding the development and potential revisions of the Mining Code in Georgia.

10. The Regional Adviser participated in organization and conduct of the Forum “Ways for Sustainable Hydrogen Production in Uzbekistan”<sup>8</sup> on 18 October 2023 in Tashkent, Uzbekistan jointly with programme officers in the Sustainable Energy Division responsible for activities in the area of hydrogen in the framework of the International Week of Innovative Ideas 2023 (Innoweek-2023) on 16-20 October 2023. The Forum was organized by ECE jointly with the Agency for Innovative Development of the Republic of Uzbekistan and discussed the potential and ability to produce and trade hydrogen both domestically and for export in Uzbekistan and other Central Asian countries. The discussions touched upon national low-carbon hydrogen production potential and the possibility of its increase in the future, exploring opportunities for hydrogen export, determining possible directions of local hydrogen demand, and outlining potential pilot projects implementation.

11. The Regional Adviser participated in organization and conduct of the Third Almaty Energy Forum<sup>9</sup> on 6-8 November 2023 in Almaty, Kazakhstan jointly with several colleagues from the Sustainable Energy Division and the Environment Division. He was directly responsible for the workshop “De-risking financing of renewable energy and energy efficiency projects” and the inter-regional seminar “Sharing lessons learned and best practices from the development of SDG 7 Roadmaps.” The Forum was organized jointly by ECE, ESCAP, UNDP, and Kazakh-British Technical University (KBTU). It gathered over 400 policymakers and representatives from the energy industry, financial institutions, academia, and civil society to discuss how to accelerate energy transition in Central Asia.

12. The Regional Adviser co-organized the workshop on Renewable Energy in Transport jointly with colleagues from the Sustainable Energy and Sustainable Transport Divisions in Tbilisi, Georgia on 21 November 2023 at the request of MoESD. It was attended by 56 participants of which 21 women. The aim of the workshop was to strengthen knowledge of Georgian experts on international legal instruments and best practices on use of renewable energy in transport. The capacity-building workshop gathered relevant Georgian stakeholders in the transport and energy sectors with the aim of strengthening future coordination.

<sup>7</sup> <https://unece.org/info/Sustainable-Energy/Regional-Advisory-Services/events/383355>

<sup>8</sup> <https://unece.org/info/Sustainable-Energy/Regional-Advisory-Services/events/383571>

<sup>9</sup> <https://unece.org/info/Sustainable-Energy/Regional-Advisory-Services/events/376946>

13. The Regional Adviser co-organized the Regional Stakeholder Consultations on Energy Connectivity and Sustainable Energy<sup>10</sup> in Astana, Kazakhstan on 12-13 June 2024. This event aimed to gather expert opinion to inform the implementation of the ESCAP-UNECE Programme on Energy Connectivity in Central Asia and the Caucasus launched in January 2024 and included the presentation of the key findings of the SDG 7 Roadmap for Kazakhstan developed under the joint ESCAP-UNECE project “Strengthening energy policies of Countries with Special Needs to build back better from COVID-19.” It served as a platform to bring together stakeholders from across the region to discuss their progress and collectively identify the subsequent steps forward.

14. The Regional Adviser co-organized with colleagues from the Sustainable Energy Division the Capacity-building Workshop in support of establishing a State Agency on Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy in Georgia in Tbilisi on 19-20 June 2024. MoESD has requested ECE to support the Government of Georgia in creating an agency that would be responsible for promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy in the country. To assist Georgia in this endeavour, ECE is developing a comparative study on existing agencies devoted to energy efficiency and/or renewable energy in other ECE member States and providing recommendations on possible options for establishing such an agency in Georgia within the context of the existing strategies, policies, legislation, targets, and overall commitments within global processes (e.g. achieving Sustainable Development Goals, in particular SDG7, and the Paris Agreement), and potential for improving energy efficiency and increasing the uptake of renewable energy in Georgia.

## **B. Field projects**

15. The Regional Adviser is managing the UNDA project “Strengthening energy policies of Countries with Special Needs to build back better from COVID-19”,<sup>11</sup> in which ESCAP is the lead agency and ECE is an implementing entity. The project aims to improve the capacity of policymakers by supporting them to develop SDG 7 roadmaps which enable the delivery of both the sustainable energy transition and the economic recovery from COVID-19. The Inter-regional seminar “Sharing lessons learned and best practices from the development of SDG 7 Roadmaps”<sup>12</sup> was organized in Almaty, Kazakhstan on 8 November 2023 in the framework of the Third Almaty Energy Forum. It was intended to allow project countries, which are participating in the roadmap development process, to share their lessons learned and best practices through regional dialogue. The Second National Stakeholder Consultation Workshops on the Development of an SDG7 Roadmap were organized in Kazakhstan<sup>13</sup> on 9 November 2023 in Astana and in Armenia<sup>14</sup> on 13 May 2024 in Yerevan. ESCAP and UNECE, with support of the national consultant, collected data on energy intensity in industry, residential, transport, and commercial sectors in Armenia and Kazakhstan. With the use of NEXSTEP, energy and emissions modelling, multiple scenario development, and economic analysis have been completed following an intensive data collection process. Key results and findings from the analysis were discussed with stakeholders at the workshops to seek comments, suggestions, and expert opinions to ensure that these findings are meaningful and aligned with countries’ specific context. Once agreed upon, these scenarios will form the basis for the development of the national SDG7 Roadmaps. The Validation Workshop for the SDG 7 Roadmap for Kazakhstan was held on 12 June 2024 in Astana in the framework of the Regional Stakeholder Consultations on Energy Connectivity and Sustainable Energy. Following the Second National Stakeholder Consultation Workshop for Kazakhstan, further interaction with Government bodies and other stakeholders allowed more comments and suggestions and expert opinions to ensure that these findings are meaningful and aligned with Kazakhstan’s specific context. Based on these inputs, scenarios have been refined and were presented for validation at this workshop.

---

<sup>10</sup> <https://unece.org/info/Sustainable-Energy/Regional-Advisory-Services/events/391414>

<sup>11</sup> <https://unece.org/strengthening-energy-policies-countries-special-needs-build-back-better-covid-19>

<sup>12</sup> <https://unece.org/info/Sustainable-Energy/Regional-Advisory-Services/events/387537>

<sup>13</sup> <https://unece.org/info/Sustainable-Energy/Regional-Advisory-Services/events/387499>

<sup>14</sup> <https://unece.org/info/Sustainable-Energy/Regional-Advisory-Services/events/390755>

16. The Regional Adviser is managing the ECE part of the Joint SDG Fund project “Green Finance Facility to improve air quality and combat climate change in North Macedonia”, in which UNDP Office in North Macedonia is the lead agency and ECE is one of the PUNOs. The project is setting up and operationalizing Green Financing Facility (GFF), a new financial vehicle, that provides access to affordable green financing for SMEs and marketable but underserved target groups of individuals/households for investments in renewable energy (RE) and energy efficiency (EE) solutions. The GFF-enabled accelerated adoption of RE and EE solutions will contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution and strengthen the local ecosystem for RE and EE green finance. ECE part of the project has the title “Improving national capacity on renewable energy (RE) and energy efficiency (EE) technologies for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and households in North Macedonia”<sup>15</sup> (project has been extended until December 2024). ECE has revised and updated the Green Economy Financing Facility (GEFF) Technology Selector Tool (a database of high-performing household equipment and materials that meet performance standards set by EBRD for the GEFF in North Macedonia) for the purposes of this project. ECE is also in charge of designing and implementing trainings that are tailored to support the consultancy companies in using the updated list of eligible technologies to design RE and EE projects and monitor and verify the projects’ performance (planned vs. actual). The Trainings on Design and Verification of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Projects<sup>16</sup> were organized in Skopje, North Macedonia on 28-30 November 2023. The project design consultants were trained on the banking requirements and how to develop bankable proposals, transferring know-how and knowledge on concepts and practical applications of project finance. The project verification consultants were trained to ensure that funded investments have been completed according to the original investment plans. As a follow-up to these trainings, the Capacity Building Workshop on Design of Bankable Project Proposals for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy by Underserved Households in North Macedonia<sup>17</sup> was organized in Skopje on 27 May 2024. The workshop discussed specific requirements for design and financing of RE and EE projects for individuals/households; experience of project design, financing, and verification of RE and EE projects for SMEs; and the review of the application format, screening questionnaire and documentary requirements for households of target groups.

17. The Regional Adviser managed extrabudgetary project funded by the International Climate Initiative (IKI) Germany “Preparation Phase of the project “Improving the energy efficiency of the global building supply chain industry and its products to deliver high performance buildings”<sup>18</sup> (April-November 2023). ECE is leading the team of implementing partners that include UNDP country offices in seven beneficiary countries,<sup>19</sup> UNEP, and ESCAP. UNEP-CCC, PHI, EEP, and GBA will be also among the implementing partners for the main phase of the IKI project. The main phase of the project aims to develop a strong foundation of proven best practice methods and focused technical capacity that beneficiary countries can build upon to improve building energy performance and reduce embodied carbon and energy to support their development and achievement of enhanced nationally determined contributions (NDC) targets. The preparation phase included review of the baseline situation to inform on existing gaps and specific requirements for project implementation; mapping of key stakeholders and project partners, identification of their roles in the project, and engaging local stakeholders in the project’s activities; preparation of a complete project document; and conduct of a validation workshop for the detailed national implementation plans with stakeholders. The Validation Workshop<sup>20</sup> was held in Tbilisi, Georgia on 22 November 2024. The full project proposal was submitted to the IKI Secretariat

<sup>15</sup> <https://unece.org/sustainable-energy/regional-advisory-services/improving-national-capacity-renewable-energy-and>

<sup>16</sup> <https://unece.org/info/Sustainable-Energy/Regional-Advisory-Services/events/385770>

<sup>17</sup> <https://unece.org/info/Sustainable-Energy/Regional-Advisory-Services/events/391214>

<sup>18</sup> <https://unece.org/sustainable-energy/regional-advisory-services/preparation-phase-project-improving-energy-efficiency>

<sup>19</sup> Armenia, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Republic of Moldova, Tajikistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan

<sup>20</sup> <https://unece.org/info/Sustainable-Energy/Regional-Advisory-Services/events/385412>

at the end of December 2023. The process of approval of the full project proposal is currently on hold by IKI due to uncertainty in the IKI budget for 2025.

18. The Regional Adviser supported implementation of the RPTC project “Mapping Albania’s readiness for green and just transition in post-coal mining areas” (July-December 2023) managed by a colleague from the Sustainable Energy Division. He participated in organization and conduct of the Workshop on Mapping Albania’s readiness for green and just transition in post-coal mining areas<sup>21</sup> in Tirana, Albania on 11 December 2023 and co-organized the Final workshop on Mapping Albania’s readiness for green and just transition in post-coal mining areas<sup>22</sup> held in Tirana, Albania on 4 April 2024. The ultimate outcome of the project is the study “Just Transition Assessment of Albania: Sector Decarbonization and the Just Transition Framework Applied to Coal Mining”.<sup>23</sup>

19. The Regional Adviser supports implementation of the RPTC project “Digitalization in support of energy systems’ transformation in the UNECE region” (May-December 2024). The objective of this project is to analyze the impacts of transitioning legacy energy systems from centralized analogue infrastructures to distributed digital economies. By examining the potential of local generation, distributed storage, and integrating modern technologies like Artificial Intelligence (AI) and cybersecurity measures, the project aims to understand how this transition can enhance resilience, accessibility, and fairness of energy services for power suppliers and end-users.

20. The Regional Adviser supports implementation of the RPTC project “Supporting electric mobility as enabler of the digital and green transformations in the UNECE region” (May-December 2024). The objective of this project implemented jointly by the Sustainable Energy and Sustainable Transport Divisions, is to improve capacity and create a knowledge base on best practices for e-mobility adoption and enhancing policymaker expertise in supporting electric vehicles (EV) adoption as enabler of the digital and green transformations.

### C. Other technical assistance activities

21. The Regional Adviser managed the preparation of the report “Guide for the implementation of energy efficiency measures and the valorization of renewable energy sources for public sector buildings”<sup>24</sup> available in English and Romanian, which was requested by the Government of the Republic of Moldova, in cooperation with colleagues from the Sustainable Energy Division. The study is intended for those responsible for ensuring energy efficiency and use of renewable energy in public buildings under the authority of the national Government and local public administrations. The Guide can be used in the process of preparing a pre-feasibility study to identify energy efficiency measures and use of renewable energy equipment and assess the investment costs depending on the measures selected and the financial resources available. The guide provides recommendations for energy auditors on how to select and justify energy efficiency measures for public buildings. An updated version of this report is under development by UNDP Moldova.

22. The Regional Adviser oversees from the ECE side the process of organization of the Thirteenth International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development (IFESD-13),<sup>25</sup> which will be hosted by ESCAP and the Government of Thailand in Bangkok on 2-4 December 2024. The objective of this year’s Forum co-organized by the five Regional Commissions in partnership with other international organizations under the theme of “Taking Action for Just Energy Transition” is to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement through the just energy transition. It will provide a platform to encourage collaboration among the organizations of the United Nations system,

<sup>21</sup> <https://unece.org/info/Sustainable-Energy/Regional-Advisory-Services/events/386159>

<sup>22</sup> <https://unece.org/info/Sustainable-Energy/Regional-Advisory-Services/events/389509>

<sup>23</sup> <https://unece.org/just-transition-assessment-albania-sector-decarbonization-and-just-transition-framework-applied>

<sup>24</sup> <https://unece.org/guide-implementation-energy-efficiency-measures-and-valorization-renewable-energy-sources-public>

<sup>25</sup> <https://unece.org/info/Sustainable-Energy/Regional-Advisory-Services/events/390553>

governments, civil society, financial institutions, the private sector, and academia needed to integrate the responses to immediate challenges on sustainable energy. Experts from the energy sector, representatives from governments, UN entities, international organizations and other stakeholders will discuss major issues and demonstrate actions to just energy transition. There will be a series of roundtables, parallel sessions and side events about energy issues such as access to clean cooking, access to electricity, renewable energy, energy efficiency, digitalization and artificial intelligence, gender mainstreaming, youth in energy and cleaner use of fossil fuels.

23. In the period under review, the Regional Adviser conducted advisory missions to Uzbekistan (16-19 October 2023 in conjunction with the Forum “Ways for Sustainable Hydrogen Production in Uzbekistan” and Innoweek-2023), Kazakhstan (6-10 November 2023 in conjunction with the Third Almaty Energy Forum and the Second National Stakeholder Consultation Workshop on the Development of an SDG7 Roadmap in Kazakhstan), Georgia (21-23 November 2023 in conjunction with the workshop on Renewable Energy in Transport and the Validation Workshop of 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”), Albania (10-12 December 2023 in conjunction with the Workshop on Mapping Albania’s readiness for green and just transition in post-coal mining areas and 3-5 April 2024 in conjunction with the Final workshop on Mapping Albania’s readiness for green and just transition in post-coal mining areas), Armenia (13-14 May 2024 in conjunction with the Second National Stakeholder Consultation Workshop on the Development of an SDG7 Roadmap in Armenia), North Macedonia (27-28 May 2024 in conjunction with the Capacity Building Workshop on Design of Bankable Project Proposals for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy by Underserved Households in North Macedonia), Kazakhstan (11-13 June 2024 in conjunction with the Regional Stakeholder Consultations on Energy Connectivity and Sustainable Energy and the Validation Workshop for the SDG 7 Roadmap for Kazakhstan), and Georgia (18-21 June 2024 in conjunction with the Capacity-building Workshop in support of establishing a State Agency on Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy in Georgia). All advisory missions to the countries are demand-driven and conducted after receiving a request from a respective national government or UN Resident Coordinator in the country.

#### **D. Future regional outreach, partnerships, fundraising and other activities**

24. The Regional Adviser continues to be engaged in maintaining and expanding partnerships within the UN system and with international organizations. The Regional Adviser has been working on several capacity-building activities with ESCAP and ESCWA. The Regional Adviser has been working with colleagues from the Sustainable Energy Division and other Divisions, in particular the Environment Division, the Forests, Land and Housing Division, the Economic Cooperation and Trade Division, and the Sustainable Transport Division on developing project proposals for extrabudgetary, UNDA, and RPTC projects and implementing current activities. The Regional Adviser actively participates in the work of the ECE Working Group on Technical Cooperation (WGTC). The Regional Adviser has been assigned by the Executive Secretary to serve as the coordinator of ECE technical cooperation activities in three countries: Belarus, Georgia, and Kyrgyzstan. This activity is conducted in close cooperation with UN Regional Coordinator Offices (RCO) in the countries and the ECE Project Management Unit (PMU). The work of the Regional Adviser will continue to be based on demand from member States and in support of the Programme of Work of the Sustainable energy subprogramme. Assistance to countries to achieve progress in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and in particular of the targets of SDG7, remains the focus of the Regional Adviser’s activities at the country and regional level, subject to availability of resources.