



**Meeting of the Bureau of the  
Group of Experts on Renewable Energy (GERE)**

**23 January 2024 from 15:30 to 17:00 - *Online***

***Report of the Meeting***

**Item 1. Chair's welcome;**

1. The Chair of the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy (GERE), Mr. Kostiantyn Gura, conveyed welcome remarks to the participants in the meeting held online and in person, the first meeting of GERE Bureau in 2023. The Chair highlighted, among others, the key steps made by GERE, fully implementing the Work Plan 2022-2023 and the approval of the Work Plan 2024-2025.

**Item 2. Approval of the agenda;**

2. The agenda was adopted as proposed and reflected in the current report.

**Item 3. Tour the table of the Bureau members, in particular to introduce new members;**

3. The Chair introduced the current Bureau Members, including those elected in September 2023. On behalf of Alberto Biancardi, newly elected Vice-Chair, who could not be present at the meeting, Noemi Magnanini presented GSE, Manager of Energy Services.

**Item 4. Implementation of the GERE Work Plan 2024-2025;**

4. The Chair and the Secretariat informed the Bureau about the Work Plan for the period 2024-2025 and the initial activities under implementation and foreseen in the coming months. The secretariat summarized the main areas of the work plan, the work to be undertaken, and deliverables, including tracking the progress made by the countries in the renewable energy development; the exchange of experiences and good practices, and multi-stakeholder dialogues on how to increase the uptake of renewable energy; contribute, in cooperation with other Groups of Experts and under the leadership of the Committee on Sustainable Energy, to work on building resilient energy systems in the ECE region; and cross-cutting cooperation to substantially increase the uptake of renewable energy and strengthen their integration in resilient energy systems.
5. Based on the work plan, the GERE would continue to track the adoption of renewable energy in 17 program countries.

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6. Additionally, the Secretariat highlighted the deeper cooperation it would pursue with organizations such as IRENA in the area of digitalization of Renewable Energy.

### **Item 5. Hard Talks planned in 2024: Turkmenistan (13-14 February) and Georgia (first half of 2024);**

7. The Secretariat highlighted Turkmenistan's commitment to promote renewable energy at the last COP. Presently, UNECE is collaborating with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan to hold an Hard Talk on 13-14 February focused on methane management and the increase of the uptake of renewable energy. The Secretariat underscored the significance of this Hard Talk, highlighting its pivotal role in the upcoming Global Methane Forum scheduled on 18-21 March in Geneva.
8. Another Hard Talk is scheduled to take place in Georgia, aiming to support the establishing of an agency specifically dedicated to energy efficiency and renewable energy.
9. Other Hard Talks would be held in 2024 and 2025, as soon as the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action of Germany, and other donors, will confirm availability funding.

### **Item 6. Focus of the eleventh session on 16-17 September 2024;**

10. The Chair emphasized that this year's GERE session is scheduled on 16-17 September 2024, in conjunction with the meetings of the Group of Experts on Energy Efficiency and the Group of Experts on Cleaner Electricity Systems, and in the same week of the Committee on Sustainable Energy.
11. The Chair encouraged members to make suggestions on agenda items to ensure that all aspects are fully discussed at the session. He noted that it is a valuable opportunity to make suggestions to enhance cross-sectoral or cross-cutting cooperation and to promote cross-guidance cooperation with different groups of Experts within the Sustainable Energy program of UNECE.
12. Bureau members are in favor to have a substantive session on bio-energy topics, exploring the possible development of a process leading to a bio-energy normative instrument.
13. The Chair invited other Bureau members to send him ideas on sustainable topics to be discussed during the next GERE annual meeting.

### **Item 7. Possible work on Biofuels quality standards;**

14. The Chair opened the discussion of internationally compatible standards for biofuels. He underscored the significance of globally harmonized standards in this context, emphasizing common standards' role in reducing emissions, preserving natural resources, and advocating for sustainable usage practices.
15. The Secretariat highlighted existing gaps in international quality standards for biofuels. UNECE is actively assessing various standards applicable at different levels. The Secretariat highlighted that, if necessary, a dedicated working group could be established to facilitate the development of more cohesive and universally recognized biofuel international standard.
16. The Vice-chair Rana Adib from REN21 emphasized the importance of international standards and certification in bioenergy to build trust in broad energy sustainability.

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Using the hydropower sector as an example, she pointed out that establishing norms etc. is a key factor throughout the planning process. On this basis, she suggested that it is important to build trust standards, processes, and regulation.

17. The Vice-chair Michela Morese from FAO described that FAO has been working on the sustainability of bioenergy over past 20 years, in particular through Global Bioenergy Partnership (GBEP). She pointed out FAO has developed a set of sustainability indicators for assessing the value chain associated with bioenergy. She also raised the key question of quality standards for biofuels: who the audience for these standards is, whether they are policy guidance for decision makers or guidelines for companies to follow in their production systems. She concluded by stressing that FAO would be glad to work with IEA, and others to discuss how to maximise joint effectiveness in the field of bioenergy.

### **Item 8. Preparatory work for REN21 UNECE Renewable Energy Status Report 2025;**

18. The Secretariat highlighted that three other reports were issued in 2015, 2017 and 2022. The UNECE Renewable Energy Status Report reviews the progress made in harnessing renewable energy and energy efficiency in 17 UNECE member countries.
19. The Vice-chair Rena Adib highlighted the intention to prepare the new version of the report in 2025, as soon as funding will be confirmed by the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action of Germany.

### **Item 9. New project ideas for extra budgetary funding;**

20. The Chair invited other Bureau members to provide ideas or proposals for extra budget funding to him and the Secretariat to strengthen the implementation of the current work plan.

### **Item 10. AOB;**

21. No other business was raised by the participants of the meeting.
22. The Chair expressed his gratitude to the participants and the Secretariat for their contribution to the discussion and closed the meeting.