

Chair's Summary of the Meeting of the Ad Hoc Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane held on 29 April 2013

I. Attendance

1. The session of the *Ad Hoc* Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane was held on 29 April 2013. Thirty one experts participated, from the following UNECE member States: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Poland, the Russian Federation, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, and the United States of America. A representative of the European Union also participated.
2. In addition, an expert from Australia attended the meeting under Article 11 of the Commission's Terms of Reference.
3. Representatives of the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) also participated.

II. Adoption of the agenda (agenda item 1)

Documentation: Annotated provisional agenda

4. The agenda was adopted¹.

III. Election of officers (agenda item 2)

5. The *Ad Hoc* Group of Experts proposed a new Bureau to be elected at the next official session of of the Ad Hoc Group of Experts to serve in 2013-2014: Mr Ray Pilcher (the United States of America) as the Chair, and Mr Yuriy Bobrov (Ukraine), Mr David Creedy (the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), Mr Ozgen Karacan (the United States of America), Ms Felicia Ruiz (the United States of America), Mr Jacek Skiba (Poland), Mr Sergey Shumkov (the Russian Federation), Mr Clark Talkington (the United States of America) and Mr Igor Yashchenko (Ukraine), as Vice Chairs.

IV. Opening remarks from the Chair (agenda item 3)

6. The Chair thanked the *Ad Hoc* Group of Experts for the election. He stressed that the Ad Hoc Group of Experts earlier developed the "Best Practice Guidance on Effective Methane Drainage and Use in Coal Mines" and that time was now to concentrate on its dissemination, which would save lives and protect the environment. The full text of the Chair's opening remarks is available on UNECE CMM website.

¹ The scheduled session for this meeting did take place in April 2013. The European Union and its member States objected that the meeting could not be considered a formal meeting because its mandate had expired as of 9th April 2013, which was the date of completion of a review by member States of the 2005 UNECE reforms. Under the terms of the review, mandates of all subsidiary bodies were extended until the end of the review. All mandates that had been provisionally extended during the period of the review therefore expired when the review ended. To rectify this procedural detail, UNECE's executive committee decided on 11 July to extend all mandates until the end of 2013 to allow subsidiary bodies to take the necessary steps in accordance with the outcome of the review. Unfortunately, sessions that took place in April 2013 are considered by member States to have been informal meetings, and there can be no formal document for the sessions that were held. A chairman's summary of the discussions that took place is available on the website.

V. Activities and priorities of the Committee on Sustainable Energy and matters for consideration by the *Ad Hoc* Group of Experts (agenda item 4)

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/89

7. The *Ad Hoc* Group of Experts was briefed on the activities of the Committee on Sustainable Energy and on the elements of the renewed strategic framework for UNECE's work, adopted at 65th session of the Economic Commission for Europe, held from 9 to 11 April 2013 in Geneva.

VI. Review of the current Terms of Reference and the programme of work for 2013/14 (agenda item 5)

Documentation: Terms of Reference (attached to the Provisional Annotated Agenda)
Sub-programme on Sustainable Energy - Operationalizing Document

8. The *Ad Hoc* Group of Experts reviewed its current terms of reference in the light of "Sub-programme on Sustainable Energy - Operationalizing Document", the version of 22 April 2013 that has been submitted to review by UNECE member States. The *Ad Hoc* Group of Experts discussed its priorities for 2013 and 2014 and recommended for approval by UNECE member States its new Terms of Reference, annexed to this report.

VII. Update on the extra-budgetary project on methane capture and use: "Best Practice Guidance on Effective Methane Drainage and Use in Coal Mines" (agenda item 6)

Documentation: Room document: BPG Progress Report

9. The *Ad Hoc* Group of Experts was briefed by the secretariat on the progress in implementation of this project and on the options for the use of remaining funds. The recommended option was to concentrate on developing additional case studies and use the remaining funds for that purpose. A Task Force on developing case studies was proposed. The Task Force will report to the *Ad Hoc* Group of Experts at its next session and to the Group's Bureau by 1 September 2013. As the members of the Task Force were nominated: Ms Felicia Ruiz as the Chair, Mr David Creedy, Mr Richard Mattus, Mr Clark Talkington, and Mr Jacek Skiba.

VIII. Expanding *Best Practice Guidance*'s scope to specialized fields (agenda item 7)

10. The *Ad Hoc* Group of Experts discussed to address certain specialized fields that are not covered in detail by the *Best Practices Guidance*. The *Ad Hoc* Group of Experts agreed to continue to look into this matter, including the possibility to mobilize additional funding needed for this activity.

IX. Update on the extra-budgetary project: "Coal Mine Safety and Life Support Systems (agenda item 8)

Documentation: Room document: Update on CMS and LSS

11. The *Ad Hoc* Group of Experts was briefed by the Chair, on behalf of the Steering Committee established at the 7th session, on the progress in implementation of this project. The *Ad Hoc* Group of Experts agreed to propose to UNECE member States that a Task Force be formed to further look into this project, which as an example of application of *Best Practice Guidance* in operating coal mines as demonstration projects. The Task Force will report to the *Ad Hoc* Group of Experts at its next session and to the Group's Bureau by 15 June 2013. For members of the Task Force were nominated: Mr Litvinov as the Chair, and Ms Galina Agapova, Mr Hua Guo, Mr Karacan, and Mr Pilcher as members. The secretariat has also initiated consultation with ILO to ensure its involvement.

X. Revision of CDM methodology ACM0008 (agenda item 9)

Documentation: Room document: Update on ACM008

12. The recent developments in the "Consolidated methodology for coal bed methane, coal mine methane and ventilation air methane capture and use for power (electrical or motive) and heat and/or destruction through flaring or flameless oxidation", known as ACM0008, were presented by a representative of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The *Ad Hoc* Group of Experts expressed its interest to continue to collaborate with UNFCCC and provide advice on this matter by 1 August 2013.

XI. Follow up to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) decision on promoting Best Practice Guidance as a global standard in methane management (agenda item 10)

13. The *Ad Hoc* Group of Experts discussed the opportunities to leverage July 2011 decision by the Economic and Social Council and ensure an application of the Best Practice Guidance for Effective Methane Drainage and Use in Coal Mines in countries worldwide.

XII. Establishing an International Centre of Excellence on Coal Mine Methane (agenda item 11)

Documentation: Room document: Blueprint for ICE-CMM

14. The *Ad Hoc* Group of Experts discussed this initiative and agreed to propose to UNECE member States that a Task Force be formed to further look into this matter. For the members of the Task Force were nominated: Mr David Creedy as the Chair, and Mr Clark Talkington and Mr Ray Pilcher as members. The UNECE Centre of Excellence on Public Private Partnership and the Sustainable Energy Division will work jointly to provide support to the Task Force.

XIII. Adoption of conclusions and recommendations (agenda item 12)

15. *Ad Hoc* Group of Experts recommended for approval by Member States the following activities under the coal mine methane sub-programme:

1. Dissemination of existing best practice guidance and review of success of dissemination in encouraging implementation.
2. Initiate and develop additional electronic publications on best practice drilling and low concentration methane drainage (aspects of methane management not covered in the existing document (proposals by August 2013).
3. Development and dissemination of case studies on the application of best practice guidance in coal mines (proposals by August 2013)
4. Demonstration projects on application of best practice guidance (proposals by August 2013).
5. Establishment of an International Centre of Excellence on Coal Mine Methane.

16. To accelerate the implementation of the above activities, the *Ad Hoc* Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane asks the UNECE member States to approve that:

1. The secretariat electronically disseminate the publication: "Best Practice Guidance for Effective Methane Drainage and Use in Coal Mines" by August 2013.
2. A Task Force be established to assist UNECE member States and other UN member States in submitting case studies on the application of best practice guidance in coal mines and instruct the secretariat to disseminate these case studies.
3. A Task Force be established to implement the application of best practice guidance in operating coal mines as demonstration projects.
4. A Task Force be established to initiate the work on setting up an International Centre of Excellence on Coal Mine Methane.

17. These conclusions will have to be formally re-affirmed at the next official session of the *Ad Hoc* Group of Experts.

XIV. Other business (agenda item 13)

18. The next session of the *Ad Hoc* Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane is tentatively scheduled for 19-20 November 2013 in Geneva.

XV. Adoption of the meeting report (agenda item 14)

19. The report was distributed and adopted at the *Ad Hoc* Group of Expert sessions.

20. The meeting was closed at 18:00 on Monday, 29 April 2013.

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Annex 1

PROPOSED NEW TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE AD HOC GROUP OF EXPERTS ON COAL MINE METHANE

The Ad Hoc Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane was launched in December 2004 by the Committee on Sustainable Energy to specifically support the Committee's activities in the area of coal mine methane (CMM), abandoned mine methane (AMM), and ventilation air methane (VAM). The Ad Hoc Group of Experts will carry out, under the Committee's guidance, activities related to development and profitable recovery and use of CMM, AMM and VAM, with a specific focus on the three pillars of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. Recovery and use of otherwise emitted methane mitigates climate change, improves mine safety and productivity, and generates revenues and cost savings. The tasks of the Ad Hoc Group of Experts are to:

- (a) Promote and provide support where applicable to the UNECE extra-budgetary projects relevant to CMM, AMM and VAM recovery and utilization.
- (b) Provide a forum for exchange of information and experience on on-going activities in the area of CMM, AMM and VAM development and for enhanced collaboration and cooperation thereof.
- (c) Identify and seek to mitigate the problems associated with the creation of incentives for CMM, AMM and VAM recovery and utilization.
- (d) Establish a clear link between the economic benefits and the mining of gassy coal seams based on the safe drainage and use of the gas, and facilitate this through:
 - (i) Expansion and application of the Best Practice Guidance through publication of case studies and further dissemination through the electronic means and conducting workshops;
 - (ii) Work to establish and maintain an International Centre of Excellence in effective pre- and post-mining extraction and use of CMM, AMM and VAM.
- (e) Identify any significant new developments affecting CMM, AMM and VAM, in particular in UNECE member countries.
- (f) Seek to strengthen inter-agency cooperation and collaboration with other stakeholders, including other governmental and non-governmental organizations and the business community/private sector, in order to realise the above objectives.

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