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COMMITTEE ON SUSTAINABLE ENERGY

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DRAFT PROGRAMME OF WORK IN THE FIELD OF ENERGY FOR 2008-2009

Note by the secretariat

1. The draft programme of work of the Committee on Sustainable Energy is prepared in the light of the Work Plan on ECE Reform, the decisions of the Commission at its sixty-second session and the decisions of the Committee at its fifteenth session.
2. The draft programme contains the programme elements that the Committee itself implements and those elements of its subsidiary bodies that are of particular importance and significance to the Committee. The detailed programmes of work of these subsidiary bodies are contained in their respective reports.
3. This document is intended to facilitate the work of the Committee and not to influence in any way its decisions. Moreover, the Committee will need to consider how best to implement the decisions taken by the Commission at its sixty-second session in April 2007, as well as broad issues of particular concern to the United Nations-wide system such as implementation of the Millennium Development Goals.

OVERVIEW AND PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES

Related programme elements and implementing bodies

C: Committee on Sustainable Energy

WP.G: Working Party on Gas

EE21: Steering Committee of the Energy Efficiency 21 Project

G.C: Gas Centre

GE.CE: Ad Hoc Group of Experts on Cleaner Electricity Production from Coal and Other Fossil Fuels

GE.CMM: Ad Hoc Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane

GE.EE: Ad Hoc Group of Experts on Energy Efficiency Investments for Climate Change Mitigation

GE.FE: Ad Hoc Group of Experts on the Harmonization of Fossil Energy and Mineral Resources Terminology

GE.G: Ad Hoc Group of Experts on the Supply and Use of Gas

1. NORMATIVE ACTIVITIES IN THE ENERGY FIELD INCLUDING LABELLING AND CLASSIFICATION SYSTEMS AND RELATED LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

Work to be undertaken: To develop and implement norms and standards and to harmonize legislation, regulations and policies in the field of energy in order to promote sustainable energy development, such as:

- (a) follow-up on the implementation of the United Nations Framework Classification for Fossil Energy and Mineral Resources (UNFC), as per ECOSOC Resolution 2004/233 which invites the Member States of the United Nations, international organizations and regional commissions to consider taking appropriate measures for ensuring worldwide application of the UNFC, and the development of Guidelines, Specifications and Case Studies for its implementation (C, GE.FE);
- (b) ongoing harmonization of terminologies and classification systems for the evaluation and assessment of reserves/resources of energy commodities – petroleum, natural gas, solid fuels and uranium (C, GE.FE);
- (c) development of standards for carbon emissions trading (C, EE21, GE.CMM);
- (d) development of UNECE guidelines for measuring capacity adequacy in electricity generation and transmission, as well as on enhancing transparency of cross border transmission, in the UNECE region (GE.CE);
- (e) harmonization/convergence of norms, practices and policies (C, WP.G, EE21, GE.CMM, GE.FE, GE.G);

- (f) assisting member States to develop norms and standards to integrate new electricity production technologies (e.g. carbon capture and storage (CSS)) into regulatory structures, including environmental regulations (GE.CE);
- (g) assessing the relationship between electricity industry regulation and the choice of fuel mix with special focus on cleaner electricity production methods (GE.CE); and
- (h) provision of technical assistance to countries with economies in transition in the energy regulatory and policy fields (C, EE21).

Work methods: To be carried out at annual sessions of the Committee and through Ad Hoc Groups of Experts, Task Forces, conferences, seminars, workshops, special studies and through the Regional Advisory Services.

2. OPENING AND LIBERALIZATION OF ENERGY MARKETS; SERVICE TARIFF SYSTEMS AND SECURITY OF SUPPLY

Work to be undertaken: To assess the major developments and trends in the ongoing restructuring and liberalization of energy markets, inherent challenges and opportunities associated with the opening up of energy markets, and to address issues related to the implementation of the regulatory, trading and technical aspects of market liberalization, such as:

- (a) assessment, monitoring and exchange of experiences regarding the implementation of the European Union (EU) Gas Directives in EU Member States and, in particular, their extension to other UNECE member countries (G.C, WP.G);
- (b) dialogue with the private sector on the implementation of market liberalization principles and practices (C, G.C, WP.G);
- (c) assessment of overall energy security risks and potential policy responses (C);
- (d) assessment of the security of natural gas supplies (G.C, WP.G);
- (e) institutional capacity development and training for the benefit of countries with economies in transition regarding industry restructuring, privatization, pricing and tariff setting (C, G.C);
- (f) exchange of views as well as policy-related studies on implications of market liberalization for government objectives, such as energy security and protection of the environment (C); and
- (g) technical advisory missions relating to regulatory matters, industry restructuring and market liberalization (C, G.C, WP.G).

Work methods: Exchange of information and experiences among member countries at annual sessions of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies, and through Task Forces, seminars, workshops, technical missions and Regional Advisory Services, including preparation of analyses.

3. SUSTAINABLE ENERGY STRATEGIES FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

Work to be undertaken: To promote the development and implementation of strategies and policies to facilitate the transition to a more sustainable and secure energy future and to contribute a regional perspective to global events at which issues related to energy sustainability and security are addressed, such as:

- (a) regional input to the work and activities of the Commission on Sustainable Development (C);
- (b) promotion and facilitation of implementation of the UNECE Guidelines on Reforming Energy Pricing and Subsidies to policymakers in countries with economies in transition, including through collaborative activities with other United Nations agencies and relevant international organizations (C);
- (c) dialogue with the private sector and non-governmental organizations to facilitate the transition to a sustainable energy future within the UNECE region (C);
- (d) dissemination of information and provision of technical assistance to countries with economies in transition on sustainable energy issues (C);
- (e) undertaking a broadly shared intergovernmental expert dialogue on energy security specifically in the area of energy infrastructure investment and financing. In the future for this dialogue to be extended to cover any/all of the following areas: (i) data and information sharing and increased transparency; (ii) legal, regulatory and policy framework; (iii) harmonization of standards; (iv) research, development and deployment of new technologies; and (v) investment/transit safeguards and burden sharing in situations of crisis (C);
- (f) a periodic exchange of views on energy security risks and their interactions with the global financial community, including internet-based information exchanges on the subject and a continued assessment of energy security, corporate governance, and energy efficiency undertaken in cooperation with other relevant international organizations (C, EE21); and
- (g) assessment of how the UNECE can contribute to enhancing the stability of the global energy market and energy security risk mitigation (C).

Work methods: Through exchanges of experiences at the annual session of the Committee, through Ad Hoc Groups of Experts, Task Forces, conferences, seminars, workshops, special studies and through the Regional Advisory Services.

4. RATIONAL USE OF ENERGY, ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND CONSERVATION

Work to be undertaken: To harmonize and develop guidelines and strategies to enhance energy efficiency and energy conservation, as well as to enhance regional cooperation on energy efficiency market formation and investment project development to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in countries with economies in transition, such as:

- (a) development of guidelines for improving energy conservation and efficiency, in particular in Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia (C, EE21);
- (b) regional networking between national participating institutions and international partners through enhanced internet communications for value added information transfers on financing energy efficiency projects and training (EE21, GE.EE);
- (c) development and harmonization of regional policies and standards to both introduce the economic, institutional and regulatory reforms and remove the barriers needed to support energy efficiency investments to reduce GHG emissions (C, EE21, GE.EE, GE.CE);
- (d) promotion of municipal level projects to enable local and concrete energy efficiency development, as well as strengthening the reforms, skills and capacities needed for investment projects that meet international environmental treaty obligations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and UNECE (EE21, GE.EE);
- (e) assistance in securing financing for energy efficiency projects, including through the provision of support for the creation of a dedicated investment fund for selected East European, Central Asian and South-East European countries, as well as providing support for cooperation with existing financial mechanisms operating in countries participating in the EE21 Project (EE21, GE.EE);
- (f) assistance with the preparation of investment project proposals for submission to the SwissRe/Conning and Company European Clean Energy Investment Fund (EE21, GE.EE);
- (g) promotion of sustainable development of municipalities and regions through rational use of energy and water resources in cooperation with the Regional Network for Efficient Use of Energy and Water Resources for Southeastern Europe (RENEUER) (EE21);
- (h) support biomass energy projects and the capacity of customers to finance and implement them, thereby addressing reduction of GHG emissions and diversification of energy sources (EE21, GE.EE);
- (i) increase the use of energy labels in the procurement process in public authorities (EE21);
- (j) development and study of coal mine methane (CMM) and coal bed methane (CBM) projects and raising the awareness of the benefits that CMM and CBM have in economic, social and environmental terms (GE.CMM, EE21, GE.G);
- (k) assessment of trends and development of market for vehicles using alternative (gaseous) fuels (WP.G); and

- (l) study of new and emerging methods for detection of gas leakages during gas industry operations (GE.G).

Work methods: Implemented through national participating institutions, private sector companies, international financial institutions, commercial banks, international organizations, other multi- and bilateral technical assistance programmes, Ad Hoc Groups of Experts and Regional Advisory Services, as well as through meetings, training sessions, workshops, seminars and special studies.

5. ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE, INCLUDING ELECTRIC POWER AND GAS NETWORKS

Work to be undertaken: To encourage the modernization, extension and transboundary interconnection of the energy infrastructure of member countries in order to promote energy trade, economic efficiency, security of supply of electricity and the fuller integration of energy systems in the UNECE region, through activities such as:

- (a) reviews of the situation and prospects for European interconnections in the field of natural gas (C, WP.G);
- (b) evaluation and dissemination of information to promote and facilitate the security of supply of electricity, particularly in countries with economies in transition, in order to achieve reliable generation, transmission, distribution and delivery of electricity to the end-consumer, and all at economic levels over a continuous period (C);
- (c) facilitating an intergovernmental dialogue on investment and regulation for the promotion of cleaner electricity production in the region (GE.CE);
- (d) updates of studies on Underground Gas Storage and Gas Grids for both natural gas and liquefied petroleum gas (WP.G); and
- (e) ongoing development of an international programme, known as the Blue Corridor Project, to establish a transboundary corridor in the UNECE region for freight and public transportation by natural gas vehicles (WP.G).

Work methods: Exchange of information and views during annual sessions of the Committee, coordination of activities and joint meetings with subregional organizations, and through Ad Hoc Groups of Experts composed of representatives of interested governments, companies and other international organizations as well as through seminars and workshops, including special studies.

6. CLEANER ELECTRICITY PRODUCTION AND SUSTAINABLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

Work to be undertaken: To provide an overview of the policies and programmes carried out in member States related to the promotion of cleaner electricity production from coal and other fossil fuels in the context of sustainable energy development. Particular emphasis is placed on promoting the environmental sustainability of the “coal – and other fossil fuels –to electricity production chain”, and also promotion of technical cooperation among member States in

applying cleaner electricity production technologies and practices, including CSS and other technical innovations to reduce emissions arising from the use of coal and other fossil fuels, such as:

- (a) dissemination of information on technological innovations that will result in a reduced environmental impact from coal use, including in the area of (i) CCS through an assessment of the current status of research, development and deployment, promising technologies and key barriers to implementation, and (ii) other technological and operational developments including coal gasification and liquefaction and zero emissions technologies (C, GE.CE, GE.G);
- (b) appraising the development of a regulatory framework conducive to promoting investment in cleaner electricity production (GE.CE);
- (c) assessing the relationship between electricity industry regulation and the choice of fuel mix with a special emphasis on cleaner electricity production methods (GE.CE);
- (d) evaluating the policies and measures to reduce the electricity efficiency gap between developed market and emerging market economies in the UNECE region (C, GE.CE);
- (e) fostering creation of a UNECE-wide consensus on enhancing investments in thermal generation and transmission, in particular in relation to cross-border transfer capacities and procedures (GE.CE);
- (f) dissemination of information on improving the thermal efficiency of large coal-fired power plants and the reduction of environmentally harmful emissions, particularly for the benefit of member countries with economies in transition (GE.CE); and
- (g) facilitating capacity building for air quality management and the application of clean coal combustion technologies in Central Asia (C, GE.CE).

Work methods: Exchange of information and views at the annual session of the Committee and through Ad Hoc Group of Experts, dedicated Task Forces, seminars, workshops and study tours; and preparation of studies, as well as presentation of case studies on successful projects.

7. COAL MINE METHANE AND SUSTAINABLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

Work to be undertaken: To encourage the development and profitable recovery and use of CMM and abandoned mine methane (AMM) in the UNECE region. The use of CMM mitigates climate change, improves mine safety and productivity, and generates revenues and cost savings. Particular emphasis is placed on promoting the environmental sustainability of the CMM industry, as well as technical cooperation among member States through activities such as:

- (a) working closely with member States and the mining industry to establish a clear link between the economic benefits gained through the safe drainage and use of CMM and to encourage implementation of best practices through dialogue with the relevant technical, business and regulatory communities (C, GE.CMM, GE.G);

- (b) facilitating financing of CMM projects in Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, including through active engagement with the international finance community (GE.CMM);
- (c) reviewing current legal and regulatory frameworks to assess whether existing requirements are inhibiting investment and innovation in more effective CMM degasification programmes (GE.CMM);
- (d) leading a task force, in cooperation with the Methane to Markets Partnership, to develop a globally harmonized system of terminology to facilitate technology and knowledge transfer in the CMM industry (GE.CMM); and
- (e) identification of opportunities for the CMM sector, in particular in UNECE member States with economies in transition, to participate in and benefit from the various public and private GHG emissions markets in operation (GE.CMM).

Work methods: Exchange of information and views at the annual session of the Committee and through Ad Hoc Group of Experts, dedicated Task Forces, seminars, workshops and study tours; and through the preparation of studies, as well as presentation of case studies on successful projects.
