



Distr.

LIMITED

E/ESCWA/SDPD/2016/.....

29 July 2016

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR WESTERN ASIA

Regional seminar on: «Enabling Policies to Promote Financing Renewable energy Investments»

19-20 October 2016, in the framework of the Seventh International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development International Conference on Renewable Energy (18-21 October, 2016) in Baku, Azerbaijan

INFORMATION NOTE

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), in partnership with the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UN ECE), is organizing a regional seminar on “Enabling Policies to Promote Financing Renewable energy Investments”, to be held the 19th and 20th October 2016, in Baku, Azerbaijan. The Seminar is organized within the framework of the Seventh International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development, and is part of the activities included in a United Nations Development Account (UN DA) capacity-building project, led by ESCWA in partnership with UN ECE, aiming at enhancing renewable energy (RE) investments in member countries in the context of sustainable development and climate change mitigation.

I. Background Information

The development of sustainable energy systems is essential in implementing sustainable development strategies. The development of RE is one of the main targets of the Sustainable Development Goals as stated in SDG 7 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that was adopted by the General Assembly on 25 September 2015 (Resolution A/RES/70/1). It is also one of the three pillars of the UN SE4All decade. The two initiatives call for a stronger deployment of RE projects, and a higher contribution of RE sources to the countries’ energy mix. Furthermore, economically viable RE solutions are increasingly becoming available, and countries, worldwide, have expressed their interest in adopting RE in power production and other sectors with high carbon dioxide emission levels.

However many countries still lack a proper regulatory and institutional environment that is favourable to promoting the financing of RE investments. This situation deprives private investors from having adequate institutional support to engage in developing and financing renewable energy projects. National authorities need to introduce policy reforms and create regulatory and institutional frameworks capable of supporting these investments.

II. Scope:

The present UN DA project, on “Promoting Renewable Energy Investments for Climate Change Mitigation and Sustainable Development”, is designed to work closely with RE policy makers, project developers, and other RE stakeholders in the Member Countries, to carry out several capacity building activities related to promoting RE investments. These activities aims at:

- (a) Developing the skills of the public and private sectors at the national level to identify, develop and implement RE investment projects.
- (b) Providing assistance to authorities to introduce regulatory and institutional reforms needed to support these

investment projects.

(c) Enhancing the financing of renewable energy projects in selected countries.

Activities also include case studies on the experience of policy reforms, regional trainings, workshops and seminars.

This regional seminar focuses on the policy and institutional reforms that are needed to provide a better environment for promoting RE investments, based on lessons learned from four UN ESCWA Member Countries and three UN ECE Member countries. The seven countries were the subjects of seven case studies on policy reforms that are being conducted in the two Regions.

Moreover, the seminar is organized in the framework of the Seventh International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development, and the activities of the second day of the seminar are held as the third session of the “International Conference on Renewable Energy (ICoRE)” to take place during the Forum. Participants in the seminar will benefit from this valuable occasion to be briefed about the RE status and future directions worldwide (Session 1 of the ICoRE), and best practices on how to increase the uptake of RE (Session 2 of the ICoRE). Other sessions of the ICoRE will discuss the role of fossil fuels for RE deployment (organised by UNESCWA). Other important topics will also be addressed at the Forum in accordance with its draft agenda; http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/energy/se/pdfs/eneff/7th_Forum_Baku_Oct.2016/Agenda_IFESD7_Baku.pdf

III. Objectives and topics of the regional training workshop

The objective of this regional seminar is to focus on policy reforms that can promote financing of RE investments with the aim of strengthening the capacity of national and local policymakers in both regions. The seminar will consider seven case studies of UN ESCWA and ECE Member Countries that would allow the participants to develop a better understanding of the role that favourable institutional and policy framework can play in promoting RE investments. The seminar will help participants identify the required or desirable changes to existing policy/legal/regulatory frameworks leading to a more favourable investment climate for RE projects.

IV. Focus Areas

The regional seminar will focus on the following topics:

- a- Policy reforms to promote financing of RE investments with the aim of strengthening the capacity of national and local policymakers in the region.
- b- Presentation of the 7 case studies conducted by UN ESCWA and UN ECE in 7 of their Member Countries, and panel discussions about the lessons learnt and ways to improve the regulatory and institutional environment to promote the financing of RE investments.
- c- Update on worldwide RE status and future directions (Session 1 of the ICoRE).
- d- Presentation of potential synergies between RE and EE (Session 2 of the ICoRE).

V. Participants

In order to engage a dialogue between public institutions in charge of developing and implementing RE policies in their respective countries and national & international stakeholders, participants, from both UN Regional Commissions, will be invited from public institutions in their respective countries, in addition to other stakeholders in the private sector.

VI. Organization of the meeting

The seminar will be held in the 19th and 20th October 2016, in Baku, Azerbaijan within the framework of the Seventh International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development, and in conjunction with the “International Conference on Renewable Energy (ICoRE)” taking place during this forum.

Seminar materials will be presented in English language.

VII. Logistical information

Each participant shall undertake the following preparation related to her/his participation: Securing hotel reservation in the venue location, visa, and any other requirements for travelling to Azerbaijan.

Instructions on how to obtain their entry visa into Azerbaijan, as well as any special arrangements made by the organizers for hotel reservations, or further logistical information are provided in attached Information logistical Note of Seventh International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development. Any update will be provided to participants in due course.

VIII. Correspondence

All correspondence related to the workshop is to be sent to either of the below addresses:

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