

UNECE roundtable on increasing the investment potential of the BRICS and Central Asian countries through UNFC and UNRMS

organized in collaboration with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation and the Federal Agency for Subsoil Use

in the frames of

Tyumen Oil and Gas Forum 2019

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The roundtable was the concluding event in the series of activities under the UNECE project “Improving national capacities of Central Asian countries to harmonize and implement an internationally applicable system of classification and sustainable management of energy and mineral resources”, funded by the Russian Federation. In total, the event assembled 93 experts, of which 30 represented the project beneficiary countries (regrettable non-participation of Turkmenistan in the project must be acknowledged),¹ specifically: Kazakhstan – 7, Kyrgyzstan – 9, Tajikistan – 4, and Uzbekistan – 10. Among these, 11 national experts present in the room were involved in the project’s activities at earlier stages, thus providing for process continuity, and allowing for building upon the previously achieved results.

The full-day event included Plenary session “Promotion of UNFC and UNRMS for expansion of investment potential of Central Asian and BRICS countries” and 2 sequential roundtables: Roundtable 1 “Methodological issues and mapping of world classification systems (PRMS, RF2013, UNFC)” and Roundtable 2 “Peculiarities of development of resource classifications for Central Asian and BRICS countries”. In connection with the project, Plenary session and Round table 2 were the primary focus.

At Plenary session, welcome address was delivered by Mr. David MacDonald, Chair of UNECE Expert Group on Resource Management (EGRM). In his interventions with presentations entitled “Sustainable Resource Management and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” (delivered on behalf of Mr. Scott Foster, Director of UNECE Sustainable Energy Division) and “United Nations Framework Classification for Resources and alignment to the Sustainable Development Goals” he stressed the importance of the topic for ensuring sustainable development, and briefed the audience on technical work being done by EGRM in support of UNFC.

Round table 2 was dedicated to discussing the case studies and follow-up actions to implement policy recommendation on application of the national UNFC system in the national contexts. The presentation with the overview of the project’s activities and the results achieved to date was delivered by Mr. Igor Litvinyuk, project manager; the following discussions were built on the conclusions from the case studies (which were developed as per project’s Activity 2.1) and presented by the national consultants from Kazakhstan (Mr. Georgiy Freiman, General Director, GeoMineProject LLP), Kyrgyzstan (Mr. Azamat Shorukov, Executive Director, Endustriel Elektrik Maden LLC), Tajikistan (Mr. Rahmonbek Bakhtdavlatov, Head of GKZ, on behalf of Mr. Sharifkhon Pirnazarov, Secretary of the State Commission For Mineral Reserves), and Uzbekistan (Mr. Jakhongir Movlanov, Head of the Center of Remote sensing and GIS technologies of the Institute of Mineral Resources).

The presented results and key findings of the case studies, developed by the national consultants, were found of high quality, which testifies for the increased skills of the experts to apply UNFC for various sectors. To the overall benefit of the project, the consultants successfully classified both energy (oil, gas, coal) and mineral (gold, silver, copper and other) reserves and resources in particular fields and deposits, that way providing concrete examples, and enabling broader applicability of UNFC. Besides the main objectives of the roundtable, a wide range of issues surrounding classification of energy and mineral reserves and resources, including application of UNFC to renewable energy resources and Guidelines on Competent Person, was discussed.

While the delegates repeatedly underscored the relevance of harmonization at national levels in general, the deliverables of this project were recognised as a stepping stone towards practical implementation of national UNFC systems. Various opportunities for this, dependent on national circumstances, were referenced, and continued work in this direction was strongly requested. The participants agreed to coordinate their efforts on both bilateral and multilateral basis, with support from UNECE secretariat, and meet at regular sessions of EGRM to exchange information and test feasibility of options to harmonize and implement an internationally applicable system of classification and sustainable management of energy and mineral resources.

¹ The requests for participation of Turkmenistan in this project (Ref.: 2018/OES/479/SED of 19 December 2018, and Ref.: 2019/OES/193/SED/32 of 5 July 2019) received no response.