

Conference Call of the Bureau of the Group of Experts on Gas

18 July 2017, 16:00

Minutes

A. Participants

Attendees:

- Mr. Francisco de la Flor Garcia (Spain), Chair
- Mr. Torstein Indrebø (Norway), Vice-chair
- Mr. Alexander Karasevich (Russian Federation), Vice-chair
- Mr. Boris Maksijan (Croatia), Vice-chair
- Mr. Dan Hooper (United States), Vice-chair
- Mr. Branko Milicevic, UNECE secretariat
- Mr. Alexandre Chachine
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Regrets:

- Mr. Tamas Korosi (Hungary), Vice-chair
- Mr. Rafael Huarte, IGU, Vice-chair

B. Summary of discussions and decisions

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted with no changes.

2. Outcomes of 13 July Methane Emissions Industry Meeting and the 12 July LNG Protocol meeting

The Chair informed the Bureau on the LNG protocol meeting and the updated matrix of actors in this field. There is a huge overlap in activities of various organizations and bodies dealing with LNG.

On 13 July there was an industry meeting on methane emissions. Three Bureau members and the secretariat attended this meeting. One of the meeting's goals was to evaluate common way of working. UNECE secretariat offered to host the next industry meeting on 21 March in Geneva, back to back with the 5th session of the Group of Experts on Gas (22-23 March). The offer was accepted. Vice-chair Hooper pointed out that these meetings should be held in a cohesive way, to make sure the industry experts stay over for GEG5.

For the 21 March Geneva industry meeting the UNECE secretariat will take lead and prepare a background documents and other necessary material.

Vice-chair Karasevic praised the meeting and asked for a detailed meeting report. The report is being compiled by Enagas and will be circulated to the Bureau as soon as ready.

3. Progress in implementation of the current work plan (model framework, case studies, publications)

The secretariat informed the Bureau about the current activities.

The Model Framework on Methane Emissions was presented in Madrid. It will be published as an official 26th Committee on Sustainable Energy document, and as such will be presented at the session. The Bureau members are encouraged to attend CSE 26. The Model Framework will be also released as an official UN publication. The secretariat is working with several companies and organizations (Enagas, Gazprom, John Crane, and Statoil) to develop a number of case studies that might be attached the Model Framework.

The secretariat is also working to overcome challenges with copyright issues that slowed down publishing of the report on removing barriers to the use of gas in transport. The secretariat approached NGVA Europe to help with some deliverables.

4. Update on the new extra-budgetary project on methane emissions from the gas value chain

Vice-chair Hooper and the secretariat updated the Bureau on the implementation of the extra-budgetary project: “Methane Management in Extractive Industries (Upstream Oil and Gas / Downstream Gas)”, funded by the US EPA/Global Methane Initiative. The funds are already received and the project implementation can start as soon as possible. At this time, the project team might use the previously released Best Practice Guidance on Coal Mine Methane as a model to follow, in particular on how to engage the stakeholder community and make sure a sufficient buy-in and ownership is built from the start. On 19 July US EPA and UNECE will hold a conference call to discuss practical aspects of project implementation. The meeting in Madrid was also a good opportunity to hear about activities of various companies and organizations that could be put to good use some project deliverables.

5. Adoption of the 2018-2019 work plan

The secretariat informed the Bureau that the work plan, with some cosmetic changes, was sent to be processed and translated as a Committee document. Vice-chair Indrebo suggested, and the Bureau accepted, that the topic of “Emerging issues” lists in brackets the concrete activities.

The Bureau also proposed that its members and the secretariat approach important member States and other stakeholders before the Committee, so that any potential misunderstanding could be resolved in advance. Chair de la Flow already discussed the work plan with EU and receive positive feedback. The secretariat informed that a meeting with several missions might be organized to discuss work plans of not only GEG but also of other subsidiary bodies.

6. Proposed events on gas in late 2017

The proposed gas event in Israel was cancelled/postponed till 2018 by the Israeli partners. In response to a request made by the secretariat Vice-chair Karasevic started to explore the possibility of hosting the workshop in Russia, with the financial and in-kind support of the Gubkin University of Oil and Gas. The hope is that in the next few days a decision will be made and the plans confirmed.

7. Preparations for the 5th session (March 2018, Geneva)

At the June conference call the Bureau started to discuss preparation for the 5th session. The secretariat invited the Bureau to reflect on possible agenda items and the central theme of the 5th session, planned for 22-23 March 2018. The programme of the session should stem from the work plan for 2018-2019 which will be hopefully adopted by the Committee in September.

8. GEG's report to the CSE on the Gas Industry Advisory Board

The secretariat reminded the Bureau that at its 25th session the CSE requested that the Group of Experts on Gas explore the establishment of a gas industry advisory board and submit its recommendation to the Committee at its 26th session. At its March 2017 session the Group of Experts took note that the ECE Executive Committee was weighing all options for enhancing dialogue between the gas industry and ECE member States, including the possibility for the Group of Experts on Gas to become the platform for the dialogue. The Group of Experts requested the secretariat to provide a concept note that explains possible options and how they may affect the Group of Experts on Gas. The secretariat is now working on this document.

9. Date of the next Bureau call

The next conference call will be held around 6 September 2017.

7. Any other business

The Bureau discussed the outcomes of the IGU meeting held in Daegu, Korea and its implications. The secretariat informed the Bureau that a Korean delegation will visit UNECE on 28 August, to discuss collaboration between UNECE and incoming IHU presidency and the committees.
