

Economic Commission for Europe
Committee on Sustainable Energy
Expert Group on Resource Management
Eleventh session
Geneva, 22-25 September 2020
Item 18 of the provisional agenda
Adoption of Conclusions and Recommendations

DRAFT Conclusions and Recommendations arising from the eleventh session of the Expert Group on Resource Management¹

Agenda item 1: Adoption of Agenda

1. The Expert Group on Resource Management noted that the unprecedented circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic had resulted in the eleventh session being postponed to 22-25 September and in a different and reduced format in collaboration with the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy. The Expert Group decided to postpone discussions on agenda items 4 and 15 to the twelfth session and adopted its agenda (ECE/ENERGY/GE.3/2020/1).

Agenda item 2: Election of Officers

2. The term of the current Bureau of the Expert Group was due to expire at the close of the eleventh session. However, given the extraordinary situation caused by COVID-19, the Expert Group decided to extend the term of the current Bureau to the close of the twelfth session in 2021 and to elect the new nominations for the position of Vice-Chairs, notably Mr. Viktor Babashev (Kazakhstan) and Mr. JU Jianhu (the People's Republic of China), to the Bureau with immediate effect.

3. The Expert Group noted with appreciation the work and contribution of all members under these difficult circumstances.

Agenda item 5: Activities and priorities of the Committee on Sustainable Energy and matters for consideration by the Expert Group on Resource Management

4. The Expert Group noted that the theme of the sixty-ninth session of the Economic Commission for Europe in 2021 is the circular economy and sustainable use of natural resources. The Expert Group observed that this theme is aligned with its work and focus and agreed to support this meeting in particular with respect to the elaboration of relevant UN instruments required for efficient socio-economic reforms. The Expert Group also supported developing and deploying UNFC and UNRMS as a tool-kit for supporting the resource management required to attain the SDGs. It noted the importance of cooperating thereon with the other subsidiary bodies of the Committee on Sustainable Energy.

Agenda item 6: United Nations Economic and Social Council Decision 2004/233

5. The Expert Group approved the draft text of the updated United Nations Economic and Social Council Decision 2004/233 on the global application of the United Nations Framework Classification for Resources (UNFC) (EGRM-11/2020/INF.2) and agreed to invite the Committee on Sustainable Energy and the Executive Committee to consider submitting the draft revised Decision on UNFC to ECOSOC for consideration and possible endorsement.

¹ These draft conclusions and recommendations were developed by the Bureau of the Expert Group and are not intended in any way to prejudice the discussions at the eleventh session, but rather to provide a draft text that will be updated as the meeting progresses.

Agenda item 7: UNFC and UNRMS guidelines and best practices for the delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals and support to the Food-Water-Energy Nexus.

6. The Expert Group noted with appreciation the work of the Sustainable Development Goals Delivery Working Group and requested further develop detailed specifications, guidelines and best practices on the effective use of UNFC and UNRMS for sustainable development, taking into consideration global values, regional circumstances, priorities and needs for resource management in the age of big data and artificial intelligence (ECE/ENERGY/GE.3/2020/7).

Agenda item 8: Pathways to Sustainable Energy

7. The Expert Group noted with appreciation the document “Pathways to Sustainable Energy – Policy recommendations from the Expert Group on Resource Management” (ECE/ENERGY/2020/10) that was prepared by the Bureau of the Expert Group and submitted to the twenty-ninth session of the Committee on Sustainable Energy.

Agenda item 9: Development, maintenance and application of UNFC and UNRMS

8. The Expert Group noted with appreciation the work of the Technical Advisory Group to coordinate the activities of all the sectoral Working Groups of the Expert Group and recommended that it continues to provide technical support for the development of UNFC and UNRMS and its application especially to support the green recovery in the post-COVID situation.

(a) Revision of UNFC

9. The Expert Group noted that the updated UNFC published at the end of 2019 (ECE Energy Series Number 61 and ECE/ENERGY/125) had optimized the language to be suitable to all resources, while the classification system itself remained fundamentally unchanged. The Expert Group requested the Technical Advisory Group to facilitate the necessary minor updates in the specifications and guidance notes to be fully aligned with the UNFC 2019 Update.

(b) Development of UNRMS

10. Recognizing the key role of sustainable resource management in the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals and responding to the UN Decade of Action 2020–2030, the Expert Group recommended the accelerated development of the United Nations Resource Management System, based on the objectives, requirements, users, outline and way forward as discussed in the Concept Note (ECE/ENERGY/GE.3/2020/5).

(c) Minerals

11. The Expert Group noted with appreciation the work of the Minerals Working Group and the progress made to develop the specifications and guidelines for application of UNFC to minerals and requested that the draft document be finalized and submitted for public consultations. The Expert Group noted with appreciation the Case Studies on Bridging from the National Standard of the People’s Republic of China Classification for Resources/Reserves of Solid Fuels and Mineral Commodities (GB/T 17766-1999) and UNFC (ECE/ENERGY/GE.3/2020/9). The work to develop case studies in the Nordic region was noted with appreciation (ECE/ENERGY/GE.3/2020/10).

(d) Petroleum

12. The Expert Group noted with appreciation the work of the Petroleum Working Group and the progress made in the development of specifications and guidelines for the application of UNFC to petroleum projects and requested that the draft document be finalized and submitted for public consultations. The Expert Group noted with appreciation the Case Study on Bridging from the National Standard of the People’s Republic of China Classification for Petroleum Resources/Reserves (GB/T 19492-2004) to UNFC (ECE/ENERGY/GE.3/2020/8).

(e) Renewable energy resources

13. Following the joint session organised with the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy, the Expert Group:
- i. Noted the benefits of standardised renewable energy resource classification and management, including: the tracking of common milestones by project developers; harmonised monitoring of project pipelines by portfolio managers in utilities and integrated energy companies; having improved information on project maturities and risks for investors, banks and regulators; and, directly comparable information on resource potentials for policy makers.
 - ii. Noted that the use of standardised resource classifications including common project milestones and harmonised reporting, promises to reduce transaction costs while improving the quality of information being shared between businesses and governments and further noted the importance of this in the post-COVID-19 green recovery.
 - iii. Noted the importance of further testing the classification of renewable energy projects using UNFC and agreed to facilitate case studies or pilot projects by ECE member States in cooperation with the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy for presentation at its twelfth session.
 - iv. Invited a member of the Bureau of the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy to join the Renewable Energy Working Group.
 - v. Agreed to work with the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy to prepare and issue a joint study on the benefits and challenges for governments applying UNFC to renewable energy projects and resources. Such a study would serve to highlight the alignment of UNFC with the Sustainable Development Goals.
 - vi. Requested the secretariat to facilitate coordination with the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy.
 - vii. Noted with appreciation the work of its Renewable Energy Working Group and in particular the approval of the specifications for the application of UNFC to solar energy (ECE/ENERGY/2019/15) and wind energy (ECE/ENERGY/2019/16) by the Committee on Sustainable at its twenty-eighth session.
 - viii. Requested the Working Group to continue its work to develop draft specifications for hydropower and marine energy.

(f) Nuclear fuel resources

14. The Expert Group noted with appreciation the preparation of the draft report on “Application of UNFC and UNRMS: The Role of Nuclear Energy in Sustainable Development - Entry Pathways” (EGRM-11/2020/INF.5) by the Nuclear Fuel Resources Working Group. The Expert Group requested the Nuclear Fuel Resources Working Group to submit the draft report for public consultation and finalize the report based on the comments received, and further disseminate the report for broader use. Following review of the Concept Note on “Integrated lifecycle management of nuclear fuel resources for sustainable energy”(ECE/ENERGY/GE.3/2020/7), the Expert Group requested the Nuclear Fuel Resources Working Group to prepare the full report in consultation with all relevant stakeholders.

(g) Injection projects

15. The Expert Group requested the Working Group to update further and/or develop specifications, guidelines and case studies for the application of UNFC and UNRMS to injection projects.

(h) Anthropogenic resources

16. The Expert Group noted with appreciation the work of the Anthropogenic Resources Working Group and requested the Working Group to support the development of case studies for the application of UNFC and UNRMS to anthropogenic resources.

(i) Groundwater resources

17. The Expert Group noted with appreciation the work of the Groundwater Resources Working Group and requested the Working Group to support the development of specifications for the application of UNFC and UNRMS to groundwater resources.

(j) Commercial aspects and financial reporting

18. The Expert Group noted with appreciation the draft document “UNFC applied to Commercial Assessments – Update” (ECE/ENERGY/GE.3/2020/5) and requested the Commercial Working Group to finalize the document.

(k) Competent Person and evaluator qualifications

19. The Expert Group noted with appreciation the work of the Competent Person Task Force and the progress made on updating the Guidance Notes on Competent Person Requirements and Evaluator Qualifications and requested that the revised documentation aligned to UNFC and UNRMS principles be developed.

(l) Other potential applications

20. The Expert Group recommended that subject to volunteers and extrabudgetary funds being identified, sub-groups be established to explore the applicability of UNFC and UNRMS to other resources such as coal mine methane and energy from wastes.

Agenda item 10: Accommodating social and environmental considerations in UNFC and UNRMS

21. The Expert Group noted the draft document “Principles of resource classification” (ECE/ENERGY/GE.3/2020/3) and recommended that the guidance provided be used in the application of UNFC. The Expert Group noted the updated draft document “Guidance for social and environmental considerations for UNFC” (EGRM-11/2020/INF.4) and recommended that the guidance be finalized, and recommended guidance should be used in the application of UNFC.

Agenda item 11: Application of UNFC in different geographical contexts

22. The Expert Group noted the progress made by the “UNFC Europe” initiative to harmonize classification and management of raw materials at EU level under the European Commission’s Raw Materials Initiative. The Expert Group noted the progress made by the “UNFC Africa” initiative to develop the UNFC African Mineral and Energy Resource Classification and Management System (UNFC-AMREC) aligned to the Africa Mining Vision under the leadership of the African Union Commission’s AMREC Working Group.

Agenda item 12: International Centres of Excellence on Sustainable Resource Management and extrabudgetary projects for implementation of the United Nations Framework Classification for Resources and development of the United Nations Resource Management System

23. The Expert Group noted the interest in establishing national and/or regional centres of excellence on sustainable resource management worldwide based on UNFC and UNRMS, with the technical support of ECE.

24. The Expert Group approved the text of the document “Criteria for Designation of International Centres of Excellence on Sustainable Resource Management (ICE-SRM) and Terms of Reference for ICE-SRM (EGRM-11/2020/INF.3).

25. The Expert Group noted with appreciation the ongoing extrabudgetary projects that support application of UNFC, in particular: (a) Improving national capacities of Central Asian countries to harmonize and implement internationally applicable system of classification and sustainable management of energy and mineral resources (funded by the Russian Federation); (b) Integrated energy and water resource management in support of sustainable development in South-East Europe and Central Asia (funded by the United Nations Development Account).

Agenda item 13: Women and diversity in resource management.

26. The Expert Group noted with appreciation the establishment of the Working Group on Women in Resource Management to promote the positive benefits of diversity and inclusion in resource management.

27. The Expert Group noted that women have an important role in the effective application of the relevant UN instruments related to regulation of global GHG emissions, international energy, CO₂ transport and sectoral interlinkages and in coordinating with other groups of experts on alternative and smarter approaches to sustainable resource management.

Agenda item 14: Education and outreach.

28. The Expert Group recommended that an educational and training session on UNFC and UNRMS be organized on the first day of the twelfth session.

Agenda item 16: Work plan for 2018-2019 and work plan for 2020-2021

29. The Expert Group noted that it has successfully implemented its work plan for 2018-2019. The Expert Group noted that the implementation of the work plan for 2020-2021 is progressing in spite of the challenging situation caused by COVID-19.

Agenda item 17: Other business

30. Following discussion and careful review and in the light of the expanded scope of application of UNFC and the development of UNRMS, the Expert Group agreed that its twelfth session needs to be held over five days, including an educational and training session on UNFC and UNRMS, but with an option to reduce the total number of days commensurate with the required agenda items.

Agenda item 19: Adoption of the report and close of the meeting

31. The report of the meeting was adopted subject to any necessary editing and formatting.
