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**Economic Commission for Europe**

Committee on Sustainable Energy

**Group of Experts on Renewable Energy**

**Eighth session**

Geneva, 5-6 October 2021

Item 11 of the provisional agenda

**Report of the meeting**

Draft Conclusions and Recommendations arising from the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy Eighth Session[[1]](#footnote-2)

Draft for Discussion – Version 24 September 2021

The Group of Experts on Renewable Energy:

I. Adoption of the agenda

*Documentation:* ECE/ENERGY/GE.7/2021/1 – Annotated provisional agenda.

1. Adopted the Agenda as presented.

**II. Opening remarks**

2. In his opening remarks, the Chair shared his reflections on the challenging situation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the impact on the activities of the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy (Group of Experts). This session of the Group of Experts was delivered jointly with the Group of Experts on Cleaner Electricity Systems and will be co-Chaired by the Chair of the Group of Experts on Cleaner Electricity Systems. The joint session is part of the 11th International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development.

3. The Chair noted that this year’s meeting was held in cooperation with a number of other groups of experts, in particular with the Group of Experts on Gas and the Expert Group on Resource Management. The Chair observed that it would be valuable for such close cooperation to continue with all of the groups of experts reporting to the Committee on Sustainable Energy in view of the key role of renewable energy in the transition to a sustainable energy future.

III. Election of officers

1. The Group of experts elected Mr./ Ms…..,, as Vice-Chairs for two years. During its seventh session in 2020, the Group of Experts elected for two years the representative of Ukraine as its Chair and representatives of Albania, Armenia, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Germany, Kazakhstan, Russian Federation, and Serbia as Vice-Chairs, and invited representatives from the International Energy Agency (IEA), the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), the Renewable Energy Policy Network for the 21st Century (REN21), and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to participate in the Bureau for two years.

5. The Bureau of the Group of Experts has the following members: Mr. Kostiantyn Gura (Ukraine) as Chair, and Mr. Adrian Bylyku (Albania), Ms. Victoria Keshishyan (Armenia),   
Mr. Andrei Miniankou (Belarus), Mr. Admir Softić (Bosnia and Herzegovina),   
Ms. Margalita Arabidze (Georgia), Mr. Tibor Fischer (Germany), Ms. Ainur Sospanova (Kazakhstan), Mr. Georgy Ermolenko (Russian Federation), Mr. Miloš Banjac (Serbia),   
Mr. Paolo Frankl (International Energy Agency), Mr. Gurbuz Gonul (International Renewable Energy Agency), Ms. Rana Adib (Renewable Energy Policy Network for the 21st Century), and Ms. Michela Morese (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations/Global Bioenergy Partnership) as Vice-Chairs

IV Tracking progress and exchange of experiences on how to increase the uptake of renewable energy

*Documentation:* ECE/ENERGY/GE.7/2018/3 – Perspectives for renewable energy in the ECE region.

ECE/ENERGY/2019/1 – Pathways to sustainable energy – Status Report.

6. Expressed appreciation for the progress made in the uptake of renewable energy and the subsequent needed policy options from the perspective of renewable energy.

7. Encouraged countries of the region to improve quality of data to monitor and assess progress made in the renewable energy uptake as well as to convey preliminary expressions of interest to organize Renewable Energy Hard Talks in their countries

8. Noted with appreciation the work done by REN21 and dena in understanding key issues to be considered in order to make the needed normative and institutional changes to promote investments and, subsequently, increase the uptake of renewable energy.

9. Recognized the role of the REN21 ECE Status Report in tracking renewable energy progress in ECE countries, which is under finalization within the RE-Uptake project implemented jointly by dena (German Energy Agency) and REN21 in cooperation with the ECE secretariat and with the support provided by the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy of Germany (BMWi) ,

10. Requested the secretariat to assist interested countries in identifying obstacles and bottlenecks to renewable energy investments through the organization of Renewable Energy Hard Talks, based on the availability of resources.

11. Welcomed support provided by the Regional Advisor to the work of the Group of Experts in a number of areas

12. Invited ECE member States to consider potential requests for studies and capacity-building activities in the area of renewable energy that can be addressed with support of Regional Advisory Services.

13. Took note of the study  “Energy Transition and Post-Covid-19 Socio-economic Recovery: Role of Women and Impact on Them”, supported by case studies from five countries in the UNECE region (Albania, Belarus, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, and Uzbekistan), and acknowledged that engaging with women in the energy sector can have multiple benefits, including contribution to skilled labour, entrepreneurs, and investors in the development of energy efficiency across sectors.

V. Cross-cutting and inter-sectoral cooperation to integrate renewable energy into energy systems

*Documentation:* ECE/ENERGY/GE.7/2021/4 – Overview of Benefits and Challenges for Governments applying UNFC to Renewable Energy Projects and Resources

14. Recognized the contribution of implemented and on-going activities towards a better integration of renewable energy into energy systems, considering in an integrated and cross-cutting manner the aspects of interlinkages with other energy sources. This includes an improved understanding of renewable energy resource characteristics and availability as well as the strengthening of policy, institutional, normative and regulatory frameworks.

15. Expressed gratitude for the delegates’ presentations on their experiences and views on how to better integrate renewable energy into energy systems, in particular on the interlinkages and synergies between renewable energy and natural gas and cleaner electricity production.

16. Taking into account the importance of further testing the classification of renewable energy projects using the United Nations Framework Classification for Resources (UNFC) Noted with appreciation the content of the study titled “Overview of Benefits and Challenges for Governments applying UNFC to Renewable Energy Projects and Resources”, jointly prepared by the Renewable Energy Working Group of the Expert Group on Resource Management (EGRM) and GERE experts.

17. Expressed appreciation for the cooperation with other sectoral activities of the ECE in helping to achieve a better management of resources, including the increase of the renewable energy share sustainably, taking into consideration intersectoral opportunities and effects in the water-energy-food-ecosystems nexus. It requested continuing the cooperation with the Task Force on the Water-Food-Energy to strengthen the potential role of renewable energy in promoting the nexus approach as well as links to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the implications for climate change mitigation.

18. Invited the secretariat to engage, within the scope of its expertise, in the joint work with other subsidiary bodies on transition of the energy sector in line with international agreements and in support to the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, and following the recommendation of the Committee on Sustainable Energy on energy sub-programme's Strategic Review and Pathways Programme,

VI. Work Plan for 2020-2021 and 2022-2023

*Documentation:* ECE/ENERGY/2021/12 – Work Plan of the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy for 2022-2023.

19. Noted with appreciation the concrete activities the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy has been implementing since the end of 2014 to help significantly increase the uptake of renewable energy in the region.

20. Noted that it had delivered on the concrete activities of the mandate and work plan for 2020–2021 and reported achievements and key milestones at the twenty-eighth session of the Committee on Sustainable Energy.

21. Requested the secretariat to work at the implementation of the Work Plan 2022-2023 as approved by the Group of Experts by written procedure and by the Committee on Sustainable Energy at its thirtieth session, under a renewed mandate, and explore possible ways and means of funding by potential donors and partner organizations for specific projects, focused on activities related to a) regulatory and policy dialogue and b) sharing of best practices on various renewable energy sources with a view to increasing the share of renewables in the global energy mix..

VII. Roundtable on financing decarbonization of energy system in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe region

*Documentation:* ECE/ENERGY/GE.7/2021/3 – Renewable Energy Financing and Investment in selected United Nations Economic Commission for Europe member States

22. Noted with appreciation the study presented to participants on “Renewable Energy Financing and Investment in selected ECE member States”, which provides a comprehensive, up-to-date overview of financing mechanisms and investment activities in four ECE member states: Albania, Georgia, Kazakhstan and Serbia. The study was instrumental to recent Renewable Energy Hard-Talks that took place or are foreseen in UNECE countries in 2021.

23. Pointed out that strengthened international cooperation is necessary to facilitate access to clean energy research and technologies, including renewable energy, energy efficiency, nuclear power and advanced and more environmental-friendly fossil-fuel technologies, and promote investments into modernization of energy infrastructure and clean energy technologies. Joint and well-balanced national power systems could be enhanced through strategic partnerships and cross-border energy cooperation, which would take into account the specificity of national power sectors.

24. Encouraged continued cooperation with the Group of Experts on Cleaner Electricity Systems, the Expert Group on Resource Management and the Group of Experts on Gas in promoting financing decarbonization of energy system, including through renewable energy investments, and advising the Committee on Sustainable Energy.

25. Requested the secretariat to further support the discussion within and among ECE countries on the relationship between policy measures and market conditions in the process of increasing renewable energy investments, while also continuing promoting and sharing successful experiences stemming from ECE Renewable Energy Hard Talks

VIII. Roundtable on technology interplay and innovation: potential of hydrogen in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe region

26. Expressed appreciation on the discussion towards clean energy pathways to a rapid shift to hydrogen ecosystem that will require hydrogen production through electrolysis from both renewable energy and nuclear power as well as from fossil fuels with CCUS.

27. Noted that across the ECE region countries are recognizing the potential for hydrogen to contribute to meeting the objectives of the Paris Climate Agreement. The regional and national hydrogen strategies have been developed in many ECE countries but there is a gap in ambition and understanding of the potential across the region.

28, Requested the secretariat to explore possible ways and means to raise extra-budgetary resources in cooperation with Group of Experts on Cleaner Electricity Systems and the Group of Experts on Gas in order to assess sustainable hydrogen production potential across the region, and strengthen national capacity in understanding the potential of global, subregional and national cost-effective hydrogen production and transport as well as how hydrogen can increase the uptake of renewable energy.

IX. Dates of the next meeting

29. The ninth session of the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy is scheduled to take place in Geneva on 6-7 October 2022, unless the Group of Experts decides otherwise.

X. Other business

30. At the time the provisional agenda was prepared, there were no issues to be raised under this item.

XI. Adoption of the report and close of the meeting

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

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1. The draft conclusions and recommendations will be reviewed and agreed by the Group of Experts after each agenda item and updated as needed [↑](#footnote-ref-2)