

REGIONAL FORUM

ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FOR THE UNECE REGION

GENEVA | 1-2 March 2018



Transforming Energy in Support of the 2030 Agenda



1 March 2018, 16:30-18:00
Lead organizers: UNECE

Room 4
International Conference Centre Geneva (CICG)
Preliminary note as at 31 January 2018

Objective

To exchange experience among countries of the UNECE region on ways to transform energy in support of the 2030 Agenda.

The roundtable discussion aims to:

- ✓ Provide a mutual learning space where policymakers can interact with their peers and other relevant stakeholders in order to exchange experiences, propose solutions to address identified problems and anticipate future developments; and
- ✓ Identify main lessons and compile a set of key action areas and good practices that can be shared with a wider audience.

Core questions

- (a) What policies and measures are policymakers developing/implementing to accelerate the transition to sustainable energy?
- (b) How can the need to reduce CO₂ emissions in order to reach the objectives of the UNFCCC Paris agreement be reconciled with the necessity to rely on fossil fuels as an important share of the energy mix in the short and medium terms?
- (c) How are countries addressing potential social impacts of the transition to sustainable energy?
- (d) How can countries ensure women's access to energy resources and their full and effective participation in the development of the future sustainable energy system?

Case studies

- ✓ Coal mine methane production at Karaganda coal basin to enhance mine safety and optimize economics (Kazakhstan)
- ✓ Coordinated Operations of Flexible Coal and Renewable Energy Power Plants (Czechia)
- ✓ Small Scale LNG – Truck Loading (Spain)
- ✓ Women in Sustainable Energy (Serbia)

Target audience

This roundtable will be of interest to policymakers and other stakeholders involved in the transition to sustainable energy, energy efficiency, renewable energy, buildings sector, industry, climate change mitigation, innovations, and in developing the green economy of the future.

Format

This round table offers a unique peer learning opportunity. While short introductions to selected case studies will be used to provide examples of how countries have addressed specific problems, all participants are expected to contribute to the discussion by sharing their own experiences, reflecting on challenges and suggesting possible solutions.

- Moderator: Mr. Scott Foster, Director, UNECE Sustainable Energy Division
- Rapporteur: Ms. Iva Brkic, Croatia

Key participants:

- ✓ Ms. Tania Meixus Fernandez, Spain, member, UNECE Group of Experts on Gas
 - ✓ Ms. Branislava Jovicic, Serbia, Project Manager for Women in Sustainable Energy South-East Europe (WISE SEE)
 - ✓ Mr. Vladimir Budinsky, Czechia, Vice-chair, UNECE Group of Experts on Cleaner Electricity Production from Fossil Fuels
 - ✓ Mr. Evgeny Alexeev, member, UNECE Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane
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Background

Energy, as the golden thread that weaves throughout the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, is essential for meeting the world's quality of life aspirations. However, according to the most recent data, progress in sustainable energy falls short. More financing and bolder policies are required to achieve energy access and meet ambitious targets for renewable energy (RE) and energy efficiency.

Today, more than 1 billion people still live without electricity. More than 3 billion people are still cooking without clean fuels or modern efficient technologies. This has adverse effects on health; women are among the most affected. The share of renewable energy in final energy consumption grew modestly from 2012 to 2014, from 17.9 per cent to 18.3 per cent. Despite their rapid growth in recent years, advanced RE technologies – solar and wind – still make up a minor share of final energy consumption. It is imperative to find a way to increase the share of renewable energy in the electricity, heat and transport sectors, which together account for 80 per cent of global energy consumption.

The Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in their pivotal Paris Agreement noted the importance of the concept of “climate justice”. The Parties emphasized the intrinsic relationships between climate change action and sustainable development, as expressed through the need to eradicate poverty and hunger, increase food security, maintain biodiversity, create decent jobs, and achieve many other nationally-defined development priorities. The world is on an increasingly narrow emissions pathway: according to the latest data, we will not succeed in limiting global warming to 2 degrees above pre-industrial levels on the basis of existing trends and commitments. At the same time, we need to understand how to reconcile a tight emissions pathway with development aspirations.

Fossil fuels still provide more than 80 per cent of the primary energy in the UNECE region and in the rest of the world. The principal challenge is how to facilitate a transition to a sustainable energy system in the most effective way, given existing limitations and the need for rapid progress. Some countries have already committed to phase out coal by 2030. Others consider that enhancing fossil energy's performance with high efficiency and low emission (HELE) technologies should remain an important policy focus. Policy discussions on how to increase access to affordable and clean energy and reduce greenhouse gas emissions and the carbon footprint of the energy sector take place at the UNECE Committee on Sustainable Energy (CSE)'s . This round table will also contribute to these debates by presenting different answers and initiatives on these key questions.

RELEVANT PUBLICATIONS

- Best Practice Guidance for Effective Methane Drainage and Use in Coal Mines, Energy Series 47
- UNECE Renewable Energy Status Report, Energy Series 48
- Best Practice Policy Guidance for Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) - Case Study: Small Scale LNG – Truck Loading
- Coordinated Operations of Flexible Coal and Renewable Energy Power Plants: Challenges and Opportunities, Energy Series 52

Linkages with other SDGs

Affordable and clean energy (SDG7), which will be discussed at this round table, has links with many other SDGs, in particular: poverty (SDG1), hunger (SDG2), good health and well-being (SDG3), resilient and sustainable cities (SDG11), responsible consumption and production (SDG12), and climate action (SDG13).