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Meeting with the Chair of the Committee on Sustainable Energy

Report by the Chair

Report by the Chair of the Committee on Sustainable Energy

The Chair of the Committee on Sustainable Energy (the Committee), Mr. Jürgen Keinhorst, is pleased to submit his report to the 108th meeting of the Executive Committee (EXCOM) on 16 December 2019. At its 102nd meeting (Geneva, 14 December 2018), EXCOM approved the programme of work of the sustainable energy subprogramme for 2019–2020.

I. Achievements since the twenty-seventh session of the Committee

1. This report outlines the main achievements of the Committee in implementing its programme of work in the period between December 2018 and November 2019 and the outcomes of its 28th session (25–27 September 2019). More information is contained in the report of the Committee ECE/ENERGY/123.

2. Since its 27th session (26–27 September 2018), the Committee has continued to debate how to accelerate and deepen the transition to sustainable energy systems in the region of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) in the context of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda). The gaps between commitments that countries have made and what is needed to achieve sustainable energy have never been larger. Greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise and show no sign of slowing their ascent. The Committee therefore has chosen to maintain its focus on this theme, but to stress “deeper” and “faster” from the angles of achieving net carbon neutrality, modernising energy infrastructure and transforming the energy system.

3. Currently, the activities of the sustainable energy subprogramme fall into three broad categories: i) sustainable resource management; ii) deep transformation of the energy system; and iii) reducing the environmental footprint of the energy sector. The Committee oversees implementation of the following flagship projects and activities (supported by extrabudgetary funding): Pathways to Sustainable Energy; Methane Management in Extractive Industries; High-Performance Buildings Initiative; and the International Fora on Energy for Sustainable Development.

4. Key achievements since December 2018 include:

(a) Organising the Tenth International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development in Bangkok, Thailand, on 7-8 October 2019, in partnership with the other four United Nations Regional Commissions, the Government of Thailand, and other key international organisations working on energy topics. Over 400 participants gathered over two days to reflect on collaboration, energy technologies and policies to develop and implement measures to close the gaps between action and ambition. The meeting was held back to back with the 2nd session of the Committee on Energy of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN ESCAP). The Committee was represented by its Chair;

(b) Finalizing the first phase of the Committee’s flagship project “Pathways to Sustainable Energy”. Based on the findings from the modelling and scenario exercise, the Committee considered the consequences of the ongoing energy transition from all angles, including, UNECE subregional challenges and opportunities, technology innovation, adaptive policy responses through an early-warning system and recommendations from the Committee’s six subsidiary bodies (see documents ECE/ENERGY/2016/7, ECE/ENERGY/2018/1, and ECE/ENERGY/2019/1 for details). The Committee received a full update with the objectives to shape possible future project phases;

(c) Further broadening the application of the United Nations Framework Classification for Resources (UNFC) to solar and wind energy (ECE/ENERGY/2019/15,

ECE/ENERGY/2019/16) and updating its current classification scheme (ECE/ENERGY/2019/17);

(d) Further contributing to reducing greenhouse gas emissions through completing and endorsing best practice guidance for effective methane recovery and use from abandoned coal mines (ECE/ENERGY/2019/13) and publishing best practice guidance for effective methane management in the oil and gas sector (ECE/ENERGY/2019/14);

(e) Organising renewable energy “hard talks” in Serbia (21-22 March 2019) and Bosnia and Herzegovina (4-5 December 2018) to explore the findings of the report “UNECE Renewable Energy Status Report 2017”¹ and to discuss concrete recommendations for the host countries;

(f) Further progressing energy performance of buildings through the High-Performance Buildings Initiative (HPBI) to deploy and disseminate UNECE’s “Framework Guidelines for Energy Efficiency Standards in Buildings” and to advance the performance of buildings broadly. This work involves establishing and coordinating International Centres of Excellence on High-Performance Buildings. Three recently completed studies on mapping energy efficiency standards and technologies in buildings in the UNECE Region support this initiative. ECOSOC took note of the Framework Guidelines at the recommendation of UNECE;

(g) Further increasing the visibility of UNECE’s regional impact by assisting Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan in drafting National Sustainable Energy Action Plans (NSEAP), to be used as an instrument for implementation of practical steps in transition towards sustainable energy;

(h) Holding its first ever dialogue on how gender activities are being integrated into the work of the sustainable energy subprogramme during its session.

II. Main outcomes from the twenty-eighth session of the Committee

5. 2019 is likely going to be the hottest year on record, following 2015, 2016, and 2017. CO₂ emissions have continued to climb to 412 ppm. It is therefore not surprising that the Committee’s own assessment of the status of energy in the UNECE region confirms that urgent action is needed to leave no-one behind to achieve Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 7 and consequently other SDGs.

6. The world has never been so outspoken about the urgency and scale needed to reduce net CO₂ emissions to zero to limit expected temperature increases. Recommendations made by the United Nations Climate Action Summit, hosted in New York by the Secretary-General in September 2019, refer to transformations in a number of sectors, including buildings, industry, transport, energy, and agriculture, forestry and other land uses. The Committee and its subsidiary bodies are active in a number of these sectors from an energy perspective and have launched the flagship projects as described in para. 3.

7. The complexity and interconnectedness of the energy sector is one of the reasons the Committee decided that the challenges of the 2030 Agenda are best met through integrative nexus activities that “energy for sustainable development” offers. As a consequence, UNECE is exploring alternative pathways countries might consider for achieving their national targets while contributing to global and regional objectives. The flagship project “Pathways to Sustainable Energy” is an important vehicle for understanding the gaps that exist in meeting the energy-related objectives of the 2030 Agenda and the opportunities available to close the

¹ <http://www.unece.org/energy/welcome/areas-of-work/renewable-energy/unece-renewable-energy-status-report.html>

gaps. After evaluating interim results in an informal open-ended consultation meeting held on 16 May 2019 in Geneva, the Committee debated in its 28th session how the countries of the UNECE region can make commensurate efforts to attain energy for sustainable development. A summary of policy imperatives resulting from this debate is listed below²:

(a) Energy efficiency is the first fuel. Energy conservation should be the core element of a future energy system, and energy efficiency improvements in production, transformation, transmission, distribution and consumption of energy should be addressed as a priority. Focus areas are buildings and retrofit schemes for the residential sector, progressive mobility solutions to reduce the carbon intensity of transport, and solutions allowing to achieve cost-effective potential that industrial energy efficiency offers;

(b) Prepare the energy system for the transformation to significant levels of renewable energy and to monitor ongoing process, highlighting barriers to the transformation. Phase out harmful fossil fuel subsidies and discourage the use of high-carbon energy through pricing and incentive schemes;

(c) Reduce the environmental footprint of energy. Reduced carbon emissions and negative carbon technologies (incl. carbon capture usage and storage (CCUS)) can support the achievement of the 2°C target and carbon neutrality commitments. Further investments are necessary;

(d) Climate focused R&D is needed to drive innovation and accelerate decarbonization, for example on metal free batteries, increased storage options and renewable gases (such as hydrogen and biomethane). Feedstocks for petrochemical and inorganic materials can play an untapped role and deserve immediate attention;

(e) Fugitive methane emissions from extractive industries need to be prevented. Best practice guidance documents developed by UNECE exist and require deployment and dissemination to deliver concrete results;

(f) Modernizing and optimizing the existing fossil-based infrastructure is essential to achieve sustainable development. The shift to a sustainable energy system is a long-term undertaking and must embrace all pillars of sustainable development seeking to leave nobody behind and maintaining social cohesion;

(g) The challenge of integrating intermittent renewable energy into power and heating grids persists. Demand-side flexibility and storage can facilitate integration of variable renewable generation. International standards are required to optimize flexible power systems that rely on the interplay of fossil fuels and renewable energy; and

(h) There is a need for an overview of countries' policy readiness for the energy transition. Improvements in the legal, regulatory, and market structure frameworks are needed to enable further transformation of the energy system.

8. During the 28th session, the Committee confirmed the vital role that energy plays as an enabler for improving quality of life and highlighted its links not only to climate but to other sectors such as water, health, and infrastructure. It very much sees its activities as fundamentally aligning with SDGs 7, 9, 11, 12, 13, and 17. The Committee encouraged nexus work and linkages to be reflected in all efforts to the extent that resources are available. It welcomed the offer by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to become an institutional partner on resilience and protection of critical infrastructure from natural and man-made disasters, given the importance of energy security for countries and citizens alike.

9. As it has in the past, the Committee stressed the lack of investments in renewable energy in the Caucasus, Central Asia, the Russian Federation, and South Eastern and Eastern

² Selection of findings from the project report to be published on 31 December 2019 as part of the Energy Series.

Europe, given that renewable energy potential (for power, heat, transport) in these subregions remains largely untapped. In this context, the Committee and its member States could identify subregional opportunities for joint energy system planning to strengthen national and regional grids, improve energy security and provide integrated planning of resources (such as water, energy and agriculture).

10. The promotion of a low-carbon, circular economy is a Herculean task that requires significant international cooperation. Sustainable resource management practices that embrace circular economy principles and that integrate the full spectrum of the 2030 Agenda's goals and targets need to be implemented. The Committee has had regular exchanges on circular economy, waste-to-energy technologies, and other options for member States, and the updated United Nations Framework Classification for Resources (UNFC) provides countries, companies, financial institutions and other stakeholders with a tool for sustainable development of energy and mineral resource endowments. UNFC applies to energy resources including oil and gas; renewable energy; nuclear fuels; mineral resources; injection projects for the geological storage of CO₂; and anthropogenic resources such as secondary resources recycled from residues and wastes. The emerging challenges in these sectors are the sustainable, environmental-friendly, carbon neutral and efficient development and production of energy and raw materials required for a growing population.

11. The role that fossil fuels play in the energy systems of the UNECE region played an important role in the Committee's debate. Energy scenarios for the UNECE region show that coal will continue to play an important role in the regional energy mix until 2050. Recognising the importance of balancing carbon emissions from fossil fuels to reach net carbon neutrality, and based on recommendations made in document ECE/ENERGY/2019/2 on Attaining carbon neutrality in the UNECE region by 2050, the Committee requested to develop ambitious instruments to reduce the environmental footprint of fossil energy use and further requested a position paper of the UNECE on carbon neutrality, containing policy recommendations on how to achieve carbon neutrality and the future role of fossil fuels (see ECE/ENERGY/123, V.)

12. The Committee underlined that energy transition is a shared challenge that requires continuous action and effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. The Committee's focus is therefore on the promotion of mutually beneficial economic-interdependence to accelerate attainment of the 2030 Agenda through integrative, nexus solutions beyond the energy space. The Committee is an ideal platform to facilitate technological and regional cross-border cooperation to strengthen best practice exchanges. There is also a huge potential for cooperation and exchange with UNECE sister Regional Commissions.

13. The full list of conclusions and recommendations arising from the twenty-eighth session of the Committee can be found in document ECE/ENERGY/123.

14. The Committee endorsed the:

(a) Programme of work of the sustainable energy subprogramme for 2020, as contained in document ECE/ENERGY/2019/3;

(b) Requests for extensions of mandates of all six subsidiary bodies, notably of the Groups of Experts on Energy Efficiency, Renewable Energy, Cleaner Electricity Systems, Coal Mine Methane, and Gas, until 31 December 2021, and of the Expert Group on Resource Management until 31 December 2024; and

(c) Work Plans of all six subsidiary bodies for 2020 – 2021, as contained in documents ECE/ENERGY/2019/6, ECE/ENERGY/2019/7, ECE/ENERGY/2019/8, ECE/ENERGY/2019/9, ECE/ENERGY/2019/10, and ECE/ENERGY/2019/11).

15. The Executive Committee is invited to approve the above decisions.

III. Major activities planned for 2020 and beyond

16. Looking forward, the Committee recommended priority actions that are sensible economically, environmentally, and socially under all circumstances and that therefore should be pursued to drive achieving the 2030 Agenda, namely decarbonisation of societies and attaining carbon neutrality, sustainable resource management, energy efficiency improvements in buildings and industry, and methane management in the extractive industries.

17. Focus areas arising from the 28th session are listed below, are, however, *all* dependent on receiving extrabudgetary contributions, including support for staffing of the secretariat. Outreach and expertise in the secretariat can only be maintained if funding is available for such activities, and this includes travelling and participation in important stakeholder events. This is currently not the case in the sustainable energy subprogramme.

Policy options to attain sustainable energy (Pathways to Sustainable Energy continued)

18. The first phase succeeded in constructing a robust analytical architecture based on complex modelling by leading institutions and on strategic analyses using a scenario-based assessment of critical unknowns and uncertainties. For the next phase, the Committee stressed the need for further exploration of sub-regional specificities, the role of technology and innovation in reaching sustainable energy, and the range of policy alternatives available to countries. Further work is needed for capacity building in use of the modelling architecture, implementation of an early warning system to alert countries who may not be on track to achieve their targets and tracking of progress of energy indicators. The Committee recognised the need for extra-budgetary support and issued a broad call for donors for this second phase.

Hydrogen

19. Decarbonised gases/fuels do not emit carbon to the atmosphere during their use in transport, heating or energy production. These gases/fuels can also be described as zero-carbon energy carriers. One of the most versatile energy carriers is hydrogen, as it can be produced from renewable energy or natural gas, be transported and stored. Hydrogen forms the basis of chemical industries and shows huge potential for decarbonising transport, heating or energy production across the UNECE region. Two groups of experts will explore in-depth how UNECE member States could harness hydrogen to meet their international commitments and decarbonise national energy systems. The objective is to improve the understanding on the role of decarbonised gases/fuels in achieving 2030 Agenda while meeting commitments of the Paris Climate Agreement.

Deep transformation of the energy system through cleaner electricity: decarbonizing the economy and getting to net zero

20. “Carbon neutrality” refers to achieving net zero CO₂ emissions by balancing carbon emissions with carbon removal or simply by eliminating carbon emissions altogether (the transition to a “post-carbon economy”). Many countries have started to shift efforts towards carbon neutrality. As fossil fuels are likely to continue to play an important role for UNECE member States in the short and medium term, achieving carbon neutrality will require deployment of CCUS, and other compensation technologies and measures, such as increasing the absorptive capacity of forests. The Groups of Experts were requested to develop a joint

position paper containing policy recommendations on how to achieve carbon neutrality and the future role of fossil fuels including CCUS.

21. Electricity lies at the heart this opportunity. Therefore the Committee has embarked on a process to develop a UNECE wide position on the critical role electricity is making to deep transformation in energy systems. The focus of this work will be on the transition to decarbonise the power sector and the needed investments to a cleaner electricity system for enhanced decarbonisation and grid resiliency.

Eleventh International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development

22. The Committee endorsed the international forum process as an effective collaboration among the five Regional Commissions and key international partners for each Commission to support its respective member States in attaining objectives. Preparations for the 11th International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development will begin in collaboration with host country Georgia and partners early in 2020.

23. The focus of the event planned for fall 2020 will explore selected nexus areas in line with the needs of the subregion. The agenda will unite all technology options with regional cooperation, investment and financing aspects. In this context, the Committee stressed the importance of a holistic approach for implementing the 2030 Agenda and recommended a broad view of energy for sustainable development.

Multi-stakeholder dialogues on renewable energy in UNECE countries

24. Rapidly scaling up renewable energy and integrating it into existing and aging fossil fuel grids are a topic of interest not only in the UNECE region. Multi-stakeholder “hard talk” dialogues on renewable energy challenges in UNECE member States are organized by UNECE jointly with relevant ministries and partners including the Renewable Energy Policy Network for the 21st Century (REN21), the German Energy Agency (dena) and the European Commission to conduct a frank exchange about barriers to recommend concrete solutions for host countries with a positive impact on the development of renewable energy policies. Three such hard talks are currently being contemplated with countries for 2020. The concept could be enlarged to more controversial topics if so requested by potential host countries.

Modernisation of energy infrastructure

25. Work continues to progress a project that brings together the expertise of all the subsidiary bodies to create a replicable and flexible transformational business model for structural change of large industrial complexes in the context of “just” transition. While it can be expected that decarbonization efforts in all economic sectors will create new opportunities and employment, it will have disruptive effects on countries, high-carbon regions and energy intensive industries. Fears of job losses, disruptive structural and cultural changes, economic decline, and negative political implications influence the debate more strongly than the benefits of a low-carbon transition. The Committee had already endorsed the project about “just” transition as an integrated approach to sustainable development, which brings together social progress, environmental protection and economic success into a framework of democratic governance (26th and 27th sessions). In the UNECE region, there are several complexes where mining, power generation, metallurgy, manufacturing and shipping facilities have grown into dense, interrelated centres. The more profound the transition towards low-carbon energy and green economy that is undertaken by a country, the more competitive and sustainable the relevant economy can become.

26. So far, the project has engaged with interested partner organisations and international financial institutions to develop approach and lessons learnt from regions already undergoing such changes in a proactive manner. The work would bring to bear the range of expertise found in the UNECE energy subprogramme (managing methane accumulations, efficient energy production from coal and gas, improving industrial and end-use energy efficiency, optimizing resource management, and enabling the introduction of renewable energy technology). This project is fully dependent on extrabudgetary contributions to move forward.

UNFC and the United Nations Resource Management System

27. The purpose and benefits of UNFC are broad and multifaceted. UNFC allows comparison of available quantities of energy and mineral resources, their maturities (economic, environmental, social and technical) and their uncertainty and risks. All of these factors help investors understand which are the projects to invest in. Work on UNFC in 2020 will build on the many initiatives that have progressed in 2019 and earlier years. UNFC is now operational for bioenergy, geothermal, solar and wind so attention is turning to hydropower and marine energy. The ability of governments and companies to understand and compare competing energy sources is essential for navigating energy transitions and transformations.

28. Norway via its Norwegian Petroleum Directorate continues to report its petroleum resources on the Norwegian Continental Shelf according to UNFC annually and has been doing so since 2013. The Russian Federation has indicated interest that the BRICS Bank be mandated to use UNFC for lending decisions. The Russian Federation also continues to support development of a UNFC for Eurasia. Having bridged its petroleum system to UNFC, the Russian Federation will work on bridging its solid minerals system in 2020 and beyond. With its long experience on application of UNFC nationally, Ukraine together with other countries is supporting work to apply UNFC to groundwater. Kazakhstan is exploring direct or indirect application of UNFC nationally as are a number of other countries in Central Asia. The European Union is using UNFC to harmonize its raw materials data. At the initiative of the European Commission, in particular D.G. GROW, a UNFC for Europe is progressing. The 55 African countries finalized the “UNFC for Africa” (UNFC-African Mineral and Energy Resources Classification and Management System or UNFC-AMREC). A reporting code has also been developed called the Pan-African Resources and Reserves Reporting Code (PARC). UNFC-AMREC and PARC are seen as the systems for sustainable development of mineral and energy resources in Africa. They will be presented to Ministers for approval in February 2020. Following approval of the Bridging Documents between its minerals and petroleum systems to UNFC, China continues to promote UNFC as a tool to advance implementation of the 2030 Agenda and international cooperation. China is looking to extend deployment of UNFC throughout the Belt and Road Initiative community. Mexico completed a large-scale project to apply UNFC to projects in 19 petroleum blocks in the country with particular emphasis on describing the social and environmental project risks. The methodology outlined in the project can be used in other countries, adapted and adopted as necessary to the local conditions, for relatively quick classification according to UNFC. Mexico is now working on a second project that will develop a UNFC digital tool and classify new petroleum projects of strategic national interest. Other countries in Latin America are now looking to UNFC, for example Colombia is considering application to minerals, and a UNFC for this region is under consideration.

29. The International Accounting Standards Board (IASB) is exploring development of an International Financial Reporting Standard (IRFS) for all extractive activities. The Expert Group on Resource Management is currently advising the IASB on UNFC and related activities and also key aspects that should be considered if an IFRS for Extractive Activities is developed, for example the need to be aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

30. Sustainable Resource Management is crucial for achieving the 2030 Agenda. By 2018, 108 countries had national policies and initiatives related to sustainable consumption and production. Companies and industries report increasingly on sustainability. The challenge today is not the availability of resources, but how they could be produced in a socially, environmentally and economically acceptable manner. UNFC has the structure to manage all energy and mineral resources in alignment with the SDGs. It is essential to have not only public support for resource projects, but also investor confidence to secure the financial capital required for development. A new resource management system is needed from the standpoints of global policy requirements, macroeconomic management, integrated resource management and the need for secondary resource management to support a circular economy. UNFC and a United Nations Resource Management System (UNRMS) based on UNFC are the tools to rewrite the resource management narrative needed if the world is to make progress on the 2030 Agenda. Work on UNRMS, as the only resource management system that promotes an integrated approach to resource development that explicitly embraces social and environmental dimensions, is progressing. It also encompasses circularity in resource production and use.

31. A network of International Centres of Excellence on Sustainable Resource Management (ICE-SRM) is under discussion. The centres will build national and regional capacities in countries to apply UNFC and UNRMS to all energy and mineral resources to enhance investment in the resource sector and to accelerate countries' attainment of the 2030 Agenda. The principal activities of the centres include conducting training workshops on integrated resource management and high-level consultations with financial institutions, stock exchanges and regulatory bodies. The centres will coordinate with key institutions to deploy the resource management mechanism. The ICE-SRM (within its activity footprint) identifies opportunities, navigates barriers to adoption of UNFC and UNRMS and efficient resource management, brokers relationships, and showcases best practices and shares results with the ICE-SRM network. Generic criteria for designation as an ICE-SRM as well as a generic Terms of Reference are under development. There is initial interest in establishing an ICE-SRM from the Russian Federation, Europe, Africa, China, Mexico and the Coordinating Council for Geoscience Programmes in East and South-east Asia (CCOP).

Methane management in extractive industries

32. UNECE has in hand its best practice guidance for managing methane in operating coal mines. In 2019, UNECE has developed two best practice guidance documents, namely for monitoring, reporting and mitigating methane emissions in the oil and gas sector, as well as for effective management of methane from abandoned coal mines. Dissemination and deployment of these monitoring and remediation procedures would accelerate reduction in atmospheric concentrations of methane, and 2020 will therefore focus on capacity building and shared experiences of methane management tools. Natural gas is expected to make important contributions to attainment of the 2030 Agenda, including possible displacement of coal for power generation, penetration of the markets for mobility, and enabling sustainable urban environments. However, methane has a climate forcing factor that is well higher than that of CO₂. As a consequence, the anticipated expansion of the role that natural gas might play in support of sustainable development can only work if the environmental challenges of methane losses can be addressed.

Resilience and protection of critical infrastructure from natural and man-made disasters

33. As critical energy infrastructures are increasingly vulnerable to natural, cyber and man-made threats, a better understanding of key risks and effective risk management strategies is crucial to ensure their protection. UNECE has become an organisational partner

to the OSCE to create a Virtual Competency and Training Centre to enhance the capacity of experts from across both regions to prevent and address these threats by offering a series of innovative online trainings on risk assessment, risk management and risk mitigations strategies. In addition, outputs will include a network/community of energy experts operating across the region and regional policy guidelines to improve the security and resilience of critical energy network. Other institutional partners include Argonne National Laboratory, the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA), The Slovak University of Technology, and the Center for Energy Systems (CESys). This project is fully dependent on extrabudgetary funding, of which OSCE has raised a part.

High-Performance Buildings Initiative

34. The HPBI comprises: 1) a global network of International Centres of Excellence on High-Performance Buildings that will provide on-the-ground implementation assistance for building owners and developers, contractors, architects, engineers and planning officials; and 2) a consortium of universities, the Global Building Network, to undertake both research into building materials, design, and construction and quality education of next generation architects and engineers. Activities in 2020 and beyond will include extending both the global network and the university consortium. Efforts will include the solicitation of extra-budgetary funding to support both work under the UNECE Joint Task Force on Energy Efficiency in Buildings and the education and outreach programmes of the global network and university consortium. Additional work will be undertaken to develop a library of case studies demonstrating global applicability of UNECE's Framework Guidelines for Energy Efficiency Standards in Buildings.³

IV. Possible changes to the subsidiary structure of the Committee

35. The Committee's decisions related to its subsidiary bodies are contained in paragraphs 14 of the current report. The global energy transition is complex and requires the possibility to respond to the fast-moving energy agenda through a dynamic and proactive set of activities. That is why the Committee, under the leadership of its Bureau, has been rethinking its procedures, structures, and activities to deliver more compelling outcomes.

36. To this effect, the Committee undertook an extended consultation on the approach it wishes to take – both in terms of mandates, structures and content – to support UNECE member States' efforts at deep transformation of their energy systems. It is expected that the subsidiary bodies give special attention to joint activities across sectors within governments and within UNECE in addressing energy nexus issues and will explore potential partnerships for enhanced capacity building and sharing of experiences on decarbonisation and resource management as they are implementing their work plans.

V. Intersectoral activities: new activities and/or progress in existing intersectoral activities

Nexus between energy and gender

37. The nexus among energy and other key development challenges (e.g. water, food, health, education, and gender) suggests that numerous opportunities can arise from wider

³ <http://www.unece.org/energy/welcome/areas-of-work/energy-efficiency/activities/energy-efficiency-in-buildings.html>

cross-sector perspectives and more holistic decision-making. Work will continue on a number of fronts, in particular on the subregional aspect of gender activities in energy. Going forward, the Committee will increase its efforts to promote the gender perspective throughout its system, including by raising awareness on gender mainstreaming in energy-related activities; promoting the incorporation of a gender perspective in meeting agendas and presentations; and, creating a supportive environment for expert participation, policies, regulations and innovative development that consider both women's and men's needs in the energy sector.

VI. Technical cooperation activities

38. Regional advisory services are key in the eyes of the Committee to respond to the needs to member States going forward. Document ECE/ENERGY/2019/18 describes the activities in the region in detail.

VII. Cooperation with other organizations

39. The Committee considers working in partnership with others to achieve energy related SDGs as a fundamental modus operandi, and in consequence, representative experts of the private sector, academia, and not-for-profit organizations are regular participants in its sessions. The value of this collaboration cannot be overstated given the complexity of the issues in achieving sustainable energy.

40. In consequence, and as every year, the Committee strives to deepen the existing relationship with the other four Regional Commissions, the World Bank Group, the International Energy Agency, the International Renewable Energy Agency, SEforAll, the Energy Community, and the International Energy Charter on tracking progress towards attainment of the energy-related SDGs and targets. The Committee renewed its encouragement to engage with other organizations and groups with relevance for UNECE energy activities to ensure complete coverage of relevant data and analysis, including deepened collaboration with organizations comprising UN Energy and with other intergovernmental, industrial, and civil society organizations.
