

Economic Commission for Europe
Committee on Sustainable Energy
Expert Group on Resource Management
Twelfth session
Geneva, 26-30 April 2021
Item 15 of the provisional agenda
Adoption of Conclusions and Recommendations

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

Agenda item 1: Adoption of Agenda

1. The Expert Group on Resource Management noted that the continuing unprecedented circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic had resulted in the twelfth session being held in a hybrid and reduced format (ECE/ENERGY/GE.3/2021/1).

Agenda item 2: Election of Officers

2. The Expert Group elected the following members to the Bureau with effect from the close of the twelfth session for a period of two years until the close of the fourteenth session: XXXX. Mr. Viktor Babashev (Kazakhstan), Ms. Branka Knežević (Bosnia and Herzegovina), and Mr. JU Jianhua (the People's Republic of China) who were elected to the Bureau at the eleventh session in 2020, will continue until the end of the thirteenth session.

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

3. The Expert Group noted with appreciation the recommendation from the Committee on Sustainable Energy at its twenty-ninth session to consider submitting the draft revised United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Decision on UNFC to the sixty-ninth session of ECE.

4. The Expert Group noted that it had participated in the preparation of the draft strategic review of the ECE sustainable energy subprogramme (ECE/ENERGY/2020/12) initiated at the twenty-ninth session of the Committee. The Expert Group further noted that sustainable resource management is a strategic priority of the subprogramme and that resource production, transformation and use, if properly managed, can ensure beneficial social and environmental outcomes.

5. The Expert Group supported developing and deploying UNFC and UNRMS as tools to support the management of resources to attain the SDGs. The Expert Group agreed in principle on its vision and strategy for application of UNFC and UNRMS for furthering sustainable development (ECE/ENERGY/GE.3/2021/7) and, in particular, its vision statement “*Using the convening power of the United Nations, we support attainment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by providing and facilitating use of a universal information framework for integrated, circular and sustainable resource management.*” The Expert Group requested the Bureau to circulate the vision and strategy electronically for broad consultation and to conduct a virtual session should the feedback indicate that this would be useful to explain the vision and strategy and collect additional inputs. Following this, the final vision and strategy should be finalised and circulated to the Expert Group for approval.

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

6. The Expert Group further requested the Bureau, in cooperation with the secretariat, to undertake outreach to ensure that all the stakeholder and user groups of UNFC and UNRMS are adequately reflected in the Group's membership.

7. The Expert Group noted the request of the Committee on Sustainable Energy at its twenty-ninth session for closer cooperation among the expert groups to address cross-cutting issues, notably related to the project on "Enhancing the understanding of the implications and opportunities of moving to carbon neutrality in the ECE region across the power and energy intensive industries by 2050" (Carbon Neutrality project) led by the Group of Experts on Cleaner Electricity Systems. The Expert Group agreed to offer its support to the project, requested the Bureau to nominate a focal point and invited interested experts to participate.

Agenda item 6: United Nations Framework Classification for Resources and United Nations Resources Management System guidelines and best practices for the delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals

8. The Expert Group noted with appreciation the work of the SDGs Delivery Working Group and requested it to develop detailed guidelines and best practices on the effective use of UNRMS for sustainable development, taking into consideration resource management as a public good and a transition vehicle to a circular economy (ECE/ENERGY/GE.3/2021/15).

9. The Expert Group noted the outcome of the United Nations Deputy Secretary-General-led High-Level Roundtable on "Extractive Industries and Sustainable Development in the UNECE region" and the forthcoming Global Roundtable on Extractive Industries on 10 May. The Expert Group requested the Committee on Sustainable Energy to recommend to member States to develop and deploy a five-point resource management framework on (i) a comprehensive social contract to operate; (ii) sustainable finance principles; (iii) a sustainable resource management system; (iv) supply chain traceability; and, (v) strategic environmental assessment for global adoption.

10. The Expert Group noted the G7 economic resiliency initiative on Critical Raw Materials led by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and agreed to include the framework for sustainable management of CRMs in UNRMS, as well as details in support of the "Resources as a Service" model.

11. The Expert Group noted with appreciation the work of the Women in Resource Management Working Group (ECE/ENERGY/GE.3/2021/14).

12. The Expert Group agreed with the recommendation of the Competent Person Working Group to merge the two guidance documents on (i) Evaluator qualifications and (ii) Competent Person Requirements and to submit the new guidance to the Expert Group at its thirteenth session.

13. The Expert Group agreed to the need to be ESG-focused on competency requirements and requested the Competent Person Working Group to focus on what is required for producing a qualified assessment as opposed to what is required to be a Competent Person.

Agenda item 7: Development of the United Nations Resource Management System

14. The Expert Group noted the progress in the development of UNRMS as a global framework for integrated and sustainable resource management. Following the request of the Committee on Sustainable Energy, the Expert Group requested the UNRMS Subgroup to accelerate development of UNRMS as a system in line with the proposals outlined in document "Draft UNRMS: Provisional structure and guidelines" (ECE/ENERGY/GE.3/2021/10). The Expert Group further requested the UNRMS Subgroup to agree with the Bureau a detailed plan for development and adoption of UNRMS,

including a timeline with specific and measurable deliverables. The Expert Group also requested the UNRMS Subgroup in cooperation with the Bureau to inform the Committee on Sustainable Energy at its thirtieth session on progress made (ECE/ENERGY/GE.3/2021/10).

Agenda item 8: Development, maintenance and application of UNFC

15. The Expert Group noted with appreciation the work of the Technical Advisory Group to coordinate and support the activities of all the sectoral Working Groups of the Expert Group. The Expert Group further recommended that the Technical Advisory Group continues to review and validate documents developed by the Working Groups. The Expert Group recommended updating the UNFC Specifications and Bridging Documents as required to be consistent with UNFC (2019) as well as development of a Common Glossary.

(a) Minerals

16. The Expert Group noted with appreciation the work of the Minerals Working Group and the progress made to develop supplementary specifications for the application of UNFC to minerals (ECE/ENERGY/GE.3/2021/5). The Expert Group recommended harmonization, to the extent possible, of titles, content and structure with other sectoral specifications. The Expert Group approved the draft supplementary specifications for the application of UNFC to minerals for public consultation. Subject to the document being approved through its agreed procedures, the Expert Group recommended it be submitted to the Committee on Sustainable Energy for review and endorsement.

(b) Petroleum

17. 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 (ECE/ENERGY/GE.3/2021/4). The Expert Group noted that the draft supplementary specifications for the application of UNFC to petroleum were issued for public comment from 3 December 2020 to 1 February 2021 and requested that the text be revised to respond to the comments received. The Expert Group recommended harmonization, to the extent possible, of titles, content and structure with other sectoral specifications. Subject to the document being approved through its agreed procedures, the Expert Group recommended it be submitted to the Committee on Sustainable Energy for review and endorsement.

(c) Renewable energy resources

18. The Expert Group noted the benefits of standardized renewable energy resource classification and management, including: renewable energy project development; banking and investment; energy and utilities (including integrated energy companies); regulation and accounting; and government policy and planning. The use of standardized resource classifications, including common project milestones and harmonized reporting, promises to reduce transaction costs while improving the quality of information being shared between businesses and governments. The Expert Group further noted the importance of standardized renewable energy resource classification and management in the post-COVID-19 green recovery (ECE/ENERGY/GE.3/2021/13).

19. The Expert Group requested the Renewable Energy Working Group to cooperate closely with the ECE Group of Experts on Renewable Energy in its work and to develop jointly the study outlined in the concept note (ECE/ENERGY/GE.3/2021/13) for presentation to the eighth meeting of the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy and the thirteenth session of the Expert Group.

20. The Expert Group noted the importance of further testing the classification of renewable energy projects using UNFC and agreed to facilitate case studies or pilot projects by countries in cooperation with the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy for presentation at its thirteenth session

21. The Expert Group further requested the Working Group to continue development of draft specifications for hydropower and marine energy.

(d) Nuclear fuel resources

22. The Expert Group noted with appreciation the work of the Nuclear Fuels Working Group and the progress made to develop the specifications for application of UNFC to nuclear projects (ECE/ENERGY/GE.3/2021/11). The Expert Group recommended harmonization, to the extent possible, of titles, content and structure with other sectoral specifications, and approved the draft specifications for the application of UNFC to nuclear projects for public consultation. Subject to the document being approved through its agreed procedures, the Expert Group recommended it be submitted to the Committee on Sustainable Energy for review and endorsement.

(e) Injection projects

23. The Expert Group noted with appreciation the contribution of the Working Group to the Carbon Neutrality project and the work of Group of Experts on Cleaner Electricity Systems, in particular to the technology brief on Carbon Capture Use and Storage (CCUS)² and the study on Geologic CO₂ storage in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia - An initial analysis of potential and policy³.

24. 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.

(f) Anthropogenic resources

25. 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 application of UNFC and UNRMS to anthropogenic resources.

(g) Groundwater resources

26. The Expert Group noted with appreciation the work of the Groundwater Working Group and the progress made to develop the specifications for application of UNFC to groundwater (ECE/ENERGY/GE.3/2021/12). The Expert Group recommended harmonization, to the extent possible, of titles, content and structure with other sectoral specifications, and approved the draft specifications for the application of UNFC to groundwater for public consultations. Subject to the document being approved through its agreed procedures, the Expert Group recommended it be submitted to the Committee on Sustainable Energy for review and endorsement.

(h) Social and environmental considerations

27. The Expert Group reviewed the revised Guidance for Social and Environmental Considerations for UNFC (ECE/ENERGY/GE.3/2021/6) and recommended that the Guidance be posted to the ECE website and its use encouraged.

(i) Commercial aspects and financial reporting

28. The Expert Group noted with appreciation the work of the Commercial Applications Working Group and the information provided in document ECE/ENERGY/GE.3/2021/9. The Expert Group reviewed the draft document "The United Nations Framework Classification for Resources applied to Commercial Assessments – Introductory Guidance" (ECE/ENERGY/GE.3/2020/8) and requested the Commercial Working Group to finalize the guidance.

(j) Other potential applications

29. The Expert Group noted with appreciation the work undertaken to apply UNFC to coal associated gas, including coal bed methane (CBM) resources, and requested draft specifications for application of

² https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2021-03/CCUS%20brochure_EN_final.pdf

³ https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2021-03/CCUS%20brochure_EN_final.pdf

UNFC to coal associated gas to be submitted to the thirteenth session subject to identification of volunteers.

30. The Expert Group recommended that, subject to volunteers and extrabudgetary funds being identified, subgroups be established to explore the applicability of UNFC and UNRMS to other resources such as hydrogen.

Agenda item 9: Application of UNFC and UNRMS in different geographical contexts

31. The Expert Group noted the "UNFC Europe" initiative's progress to harmonize classification and management of raw materials at EU level under the European Commission's Raw Materials Initiative. The Expert Group further 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 10: 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

32. 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 technical and coordination support from ECE. The Expert Group in particular noted the progress made to establish a centre of excellence on sustainable resource management in Russia for the Eurasia region, in China, and in Mexico for the Latin America region.

33. The Expert Group noted with appreciation the ongoing extrabudgetary projects that support the application of UNFC, in particular (i) the European Commission-funded project to support UNECE member States in the development and implementation of UNFC and UNRMS; and (ii) the 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 11: Communications, promotion and outreach

34. The Expert Group noted with appreciation the work of the Communications Working Group and, in particular, the progress made on the Young UNFC initiative. The Expert Group agreed to the Resource Management Young Member Group (RMYMG) proposal as presented (EGRM-12/2021/INF.2) and requested an update on its implementation at the thirteenth session.

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

Agenda item 13: Work plan for 2020-2021 and work plan for 2022-2023

36. The Group of Experts noted with appreciation the work of the Bureau and the secretariat to manage and direct the Group's activities between annual sessions despite human and financial resource constraints and the unprecedented situation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

37. The Expert Group noted that it had made good progress to implement its work plan for 2020-2021 in spite of the challenging situation caused by COVID-19. The Expert Group agreed to its draft work plan for 2022-2023 (ECE/ENERGY/GE.3/2021/3) subject to the amendments agreed at the meeting and in the light of the vision and strategy for UNFC and UNRMS discussed under item 5, and requested the secretariat to submit it to the thirtieth session of the Committee on Sustainable Energy for approval.

Agenda item 14: Other business

38. 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 thirteenth 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 15: Adoption of the report and close of the meeting

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