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## Workshop on Sustainable Energy Policies and Implementation of National Sustainable Energy Action Plans

Organized jointly by UNECE and UNESCAP

Online, Geneva and Bangkok

17 November 2021, 10:00 – 12:30 (CET, Geneva); 16:00 – 18:30 (Bangkok)

### Background

UNECE, jointly with UNESCAP, has completed implementation of the United Nations Development Account (UNDA) project “[Sustainable Energy for All \(SE4All\) in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia](#)”. The goal of the project was to strengthen capacities of beneficiary countries (Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan) for the preparation of National Action Plans to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) related to energy. Under the project, national reports that include a baseline review of sustainable energy data in each beneficiary country have been prepared to assess the existing gaps in data collection. National case studies have been developed, and a synthesis report has been prepared to provide an analysis of these case studies and give the assessment of existing policies and practices in sustainable energy, focusing on existing regulatory and institutional frameworks and pointing out gaps and challenges that governments face in implementing these policies.

Based on the reports and other activities under the [project](#), consultants from the project countries have developed draft National Sustainable Energy Action Plans (NSEAP). They were presented and discussed at the final validation workshop of the project *National Sustainable Energy Action Plans – from Commitments to Actions*, which was held in the framework of the Tenth International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development: From Targets to Action in Bangkok on 7-8 October 2019. The Bangkok workshop reviewed all stages of the project and progress of the beneficiary countries in achieving the project objectives.

The countries of the project presented information on the progress in overcoming gaps in data collection and improving gathering and processing sustainable energy data. They emphasized a significant role played by the project in this process, confirmed the validity of recommendations developed for each country by the international consultant on energy statistics, and outlined remaining challenges. They emphasized a significant role played by the project in this process, confirmed the validity of recommendations developed for each country

by the international consultant on energy statistics, and outlined remaining challenges. Further assistance from international organizations in overcoming these challenges is necessary.

Analysis of national case studies under the project was presented. This synthesis report gives an assessment of existing policies and practices in sustainable energy, focusing on existing regulatory and institutional frameworks and pointing out gaps and challenges that governments face in implementing these policies. Panellists and participants discussed what they consider the most significant gaps and barriers to sustainable energy development and what the countries are doing to overcome them. Among the areas for improvement the following have been mentioned: legal framework, institutional capacity, behavioural change, energy tariffs, investment conditions, financial incentives, and sustainability component of international technical assistance. National consultants from the five beneficiary countries of the project presented draft NSEAPs developed in Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan. These documents can and should be used as an instrument for implementation of practical steps in transition to sustainable energy.

At the closing of the workshop, possible future steps after the completion of the UNDA project “Sustainable Energy for All (SE4All) in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia” were discussed. They include: adoption of NSEAPs by Governments; implementation of NSEAPs; support of NSEAP implementation by international organizations; development of NSEAPs by other countries; and making use of project results by other projects, strategies, programmes, and plans.

### **Concept**

This workshop is intended to serve as a platform to discuss approaches of Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan for using the outcomes of the project “Sustainable Energy for All (SE4All) in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia” and draft NSEAPs in their pathway to sustainable energy.

The draft National Sustainable Energy Action Plans, which were prepared for all participating countries, are innovative policy documents that provide comprehensive information on the energy sector in all its facets and at its interaction with industry, buildings, transport and other economic sectors and with society and the environment. A draft NSEAP includes practical recommendations on building capacity of government officials and other stakeholders in their work to achieve SDGs through better use of available data in formulating policies and improved analysis of decisions. The draft NSEAPs focus on energy aspects that most directly relate to the SDGs, poverty reduction and meeting environmental goals, in particular: the gender issue as it relates to the development of the energy sector and the role of sustainable energy in achieving SDG5 on achieving gender equality; water-energy nexus (in relation to SDG6); and the role of sustainable energy in achieving Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) for the Paris Agreement (SDG13). The documents outline current energy production, distribution and consumption; government’s targets of generation growth for economic development; national targets to meet SDG7; leverages to perform actions to meet SDG7; and cross-cutting issues of energy efficiency, renewable energy and energy access. Each draft NSEAP contains information on specific actions, the timeframe for their implementation, and

Governmental (and/or other if applicable) entities responsible for these actions in line with the focus areas above.

Since the conclusion of the project in the end of 2019 the target countries and the whole world have gone through a testing and transformative time due to global COVID-19 crisis. The pandemic has placed additional strains on limited resources causing both energy supply and demand shocks across all sectors of society and putting existing energy systems under pressure. As countries are moving from the immediate health crisis to long term recovery, the sustainable energy can play a key part in this recovery. The countries may wish to update the NSEAPs and integrate them into their social-economic plans to pave a way forward for the post-COVID-19 energy transition.

Participants of the workshop will discuss the challenges their national energy systems are facing today and the ways for promoting their National Sustainable Energy Action Plans. The issues to be discussed include: governmental support for implementation of NSEAPs; involvement of various stakeholders in finding practical solutions to implement proposed measures; attracting necessary financial and other resources (both domestic and international) for implementation. The workshop's format will include countries' presentations and interactive discussions among participants.

Target audience for the workshop: policy makers and experts from Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and other member States of UNECE and UNESCAP; representatives of UNECE, UNESCAP, and other international organizations; representatives of financial institutions and business sector; academia; representatives of civil society; and other stakeholders. Participation of representatives of other UNECE and UNESCAP member States would be welcome as this would allow sharing experience obtained in the process of implementation the project "Sustainable Energy for All (SE4All) in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia" and developing draft NSEAPs.