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Economic Commission for Europe

Committee on Sustainable Energy

Group of Experts on Gas

Ninth session

Geneva, 24-25 March 2022

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Adoption of the agenda

Annotated provisional agenda for the ninth session

To be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, and online, starting at 10 a.m. on Thursday 24 March 2022.¹

I. Provisional agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda.
2. Opening remarks.
3. Election of officers.
4. Activities and priorities of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Committee on Sustainable Energy.
5. Update on implementation of the 2020-2021 work plan.
6. Implementation of the 2022-2023 work plan
7. Update on activities in member States, the gas industry and organizations (tour de table).
8. Preparations for the tenth session of the Group of Experts on Gas.
9. Any other business.
10. Adoption of conclusions and recommendations.
11. Adoption of the report and close of the meeting.

¹ Delegates attending meetings at the Palais des Nations are requested to register online at <https://indico.un.org/event/1000458>, if possible at least two weeks prior to the session. On the day of the meeting, delegates are requested to present themselves at least 45 minutes prior to the start time at the Pass and Identification Unit of the United Nations Office at Geneva Security and Safety Section, located at the Pregny Gate, 14, Avenue de la Paix, opposite the Red Cross Building (see the map on the Energy Division's website) for the issuance of an identification badge. Registration is open every workday at the Pregny Gate from 8:00 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. The secretariat can be contacted by telephone (extension 73158).

II. Annotations to the provisional agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda

In accordance with the rules of procedure of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), the first item on the provisional agenda is the adoption of the agenda. The documents for the session will be published on the ECE Sustainable Energy Division natural gas website,² as soon as they become available.

2. Opening remarks

The Chair of the Group of Experts on Gas will set forth efforts by the Group of Experts to help ECE member States deliver on key political commitments such as the strategic review of the ECE sustainable energy subprogramme, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the outcomes of the Glasgow Climate Change Conference (COP26).

3. Election of officers

At its seventh session, 22-25 September 2020, the Group of Experts elected a Bureau to serve until the close of the ninth session. The Group of Experts will elect a new Bureau, to serve until the close of the eleventh session in 2024.

4. Activities and priorities of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Committee on Sustainable Energy

The secretariat will brief the Group of Experts on the outcomes of the thirtieth session of the Committee on Sustainable Energy (the Committee), 22-24 September 2021. Recognizing in the progress the Group of Experts has achieved in delivering on its 2020-2021 work plan, the Committee adopted the Group of Experts' work plan for 2022-2023 (ECE/ENERGY/137). The Committee noted that in some ECE member States gases could play a critical role in achieving carbon neutrality by 2050, and that renewable and low-carbon gases, including sustainable hydrogen, were already an important energy vector.

The Committee further noted that a future decarbonized energy system might be characterized by an optimal combination of “photons, electrons and molecules”, in which variable renewable electricity (photovoltaics and wind) and gas systems are interlinked progressively. In this sense, the Committee noted that existing gas infrastructure could help accelerate the transition to a carbon-neutral economy through energy system integration. The Committee recognized the value of blending natural gas, biogas, sustainable hydrogen, and other gases as possible approaches to decarbonizing the energy system in the short and medium terms.

In October 2021, the Executive Committee of ECE approved the extrabudgetary project: “Sustainable hydrogen production in the UNECE region and its role in the development of a hydrogen ecosystem and export potential”.³ The Group of Experts will work with other subsidiary bodies of the Committee to support implementation of the project.

5. Update on implementation of the 2020-2021 work plan

The secretariat will report to the Group of Experts on implementation of the 2020-2021 work plan, including an update on the extrabudgetary project on gas in transport (Improving

² <https://unece.org/sustainable-energy/events/ninth-session-group-experts-gas>

³ https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2021-09/Item%209_ECE_EX_2021_27_XB_8_Hydrogen%20.pdf

capacities of ECE member States to decarbonize the transport sector by increasing the use of natural gas as a motor fuel).⁴

6. Implementation of the 2022-2023 work plan

The Group of Experts will discuss implementation of its 2022-2023 work plan (ECE/ENERGY/2021/11) and other issues such as the growing share of natural gas in the total primary energy supply and its economic, social, and environmental implications. Speakers and panellists will present on some of the following topics, followed by an open floor discussion among the participants:

- (a) Gas and Sustainable Development Goals;
- (b) Gas and post-COVID-19 recovery;
- (c) Methane management in the gas sector;
- (d) Carbon neutrality through synergies between gas(es) and renewable electricity;
- (e) Sustainable hydrogen: An innovative solution for carbon neutrality;
- (f) Improving urban air quality;
- (g) Use of gas in transportation – challenges and opportunities;
- (h) Carbon capture, utilisation, and storage: The role of gas infrastructure;
- (i) Promoting sustainable and clean production, distribution, and consumption of gas and liquefied natural gas (LNG) in the ECE region.

7. Update on activities in member States, the gas industry and organizations (tour de table)

Representatives of ECE member States, the gas industry, and international organizations will present their work and other developments since March 2021. The Group of Experts requests representatives of member States and other organizations to submit, when possible, electronic versions of their presentations to the secretariat in advance, in one of the ECE three working languages (English, French, and Russian).

8. Preparations for the tenth session of the Group of Experts on Gas

The Group of Experts will discuss preparations for its tenth session. Possible topics for the substantive portion of the session will be proposed and discussed. The tenth session of the Group of Experts is scheduled for the first quarter of 2023.

9. Any other business

The meeting may discuss other issues that arise before or during the session and that fall within the scope of the Terms of Reference of the Group of Experts. To the extent possible, delegates are encouraged to notify the secretariat or the Chair in advance of any issue they may wish to raise under this agenda item.

10. Adoption of conclusions and recommendations

Draft conclusions and recommendations will be circulated to participants and Geneva Permanent Representations at least ten days before the start of the meeting.

⁴ <https://unece.org/sustainable-energy/project-gas-transport>

The Chair, with the assistance of the secretariat, will summarize the conclusions and recommendations agreed during the session and the Group of Experts will be invited to adopt them.

11. Adoption of the report and close of the meeting

The Group of Experts will be invited to adopt its report based on a draft prepared by the secretariat in cooperation with the Bureau of the Group of Experts, following which the Chair will close the meeting.
