



Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane and Just Transition

UNECE



Michal Drabik, Secretary



Overview

- SDG's
- Just Transition
 - Context
 - The Concept of Just Transition
 - Human Nature
 - Bottom-up Approach of UNECE
 - Comprehensive strategy
- Mapping Just Transition
 - Context
 - The Problem
 - Goals of the UNECE's work on Just Transition
 - Your Task



ENERGY



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



➤ 17 SDGs, agreed by UN GA in 2015, are the **principal framework for the UNECE's work in sustainable energy.**



7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY



- **SDG 7** is about providing sustainable energy to the world.
- UNECE SED focuses on **'energy for sustainable development'** because energy is a golden thread that underpins all SDGs.
- Therefore, we work also on **Just Transition**



Context

- To conform with the **climate** objectives, countries have to undergo through a process of decarbonization of their economies.
- **Decarbonization** includes a need to modernize the energy sector.
- Decarbonization will create **new opportunities**, but it will also entail certain **disruptive effects**, which are likely to fall disproportionately on the shoulders of the localities that are economically reliant on energy-intensive industries.



The Concept

- A “just transition” is an **integrated approach to sustainable development that brings together social progress, environmental protection, and economic success into a framework of democratic governance and institutional resilience.**
- The concept of “just transition” is the essential component of energy transformation, ensuring that the latter is delivered in a socially sensitive manner, which is a condition for **sustainability of its results.**



Human Nature

- **People fear the unknown**; fears of job losses and economic decline, influence the social debate more strongly than the promised benefits of the low-carbon economy.
- **People do not like being told what to do** and tend to reject the solutions that are authoritatively imposed on them.
- The concept of “just transition” must **acknowledge those characteristics** of the human nature and put them at the very centre of the transformation process.



Bottom-up Approach

- Energy transformation has **more than two dimensions** of technology and finance. For a transition to truly succeed, it must be **socially sensitive** and acceptable.
- To ensure the sustainability of the proposed change, instead of presenting the communities with any preconceived solutions, it is necessary to approach them with a certain **offer**, only hinting what and how they could change to fit better to the new economic and environmental circumstances.
- People should be informed about the challenge that they face and about the changes that are happening around them, and be **guided**, but **not led**, in a thought process allowing them to identify themselves their objectives and the means of achieving them.
- People must be allowed to make their choices, to **own the process** of transformation, and to **take responsibility** for the outcomes.



Comprehensive Strategy

- A **comprehensive all-encompassing strategy** encompassing all aspects (social, economic, environmental) is necessary.
- Without such approach, undertaken projects will be developed in **silos** and will not add up to a strategy allowing to change the economic profile of a given region.
- Developing a comprehensive strategy will take **time**, but it is necessary to prepare a plan that **addresses all the matters in a coordinated** manner in order to ensure sustainability of the results.
- Only with a comprehensive strategy will the regions in transition be able to precisely **identify** their **needs** and thus request a particular and detailed help from the donors and supporters. Without such strategy, as it is oftentimes the case nowadays, recipients of aid are being told by the donors what to spend the given funds on, rather than having a say in that matter.



Context

- Energy transitions are occurring throughout the ECE region at **different rates** depending on the subregional economic and political response to the need to decarbonize.
- These **localized responses** range from mine closures to consolidation of older mining enterprises coupled with modernization of coal extraction and power production.
- In some parts of the ECE region, **coal extraction** and use is for the time being expected to **continue** as member States have to balance their environmental efforts with the need to secure reliable and affordable energy supply, as well as social peace.
- However, the **transition is already taking place** and that process is likely to become **more widespread** as alternative modes of energy production are introduced, and substitutes for coal in chemical and industrial processes are developed.



The Problem

- Just transition is a **complex**, complicated and long-term **process**.
- Even though just transition has become a popular subject, the concept still **remains quite vague**, as the process of socially-sensitive, environmentally-friendly, and economically-viable systemic transformation towards green economy has not been yet structured to the extent that would allow for its successful application in varying circumstances.
- **Transition needs a starting point**, and its **progress is determined by the interplay of various factors**.
- **Conditions** that need to be fulfilled **to launch the transformation, as well as** issues that must be addressed throughout the process in order to achieve satisfactory results still **need to be identified**.

**ENERGY****Goals**

- To **assess the situation** in various coal mining regions across the world
 - **Collect data** from each one of them and **develop** detailed economic, energy, environmental, and social **characteristics** of the selected localities.
- To **identify the elements** that are necessary to enable the start and progress of transition, as well as the barriers that prevent it from happening



Your Task

- **The objective** of the project is
 - to **identify factors that allow to assess countries' readiness for green and just transition** of their local current or past coal mining areas, and
 - **identify** regulatory, social, technical, and financial **barriers** that the countries undergoing through the process of repurposing and transition typically need to address
 - to **successfully repurpose their current or past coal mining areas** in accordance with the principles of green economy and just transition.
- **The task** is to
 - **assess the situation** of various current or past coal mining areas across the selected ECE countries (e.g. Germany, Poland, Kazakhstan, Ukraine, Albania, UK, US, Belgium) and
 - **identify elements** that are **necessary to enable** the start and to ensure progress in repurposing and transition.



Michal Drabik

Chief of Section, Economic Affairs, UNECE
Secretary of the GoE on CMM and JT

Tel: +41 (0) 22 917 3966

Email: michal.drabik@unece.org

<http://www.unece.org/energy/se/cmm.html>



Thank you!

