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Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)

Report
of the eleventh session of the Committee on Energy
Cairo, 14-16 May 2017

Summary

The Committee on Energy of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) held its eleventh session in Cairo from 14 to 16 May 2017.

The session agenda contained several priority topics, including follow-up on the implementation of recommendations made by the Committee on Energy at its tenth session; progress made in the implementation of energy-related activities under the ESCWA programme of work between the tenth and eleventh sessions of the Committee; sustainable energy and the energy-water nexus in the Arab region; the impact of shale oil and gas on underground water; and Arab cooperation on addressing climate change.

Participants reviewed the proposed ESCWA programme of work for the biennium 2018-2019 in the field of energy; and participated in a roundtable discussion on projects funded by the United Nations Development Account, and on forming an expert group on fossil fuels and climate change.

The present report summarises key interventions and discussions, and sets out the recommendations issued by the Committee at its eleventh session.

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Introduction

1. The Committee on Energy of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) held its eleventh session in Cairo from 14 to 16 May 2017, hosted by the Egyptian Minister of Electricity and Renewable Energy, pursuant to ESCWA resolution 204 (XVIII) of 25 May 1995 on the establishment of a Committee on Energy in the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, which was adopted by the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations in resolution 1995/25 of 24 July 1995.

2. The following sections set out the key recommendations adopted by the Committee at its eleventh session.¹

I. RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AT ITS ELEVENTH SESSION

3. The Committee issued the following recommendations at its eleventh session, some addressed to member States and others to the ESCWA secretariat.

A. RECOMMENDATIONS TO MEMBER STATES

(a) Promote energy activities at ESCWA by mobilizing technical and financial resources, and by holding the sessions of the Committee on Energy annually to follow regional and international developments;

(b) Support the secretariat's efforts in linking ESCWA normative activities (studies and reports) to technical cooperation provided to member States, while focusing on translating the latter into projects that take into account member States' specificities; and request broader technical support, advisory services training activities and study tours, upon requests from member States;

(c) Incorporate sustainable energy-related goals, targets and indicators into national and sectoral development plans in an integrated manner, adopt suitable national indicators to measure and monitor progress on the energy-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), and maintain linkages with other relevant SDGs and targets under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

(d) Inform the secretariat of the efforts made by member States to implement, monitor and present reports on the energy-related SDGs;

(e) Develop short and long term policies and programmes to achieve the water-energy-food nexus;

(f) Actively participate in preparations for the 2018 and 2019 sessions of the Arab Forum on Sustainable Development and the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, which will both focus on SDGs 7 (on energy) and 13 (on climate change);

(g) Strengthen the participation of technicians and specialists in the activities and events of a project on developing ESCWA member States' capacity on the energy-water nexus to achieve the SDGs; facilitate cooperation and support regional integration; and exchange information and expertise in this field;

(h) Develop national capacity in information, statistics and data collection and analysis on energy production, distribution and end-user consumption;

¹ Session information, documents and reports are available from www.unescwa.org/events/committee-energy-11th-session.

(i) Monitor the environmental impact of oil and shale gas exploitation, including its effects on underground water, to ensure sustainability in this field;

(j) Present progress reports on the implementation of recommendations issued to member States to the Committee at its twelfth session.

B. RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE ESCWA SECRETARIAT

(a) Focus on issues related to the sustainable management of energy in the Arab region under the energy-related SDGs, and conduct research and outlook studies to inform member States of opportunities in promising sectors at the national and regional levels;

(b) Monitor energy sector indicators under the 2030 Agenda and analyse their compatibility with Arab countries' needs, with the possibility of proposing indicators to paint an accurate picture on progress in implementing the energy-related SDGs at the national and regional levels;

(c) Establish a regional observatory to monitor the implementation of the energy-related SDGs in the Arab region;

(d) Continue providing technical support to member States in collecting and processing national data on energy and other data that can assist in monitoring the implementation of the energy-related SDGs;

(e) Continue submitting reports on developments in regional and international energy markets to keep pace with emerging issues;

(f) Study the impact of conflict in the Arab region on energy sustainability vital to achieving food and water security;

(g) Prepare technical studies on the electricity sector, including a study on power stations and water desalination centres and their output distribution, with reference to simulation models, and a study on the impact of linking renewable energy to electrical grids and on privatizing the distribution sector;

(h) Provide technical assistance to member States in preparing documents on technical, financial and legal requirements for investing in and operating electrical grids, with reference to global experiences (Jordan, Oman and Turkey);

(i) Continue monitoring regional efforts on the water-energy-food nexus, provide support to member States in that regard, select a pilot project on the nexus for implementation, and transfer the expertise of countries who have succeeded in that field;

(j) Support member States in adopting strategies and policies compatible with the SDGs related to the energy-water-food nexus, develop relevant institutional capacity, and employ suitable indicators to monitor the nexus;

(k) Continue building member States' capacity in developing and implementing national and regional policies and action plans on mixed energy, cleaner fossil fuel technology, energy efficiency and renewable energy;

(l) Continue linking activities of the ESCWA Technology Centre to sustainable development issues, especially in the areas of environmentally friendly technology and energy efficiency, highlight the role of the Centre as a regional technical knowledge platform and raise awareness of new technologies, and implement activities to support member States' national capacity in the field of environmentally friendly technology and energy efficiency;

(m) Publish the findings of the ESCWA Technology Centre through relevant activities, and disseminate them to member States;

(n) Organize media and informational activities to raise awareness on energy conservation as a means for achieving sustainable energy;

(o) Continue capacity-building activities for Arab negotiators in the field of climate change, focusing on organizing training workshops on preparing project proposals to receive funding from international climate change funds;

(p) Support the secretariat in developing an integrated vision for an Arab climate change centre in the Arab region at ESCWA, similarly to other regional commissions, including the centre's expected accomplishments, funding sources and activities, for consideration and adoption at the next session of the ESCWA Executive Committee;

(q) Form an expert group on fossil fuels, equivalent to a subcommittee of the Committee on Energy, working in accordance with the ESCWA rules of procedure and United Nations regulations in that regard, which shall present a report of its activities to the Committee at its next session;

(r) Continue building partnerships with international and regional organizations in the field of energy, especially the League of Arab States and the Regional Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency, and broaden those partnerships to promote integrated work for optimal benefits to member States;

(s) Implement energy activities proposed in the programme of work for the biennium 2018-2019, and ensure sufficient flexibility in response to new challenges and issues facing the Arab region;

(t) Submit periodic reports to member States on progress in implementing ESCWA energy activities;

(u) Organize activities on developments in legislative structures for renewable energy and energy use in Arab countries.

II. TOPICS OF DISCUSSION

A. REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTED ACTIVITIES IN THE FIELD OF ENERGY (Agenda item 4)

4. Under this item, the Committee on Energy considered document E/ESCWA/SDPD/2017/IG.2/3(Part I) on implemented activities in the field of energy, pursuant to recommendations made by the Committee at its tenth session; and document E/ESCWA/SDPD/2017/IG.2/3(Part II) on implementing energy-related activities under the ESCWA programme of work since the tenth session of the Committee.

5. Discussions on both documents focused on the importance of including in the programme of work for the biennium 2018-2019 projects compatible with the circumstances and priorities of each member State; studies on regional partnerships, an energy-water-food nexus methodology, water desalination, the Arab electricity market, and renewable energy and links to the national electrical grid; training for technical cadres working in that field at the national level; and coordination and cooperation with academic and research centres in member States on events to be held. Representatives requested access to 2017 studies and resources. They agreed on the need for ESCWA to prepare a study on the impact of armed conflict in the region on sustainable energy, and on resulting threats to economic and social development plans in conflict-affected countries, in particular, and the region as a whole, in general. Representatives enquired about including the impact of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on the electricity sector in that study. They said that Palestine was an occupied country, and the focus of several United Nations resolutions in that regard. As such, it was the responsibility

of the occupying power to provide energy to Palestinians, but Israel prohibited the Palestinian Authority from implementing energy projects. Representatives said that specific energy issues should be identified when requesting studies, and that ESCWA study findings and events outcomes should be disseminated to member States. They proposed cooperating in that regard with the secretariat of the Arab Ministerial Council for Electricity of the League of Arab States, to send important messages to decision-makers. They stressed the importance of mobilizing financial resources to support the ESCWA Energy Section's activities to strengthen technical support for member States.

6. In response, the representative of the secretariat said that the activities had been implemented in view of the tenth session of the Committee, and the programme of work for the biennium 2016-2017 adopted at the tenth session. ESCWA was cooperating with research and academic centres by inviting them to participate in some related events. Representatives of academic institutions and research centres had participated in workshops on the energy-water nexus. ESCWA had organized training workshops on renewable energy integration with transport and distribution networks in the Arab region (Jordan, September 2015), and had published a fact sheet on electricity sector infrastructure and energy exchange in the Arab region (distributed to participants at the eleventh session of the Committee). A workshop is expected to be held on renewable energy investment policies under the Development Account project on promoting investment in renewable energy (Astana, June 2017); and another on renewable energy technologies will be held in July 2017. Member States could appoint representatives actively involved in related fields to participate. The representative of the secretariat stressed the commitment of ESCWA to collaborating with regional and international organizations, and to securing extrabudgetary resources to implement activities. Regarding a study on the impact of armed conflict on sustainable energy, the representative of the secretariat recalled that ESCWA had a division dedicated to conflict-related issues, and assured representatives that scientific and technical methods would be followed when preparing the study.

7. Under the same item, the Committee considered document E/ESCWA/SDPD/2017/IG.2/3(Part III) on technical cooperation activities in the field of energy, implemented in collaboration with some member States upon their official request in the period between the two sessions of the Committee, and on expected activities. The representative of the secretariat requested representatives to take note of the implemented activities, and to comment thereon.

8. Representatives stressed the importance of identifying specific energy-related issues, and of organizing priorities and determining goals, especially regarding policies on sector structuring and energy pricing, with special focus on projects to integrate water, energy and food policies, the SDGs and related statistics, measurement indicators and implementation mechanisms and, in turn, identifying technical support programmes. Representatives suggested that ESCWA link study and report findings to technical support programmes, and disseminate the outcomes of those programmes to all member States to exchange information in areas of common interest.

9. The representative of the secretariat said that technical support programmes were provided upon official request from member States, in accordance with ESCWA capabilities. ESCWA was prepared to offer support to any member State upon an official request identifying the energy areas in which the country wished to build national capacity, and an initial timeline for implementation – in collaboration and coordination with a specialized ESCWA team.

B. SUSTAINABLE ENERGY IN THE ARAB REGION (Agenda item 5)

10. Under this item, the Committee considered document E/ESCWA/SDPD/2017/IG.2/4(Part I) on energy-related Sustainable Development Goals. SDG 7 focused on ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all, with targets on increasing access to modern energy services and renewable energy, and improving energy efficiency and implementation measures. The document set out the indicators selected

to monitor progress in achieving those targets, efforts to collect relevant information, and related challenges, especially in the Arab region.

11. Representatives agreed on the following: the importance of developing sustainable development indicators in the field of energy in line with national priorities, while ensuring that they were measurable, suitable to local circumstances, and compatible with United Nations indicators; the ability to dedicate an institutional framework to the 2030 Agenda and related indicators, especially in view of the direct/indirect linkages between many SDGs; and the necessity to build member States' capacity in collecting detailed statistical data on energy, and to coordinate between national sectors to evaluate progress. The representative of the secretariat stresses the need to incorporate the SDGs and their targets and indicators into national plans, including policies and implementation, follow-up, monitoring, evaluation and amendment mechanisms.

12. Under the same item, the Committee considered document E/ESCWA/SDPD/2017/IG.2/4(Part II) on the energy-water nexus in the Arab region, and the importance of viewing the future differently when tackling energy, water and climate change issues, the energy-water nexus and related consumption patterns, and suitable technologies. The document indicated the need to develop integrated strategies and policies on energy and water for the medium and long term, so as to establish a sustainable approach on their interlinkages, face challenges, and benefit from opportunities by adopting a set of decisions on good energy and water policies, selecting suitable technical alternatives for local specificities, and strengthening regional cooperation. The document stressed that efficiency in natural resource management, in general, and energy and water resources, in particular, were key issues for implementing the 2030 Agenda in the Arab region. It also reviewed ESCWA activities to build member States' capacity in that field.

13. The representative of the secretariat said that the Development Account project on building the capacity of ESCWA member States to study the water-energy nexus towards achieving the SDGs, currently under implementation with an expected completion date of December 2017, included preparing operational models on the energy-water nexus and was available on the ESCWA website. Other activities included organizing a workshop on renewable energy technologies (Beirut, July 2017), and another on nexus policies and key project outcomes (Amman, November 2017).

14. The ensuing discussion focused on the significant challenges posed by food and water security, and the need to tackle them. The nexus required work on several issues and levels to develop integrated solutions to reduce projects' economic cost, coordinate between all sectors, build capacity in both fields, raise public awareness on responsible energy and water consumption, benefit from technological advances for the efficient use of natural resources (cleaner production techniques, green technology, energy efficiency measures), encourage private investment, and enact relevant legislation. It was also necessary to review support policies and reprice energy and water supply services, by employing gradient systems to take into account poor groups and peak times, in line with real service costs. The representative of Iraq described his country's experience in using energy-saving air conditioning units powered by ammonia and solar energy, and in amending the cooling cycle to reduce energy consumption. The main problem with that technology was the large size of the energy-saving units.

15. The Committee then considered document E/ESCWA/SDPD/2017/IG.2/4(Part III) on the impact of shale oil and gas on underground water, as non-traditional sources of energy. Several studies found that many Arab countries had shale oil and gas reserves. The document reviewed global experiences and those of some Arab countries in shale oil and gas extraction, and related challenges, especially their impact on underground water and the environment. The document highlighted factors that policymakers should evaluate before exploiting non-traditional resources. Representatives commended the document, and requested the secretariat to periodically inform the Committee of global developments in that field.

16. Under this item, representatives reviewed progress in achieving the energy-related SDGs in their countries, as follows:

- Jordan: the country has decided to increase its renewable energy share in the national energy mix by 10 per cent by 2030. There are an estimated 70 million tons of oil shale; a 475 MW capacity plant has been established to exploit this resource in collaboration with Estonia. A natural gas tanker has been leased to supply around 90 per cent of thermal stations with fuel.
- Bahrain: the total composite capacity of renewable energy projects had reached around 15 MW. Work is ongoing to implement energy efficiency projects. A team has been formed to follow up on the implementation of the SDGs, and working groups have been tasked with collecting relevant data.
- Syrian Arab Republic: The growth rate for energy demand reached 3.5 per cent as at 2010, but later decreased along with electricity production because of fuel shortages caused by conflict. Solar cells with a capacity of 2.5 MW were installed, and solar water heaters are widely used in households. There is a national centre for energy research, and the Ministry of Electricity is restructuring the sector and enacting appropriate legislation to enable the private sector to play a larger role in that field. The representative of the Syrian Arab Republic requested ESCWA, under the technical support programme, to assist in benefitting from the experiences of Mauritania and Oman in using renewable energy in remote areas.
- Sudan: The country suffers from weak energy supply to households. The electrical grid covers around 35 per cent of the Sudan, and generators are used in the remaining areas. The country is expected to establish 10 photovoltaic stations in big cities, and 100 MW of solar cells (build - own - operate - transfer). Legislation has been passed on energy efficiency measures.
- Iraq: There are hydroelectric power stations totalling 2,000 MW, but operating at 30 per cent capacity because of the current instability. Contracts for solar cell projects of 550 MW have been signed, and are expected to increase to 1,000 MW. Feasibility studies have been conducted on geothermal energy. Efforts are underway to improve the efficiency of thermal power stations by converting gas stations to a combined cycle, expanding energy efficiency measures and benefiting from the Jordanian experience in that regard.
- Oman: Combined electricity capacity has reached around 8,000 MW, and efforts are underway to add 3,000 MW. Approximately 90 per cent of thermal stations are powered by natural gas. The energy sector has been restructured, and 45 per cent of the shares of distribution companies will be floated on the stock market. The water sector will also be restructured. There is interest in expanding energy efficiency measures, and in increasing the share of renewables in the energy mix to 10 per cent by 2025.
- Palestine: The territory buys 88 per cent of its energy from Israel, and 3 per cent from Egypt and Jordan. An agreement was signed allowing the Palestinian distribution company to transfer energy from Israel by establishing four stations. A goal of the national strategy is to ensure a 10 per cent share of renewables in the energy mix by 2020. A law on renewable energy was issued in 2012 on the use of solar power for energy generation, on employing competitive bidding for large renewable energy projects undertaken by the private sector, and on applying policies to measure net energy for small renewable energy projects. An investment fund for renewable energy has been established, and a national plan on energy efficiency has been issued. China has provided a grant to establish a photovoltaic plant with a 30 MW capacity. A loan agreement has been signed with the French Development Agency to implement projects on renewable energy and energy efficiency.
- Lebanon: Thermal stations are 96 per cent powered by fossil fuels. Plans exist to increase the share of renewables in the energy mix by 12 per cent by 2020. The Central Bank has developed a funding mechanism to disseminate the use of solar water heaters, and has prepared bidding documents to establish wind stations in three locations.

- Libya: A renewable energy body has been established. There are 300 photovoltaic systems in operation. Wind energy projects have not been implemented as expected, because of armed conflict. The country is collaborating with the World Bank to prepare an integrated renewable energy strategy to develop a project investment plan. Existing legislation is under review, in preparation for legislation on renewable energy.
- Egypt: The 2030 strategy aims to increase the share of renewables in the energy mix to 20 per cent by 2022 and to 37 per cent by 2037, as well as adding geothermal, coal and nuclear energy to the mix. Policies have been amended to gradually remove energy subsidies by 2019, starting in 2014. A new energy law has been passed, and a law on establishing an energy body for new and renewable energy has been issued to allow the private sector to increase its involvement in the implementation of renewable energy plans (4,300 MW of solar and wind power). A government electricity tariff on renewable energy has been adopted, as well as competitive bidding on wind power projects for the private sector. An extra 680 MW has been added to the grid over the past two years, and efforts are underway to renovate power stations and high voltage lines.
- Yemen: The country suffers from an energy shortage. Most stations have halted production, including the largest that met the needs of 40 per cent of the population, because of the armed conflict. Current efforts cover maintaining existing thermal station, repairing damaged lines, and restarting power stations in several cities. A project for a wind farm has not been implemented (60 MW) because of the current situation. There are some photovoltaic projects for electricity production in place in some remote rural areas. The use of coal and gas in electricity production is expected following the end of the conflict.
- United Arab Emirates: The country has held workshops on sustainable development, to develop detailed plans on implementing the SGDs. The share of renewables is expected to increase to 50 per cent of the energy mix by 2050. Efforts are underway to broaden energy efficiency measures in government buildings, mosques and offices.
- Mauritania: Renewables constitute 20 per cent of the energy mix, with the objective of reaching 40 per cent by 2020. A photovoltaic station with a capacity of 15 MW and a wind station with a capacity of 30 MW have been established, both linked to the grid. There are also 33 MW of combined electricity capacity. There are regional links to Mali and Senegal, where surplus energy is exported (225 kv). The electricity grid covers 70 per cent of cities compared with 5 per cent of rural areas, because of the rugged terrain.

C. ARAB COOPERATION ON ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE (Agenda item 6)

17. Under this item, the Committee considered document E/ESCWA/SDPD/2017/IG.2/5 on Arab cooperation in addressing climate change from an energy perspective. It covered key outcomes of the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and activities implemented by ESCWA in that regard, taking into account the SDGs and supporting member States' capacity to strengthen their participation in preparations for conferences under the Convention. The document set out proposed future activities in that field, and concluded with several recommendations to ESCWA and member States. The aim was to review the Arab position on implementing the Paris Agreement to mitigate and adapt to the impact of climate change, and implement mechanisms such as technology funding and transfer and capacity-building, from an energy perspective.

18. In the ensuing discussion, representatives emphasized member States' commitment to building national capacity on climate change negotiations, and on mechanisms to benefit from the Paris Agreement and green funds so as to finance clean energy projects. They welcomed a proposal to establish an Arab climate change centre in the Arab region at ESCWA. They requested ESCWA to prepare a vision thereon, including its goals, funding sources and proposed activities, for submission to the Committee at its next session.

D. ESTABLISHMENT OF AN EXPERT GROUP ON FOSSIL FUELS AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(Agenda item 7)

19. The committee proposed forming an expert group on fossil fuel and climate change to research issues and studies of importance to member States regarding the achievement of the SDGs in related fields. The expert group will follow the ESCWA rules of procedure and United Nations regulations.

20. Discussions focused on the relationship between fossil fuels and climate change, the scope of the expert group's work, and its required expertise. The representative of the secretariat said that the programme of work for the biennium 2018-2019 contained several activities on adapting to and mitigating the impact of climate change, requiring continual follow-up of developments in sustainable energy and in fossil fuels as the main energy source in the national energy mix of most countries for the coming decades, and given its role in the energy-water nexus, clean technology and sustainable transport. The expert group is expected to comprise many prominent specialists from national oil and gas companies, the private sector, international organizations, and government institutions in the field of fossil fuels. Its work shall focus on promoting sustainable and clean technologies in fossil fuel production, distribution and consumption, mitigating the impact of climate change in the region, increasing the share on natural gas in the total supply of primary energy, managing carbon and methane emissions, transferring technology and innovation, and tackling new initiatives and issues compatible with the Committee's work programme. The proposed expert group shall be formed as a subcommittee of the Committee on Energy, and shall be subject to United Nations rules of procedure. Each member States shall have the right to appoint a member to represent it in the expert group. The members of the Committee agreed on forming the expert group and designating it as "the expert group on fossil fuels". ESCWA shall contact relevant ministries, enterprises and organizations to request the appointment of experts in the field of fossil fuels.

E. CURRENT AND FUTURE ACTIVITIES OF THE ESCWA TECHNOLOGY CENTRE
(Agenda item8)

21. The Director of the ESCWA Technology Centre gave a presentation on the Centre's goals and activities, as a regional platform for technical knowledge and awareness-raising on modern technologies to mitigate the impact of climate change and achieve the energy-related SDGs in member States.

22. Most representatives agreed on the potential role of the Centre in disseminating economically competitive renewable energy technologies, promoting green building technology affecting energy efficiency, building capacity and implementing model projects. They proposed that the Centre focus on transforming research findings into local industries, and on holding training sessions to urge the private sector to invest in transforming research findings into marketable products, taking into account regional specificities. They enquired about the availability of databases on research and development centres, experts and studies. They requested ESCWA to benefit from the Centre in implementing national capacity-building activities in the field of green technology and energy efficiency.

23. The Director of the Technology Centre said that the Centre had no databases on research and development centres, experts and studies, and that it was working with member States on establishing and modernizing national observatories, and linking the Centre's website to national databases. Regarding transforming research findings into marketable projects, the Centre was organizing meeting and workshops bringing together researchers, investors and industrialists. He welcomed representatives' requests for support in building national capacity in the required fields.

F. PROPOSED PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR THE BIENNIUM 2018-2019 IN THE FIELD OF ENERGY
(Agenda item 9)

24. The Committee considered document E/ESCWA/SDPD/2017/IG.2/6 on the programme of work for the biennium 2018-2019 in the field of energy, containing the proposed activities and outcomes to be undertaken by ESCWA. The programme of work was prepared under the revised strategic framework for the biennium

2018-2019, adopted by ESCWA at its twenty-ninth session (Doha, 13-15 December 2016). The representative of the secretariat requested member States to review the proposed programme of work, and make comments thereon.

25. The ensuing discussion highlighted representatives' interest in building national capacity to harmonize between implementing national energy policies and achieving the SDGs and the Paris Agreement. Participants said that it was necessary to continually communicate via email with ESCWA, to periodically inform Committee members of new activities and studies, including those uploaded on the ESCWA website. The Committee adopted the programme of work for the biennium 2018-2019, stressing the need for flexibility in its implementation in line with regional and global developments, thus allowing countries to reorganize their priorities in that regard.

G. DATE AND VENUE OF THE TWELFTH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY (Agenda item 11)

26. The Committee on Energy will hold its twelfth session at the United Nations House in Beirut in March 2019, unless it receives an invitation to hold it in another member State.

H. OTHER MATTERS (Agenda item 12)

27. No issues were raised under this item.

I. PARALLEL ACTIVITIES

EXPERT GROUP MEETING ON MONITORING PROGRESS TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE ENERGY – SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT HORIZON 2030 IN THE ARAB REGION

28. ESCWA organized an expert group meeting on monitoring progress towards sustainable energy – sustainable development horizon 2030 in the Arab region, on 14 and 15 May 2017. Participants included members of the Committee on Energy and experts from Arab countries and regional organizations. The meeting reviewed progress in the field of sustainable energy in the Arab region in line with the SDGs. It highlighted the challenges facing policies and success factors at the national level, the role of energy efficiency and renewable and nuclear energy in the energy mix, similarities and differences between country approaches and understanding of sustainable energy today and in the future, and energy-water-food nexus policies, among other issues.²

III. ADOPTION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AT ITS ELEVENTH SESSION (Agenda item 12)

29. Pursuant to article 33 of the ESCWA Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure, at the closing meeting held on 16 May 2017, the Committee agreed to grant its members time to comment on the draft report of the eleventh session.

IV. ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION

A. DATE AND VENUE

30. The Committee on Energy held its eleventh session in Cairo from 14 to 16 May 2017.

² Information and presentations on and the report of the expert group meeting are available from <http://www.unescwa.org/events/egm-sustainable-energy-horizon-arab-region>.

B. OPENING

31. The first Under-Secretary of State for Research, Planning and Follow-up gave an opening speech on behalf of the Egyptian Minister of Electricity and Renewable Energy, in which he commended the constructive role ESCWA played in supporting sustainable development and integration efforts in the Arab region. He noted the commitment of Egypt to participate in all ESCWA events, given their significant impact in strengthening cooperation and the exchange of expertise and highlighting best practices in member States. He reviewed the national strategy on sustainable development 2030 in terms of ensuring energy supply to enhance green economic and social growth through the good management of energy sources, diversifying the energy mix to include traditional, renewable, coal and nuclear sources, and improving energy use and energy efficiency by employing innovative policies, economic tools and market procedures.

32. The Director of the ESCWA Sustainable Development Policies Division welcomed participants, noting that achieving the 17 SDGs would provide a decent life for all people, secure social justice, improve the management of natural resources, and protect the environment. She said that SDG7 on energy was linked to other SDGs, including those on poverty, food security, water resources, sustainable consumption and production, and climate change. Over the past few years, ESCWA had developed indicators to monitor progress in achieving SDG7, to translate the energy-water food nexus from theory into practical steps and specific work programmes, to coordinate between all relevant institutions, and to conduct activities to transfer and nationalize green technology in member States. When the 2015 Paris Agreement came into effect in 2016, following ratification by 145 States including 12 Arab countries of which eight were ESCWA member States, the adoption of practices to mitigate climate change became a commitment for all parties. She added that ESCWA was working with member States on developing and implementing policies to adapt to climate change, mitigate its impact and reduce the disaster threat, through reliable and transparent processes and indicators. She gave an overview of the issues to be covered by the Committee at its eleventh session.

C. ATTENDANCE

33. The session meetings were attended by representatives from 14 of the 18 ESCWA member States. The Director of Energy Department at the League of Arab States, representatives of the African Energy Commission, the Regional Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency and the International Renewable Energy Agency, and the representative of Egypt to the ESCWA Committee on Water Resources participated as observers. The list of participants is set out in annex I to the present report.

D. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

34. Rule 18 of the ESCWA Rules of Procedure states: “Member States shall chair the sessions of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission on a rotating basis, in the Arabic alphabetical order employed by the United Nations.”³ Unless the Commission decides otherwise, those bodies shall elect all their other officers.” The officers of the eleventh session of the Committee on Energy will be as follows:

President:	Mr. Mohamed Yarkit, representative of Mauritania
Vice-President:	Mr. Abdallah Ahmed Hajjar, representative of Yemen
Vice-President:	Mr. Ahmad Mohammad Mahina, representative of Egypt
Rapporteur:	Mr. Mustapha al-Khatib, representative of Jordan

³ ESCWA member States in Arabic alphabetical order are as follows: Jordan, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Tunisia, the Syrian Arab Republic, the Sudan, Iraq, Oman, the State of Palestine, Qatar, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Egypt, Morocco, Saudi Arabia and Yemen.

E. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

35. At its first meeting, the Committee on Energy adopted the agenda of its eleventh session as set out in document E/ESCWA/SDPD/2017/IG.1/L.1, following some amendments to bring it in line with the topics of discussion. Country presentations on progress in implementing the energy-related SDGs were included as sub-item 5 (d) under “Sustainable energy in the Arab region”, so as to dedicate item 9 to the programme of work for the biennium 2018-2019 to benefit from all comments on the proposed outcomes. The agenda was adopted as follows:

1. Opening of the session.
2. Election of officers.
3. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.
4. Review of implemented activities in the field of energy:
 - (a) Implementation of recommendations made by the Committee on Energy at its tenth session;
 - (b) Implementation of energy-related activities under the ESCWA programme of work;
 - (c) Implementation of technical cooperation activities with member States.
5. Sustainable energy in the Arab region:
 - (a) Energy-related Sustainable Development Goals;
 - (b) The energy-water nexus;
 - (c) Impact of shale oil and shale gas on underground water;
 - (d) Progress in implementing the energy-related Sustainable Development Goals in member States.
6. Arab cooperation on addressing climate change.
7. Establishment of an expert group on fossil fuels and climate change.
8. Current and future activities of the ESCWA Technology Centre.
9. Proposed programme of work for the biennium 2018-2019 in the field of energy.
10. Date and venue of the twelfth session of the Committee on Energy.
11. Other matters.
12. Adoption of recommendations made by the Committee on Energy at its eleventh session.

F. DOCUMENTS

36. The list of documents presented to the Committee on Energy at its eleventh session is set out in annex II to the present report.

Annex I

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

A. ESCWA MEMBER COUNTRIES

Bahrain

Mr. Hussein Jaafar Abdullah Makki Ali
Advisor
National Oil and Gas Authority

Egypt

Ms. Taghrid Said al Ayouti
Director General for Technical Follow-up
Ministry of Electricity and Renewable Energy

Iraq

Mr. Abdul Basit Saadoun Hamid
Assistant Chief of Engineers
Ministry of Electricity

Jordan

Mr. Mustafa al-Khatib
Director of the Directorate of Electricity
Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources

Lebanon

Ms. Aurore Feghali
Director General of Oil
Ministry of Energy and Water

Libya

Mr. Hamid Hamida al Sherwaly
Chairman
Renewable Energy Authority of Libya

Mauritania

Mr. Mohamed Yarkit
Technical Advisor to the Minister of Petroleum,
Energy and Mines
Ministry of Petroleum, Energy and Mines

Oman

Mr. Ali bin Hamad bin Abed al Ghafiri
Assistant to Chairman of International Relations
and Media
Public Authority for Electricity and Water

Palestine

Mr. Ayman Fouad Ismail
Director General
Palestinian Energy and Environment Research
Centre
Palestinian Energy and Natural Resources
Authority

Qatar

Ms. Alanoud Abdullah al Mughayseb
Senior Economic Expert
Department of Energy
Ministry of Energy and Industry

Sudan

Mr. Adel Ali Ibrahim Khalfallah
Director General
Policy and Planning Department
Ministry of Water Resources, Irrigation and
Electricity

Syrian Arab Republic

Mr. Nidal Karmouchi
Assistant Minister of Electricity
Ministry of Electricity

United Arab Emirates

Ms. Marwa Ahmad al Awadhi
Chief of the Guidance and Execution Department
Ministry of Electricity

Yemen

Mr. Abdullah Ahmed Hajar
Executive Director General
Ministry of Electricity and Energy
General Authority for Rural Electricity

B. OBSERVERS

International Renewable Energy Agency

Mr. Gorboz Gonol
Chief Regional Programmes Officer
International Renewable Energy Agency

Ms. Lara Younes
Technical Associate
International Renewable Energy Agency

Regional Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency

Mr. Hossam al Harfi
Senior policy specialist

League of Arab States

Ms. Jamila Matar
Director of the Energy Department
African Energy Commission

Mr. Atef Mohamed Ibrahim Marzook
Temporary Executive Director
African Energy Commission

Egypt

Mr. Mohamed Chahate Wehbe
Deputy Chief of the Water Resources and
Irrigation Department
Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation

Annex II

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

Title	Item	Symbol
Information note		E/ESCWA/SDPD/2017/IG.2/INF.1
Provisional agenda and annotations	3	E/ESCWA/SDPD/2017/IG.2/L.1
Organization of work	3	E/ESCWA/SDPD/2017/IG.2/L.2
Review of implemented activities in the field of energy	4	E/ESCWA/SDPD/2017/IG.2/3
Implementation of recommendations made by the Committee on Energy at its tenth session	4 (a)	E/ESCWA/SDPD/2017/IG.2/3(Part I) (Arabic only)
Implementation of energy-related activities under the ESCWA programme of work	4 (b)	E/ESCWA/SDPD/2017/IG.2/3(Part II) (Arabic only)
Implementation of technical cooperation activities with member States	4 (c)	E/ESCWA/SDPD/2017/IG.2/3(Part III) (Arabic only)
Sustainable energy in the Arab region	5	E/ESCWA/SDPD/2017/IG.2/4
Energy-related Sustainable Development Goals	5 (a)	E/ESCWA/SDPD/2017/IG.2/4(Part I)
The energy-water nexus	5 (b)	E/ESCWA/SDPD/2017/IG.2/4(Part II) (Arabic only)
Impact of shale oil and shale gas on underground water	5 (c)	E/ESCWA/SDPD/2017/IG.2/4(Part III)
Arab cooperation on addressing climate change	6	E/ESCWA/SDPD/2017/IG.2/5 (Arabic only)
Proposed programme of work for the biennium 2018-2019 in the field of energy	7	E/ESCWA/SDPD/2017/IG.2/6
Establishment of an expert group on fossil fuels and climate change	8	E/ESCWA/SDPD/2017/IG.2/7