



# Economic and Social Council

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## Economic Commission for Europe

### Committee on Sustainable Energy

#### Group of Experts on Gas

##### Sixth session

Geneva, 25 and 26 March 2019

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

##### Adoption of the agenda

### Annotated provisional agenda for the sixth session

To be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, starting at 10 a.m. on Monday 25 March 2019<sup>1</sup>.

#### 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 and its Executive Committee.
5. The role of gas in attaining the Sustainable Development Goals.
6. Exploring synergies between gas, renewable energy and energy efficiency.
7. Promoting sustainable and clean production, distribution, and consumption of gas.
8. Joint Meeting of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and the Oil and Gas Subcommittee of the Global Methane Initiative.

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<sup>1</sup> Delegates attending meetings at the Palais des Nations are requested to register online (<http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=50338>), 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 work day at the Pregny Gate from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The secretariat can be contacted by telephone (extension 73158 or 73328).



9. The role of gas in improving urban and indoor air quality.
10. Emerging issues.
11. Update on implementation of the work plan for 2018–2019.
12. Work plan for 2020–2021.
13. Update on activities in United Nations Economic Commission for Europe member States, the gas industry and organizations.
14. Preparations for the seventh session of the Group of Experts on Gas.
15. Any other business.
16. Adoption of conclusions and recommendations.
17. Adoption of the report and close of the meeting.

## **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<sup>2</sup>, as soon as they become available.

### **2. Opening remarks**

Opening remarks will be delivered, including on the efforts of the Group of Experts to help ECE member States deliver on key political commitments, such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on climate change.

### **3. Election of officers**

At its fifth session held in March 2018, the Group of Experts elected a Bureau to serve for a period of two years. The Group of Experts will be informed of changes to the Bureau, if any, since the fifth session.

### **4. Activities and priorities of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and its Executive Committee**

Following the twenty-seventh session of the Committee on Sustainable Energy (the parent body of the Group of Experts) in September 2018, the secretariat will provide an overview of recent activities of the Committee and inform the Group of Experts of any decisions taken related to its current or future work by the Committee and the ECE Executive Committee. The secretariat will also provide an overview of the open-ended consultation meeting of the Committee taking place in Geneva on 16 May 2019 and invite the Group of Experts to take an active role in the preparations for and discussions at that meeting.

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<sup>2</sup> [http://www.unece.org/energy/se/docs/natural\\_gas.html](http://www.unece.org/energy/se/docs/natural_gas.html)

## **5. The role of gas in attaining the Sustainable Development Goals**

The Group of Experts will explore how gas and liquefied natural gas (LNG) could enable ECE member States to attain a range of Sustainable Development Goals, such as Goal 1 (no poverty), Goal 2 (zero hunger), Goal 3 (good health and well-being), Goal 5 (gender), Goal 6 (clean water and sanitation), Goal 8 (decent work and economic growth), Goal 9 (industry, innovation and infrastructure), Goal 11 (inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities), Goal 12 (sustainable consumption and production patterns), and Goal 13 (climate action).

Gas is particularly relevant to the three objectives of Goal 7 – to increase access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all, to accelerate the uptake of renewable energy, and, by replacing coal where possible, to improve energy efficiency of the electricity system.

The Group of Experts will also be updated on the project the Committee oversees “Pathways to Sustainable Energy”. Through this project the Committee has been assessing pathways that attain the energy-related SDGs and subsequent pledges made in Paris. All expert bodies under the Committee are invited to contribute to the resulting policy and technology dialogues before recommendations will be presented to the Committee’s twenty-eighth session in September 2019 for adoption. Results are expected to shed light onto some of the challenges of the ongoing transformation in energy, including: (a) natural gas displacing competing higher carbon-intensity fuels in power generation, transport, heating, and other end-use markets; (b) the possibility of natural gas enhancing the uptake of renewables by compensating their intermittency (balancing markets); and (c) penetration of new markets through small-scale LNG and compressed natural gas (CNG).

## **6. Exploring synergies between gas, renewable energy and energy efficiency**

The Group of Experts will be updated on discussions and common interests with the ECE Group of Experts on Renewable Energy, as well as on opportunities to increase the efficiency and performance of the energy system by combining natural gas with renewable energy sources. Representatives of the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy and the Group of Experts on Cleaner Electricity Production from Fossil Fuels are invited to join the discussion. The Group of Experts on Gas will discuss the information provided with the aim to identify synergies between subsidiary bodies of the Committee, as well as with other ECE sectoral committees.

## **7. Promoting sustainable and clean production, distribution, and consumption of gas**

The Group of Experts’ core mandate is to provide a forum for dialogue on sustainable and clean production, distribution, and consumption of gas and LNG in the ECE region. This annual roundtable will present several policy approaches to key political and technical developments in the gas sector.

## **8. Joint Meeting of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and the Oil and Gas Subcommittee of the Global Methane Initiative**

This will be the first joint meeting of ECE and the Oil and Gas Subcommittee of the Global Methane Initiative (GMI), one of the key stakeholders of the Group of Experts. The Group

of Experts will be updated on the methane management activities in several of the forty-five GMI Partner Countries.

The Group of Experts will be also updated on the implementation of the project: “Methane Management in Extractive Industries (Upstream Oil and Gas/Downstream Gas),” funded by the United States Environmental Protection Agency in support of the mission of the GMI. The key deliverables of the project: best practices for (a) measurement, reporting, and verification of methane emissions, and (b) reducing methane emissions in these industries will be presented and discussed. The Group of Experts will discuss the information provided (as contained in document ECE/ENERGY/GE.8/2019/3) with an aim to identify case studies that could illustrate applications of the best practices discussed in the document.

## **9. The role of gas in improving urban and indoor air quality**

The Group of Experts will discuss how an increased reliance on natural gas in electricity generation could reduce concentrations of airborne pollutants – nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide, methane, volatile organic compounds, sulphur dioxide, and particulate matter – and hence improve urban air quality. Replacing some transportation fuels with gas could help further improve air quality, particularly in urban areas of the economies in transition of the ECE region.

The absolute number of people relying on polluting fuels for cooking, such as solid fuels and kerosene, has increased to nearly three billion. Gas, as the cleanest-burning fuel, could help reduce or eliminate indoor air pollution that has an adverse effect on achieving the Sustainable Development Goals related to health, poverty, and gender.

## **10. Emerging issues**

Biogas, synthetic gas, power-to-gas, and hydrogen have been identified as emerging concepts in the Group’s work plan for 2018–2019. At the fifth session in 2018, biogas was discussed in depth. This year, the Group of Experts will turn its attention to hydrogen and the role of gas infrastructure in accelerating the transition to a future hydrogen economy.

## **11. Update on implementation of the work plan for 2018–2019**

The Group of Experts provides a forum for dialogue on sustainable and clean production, distribution, and consumption of gas in the ECE region. The Group’s work plan for 2018-2019 focuses on six activities:

- (a) Role of gas in attaining Sustainable Development Goals;
- (b) Best practices in managing methane emissions along the gas value chain;
- (c) Role of gas in improving urban air quality;
- (d) Renewable energy and natural gas as the best combination to enhance the energy efficiency in the whole energy system;
- (e) Emerging issues;
- (f) Promoting sustainable and clean production, distribution, and consumption of gas and LNG in the ECE region.

The Chair and the secretariat will update the Group of Experts on progress to date and the work ahead in the implementation of the 2018–2019 work plan.

**12. Work plan for 2020–2021**

Following the update on the current work plan and taking note of emerging themes over the last two years, the Group of Experts will review and discuss the proposed draft work plan (as contained in the informal document GEG-6/2019/INF.2) that was developed by the Bureau of the Group of Experts. The recommended draft work plan needs to be submitted to the Committee on Sustainable Energy at its twenty-eighth session, 25–27 September 2019.

**13. Update on activities in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe member States, gas industry and organizations**

Representatives of ECE member States, the gas industry, and international governmental and non-governmental organizations will present their work and other developments since March 2018. 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, or Russian).

**14. Preparations for the seventh session of the Group of Experts on Gas**

The Group of Experts will discuss preparations for its seventh session. Possible topics for the substantive portion of the session will be proposed and discussed. The seventh session of the Group of Experts is scheduled for the first quarter of 2020.

**15. 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.

**16. Adoption of conclusions and recommendations**

The Group of Experts will be invited to adopt conclusions and recommendations as may be agreed.

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

**17. Adoption of the report and close of the meeting**

The Chair, with the assistance of the secretariat, will summarize the agreed conclusions and recommendations. 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.

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