

**Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)**

Committee on Energy
Eleventh session
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Item 7 of the provisional agenda

**Proposed programme of work for the biennium
2018-2019 in the field of energy****Summary**

The proposed programme of work of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) for the biennium 2018-2019 in the field of energy presents a set of activities and outputs related to the implementation of the expected accomplishments envisaged under subprogramme 1, “Integrated management of natural resources for sustainable development”, of the strategic framework of ESCWA. While subprogramme 1 comprises work in the fields of energy, water resources, food and environment and is implemented by the Sustainable Development Policies Division (SDPD), this document contains the proposed activities in the field of energy only, which are implemented by the Energy Section of SDPD.

The Committee on Energy is invited to review the activities listed in the proposed programme of work and discuss the extent to which they meet the priorities of ESCWA member States and their relevance to the expected accomplishments in the field of energy. The Committee is also invited to discuss ways to concretely measure the indicators of achievement in order to accurately monitor progress achieved as a result of implementing the proposed outputs.

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Introduction

1. The activities comprised in the proposed programme of work of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) for the biennium 2018-2019 in the field of energy were formulated on the basis of subprogramme 1 on the integrated management of natural resources for sustainable development, of the strategic framework for the biennium 2018-2019, which was adopted by ESCWA at its twenty-ninth session held in Doha, from 13 to 15 December 2016.
2. The Sustainable Development Policies Division (SDPD) at ESCWA is responsible for the implementation of subprogramme 1 through its three sections, the Energy Section, the Water Resources Section and the Food and Environment Policies Section. During the biennium 2018-2019, SDPD will maintain its focus on promoting regional and subregional cooperation on sustainable development in the fields of energy, water resources, food and environment, and on assisting member States in the harmonization of relevant policies and standards. This document presents the proposed outputs to be implemented by the Energy Section.
3. In preparing those outputs, the ESCWA secretariat has given due consideration to the following:
 - (a) Major challenges facing the Arab region, including issues that have emerged during the implementation of the programme of work for the biennium 2014-2015 and in 2016;
 - (b) Adoption by Member States of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in September 2015 and of the Paris Agreement adopted at the twenty-first Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Paris, in December 2015, and activities being carried out to support implementation through diverse means, including adoption of the nexus approach;
 - (c) The Pan-Arab Strategy for the Development of Renewable Energy Applications (2010-2030), adopted by the Secretariat of the Arab Ministerial Council for Electricity on 23 November 2010, and by the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit at its third session, held in Riyadh, on 21 and 22 January 2013.

I. ACTION REQUIRED OF THE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY

4. The Committee on Energy is invited to review the proposed outputs and provide its guidance to the secretariat on the basis of the following two criteria: (a) the extent to which the proposed outputs respond to the needs of intended beneficiaries, namely ministries and authorities of the Arab region in charge of energy issues; and (b) the extent to which those outputs contribute to the realization of the expected accomplishments of subprogramme 1, considering the outcome of the deliberations that will take place at the current session.

II. SUBPROGRAMME 1: INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

A. OBJECTIVE OF SUBPROGRAMME 1 FOR THE BIENNIUM 2018-2019

5. The objective of subprogramme 1 is to support the integrated management of natural resources leading to improved food, water and energy security and enhanced resilience to climate change, and to mainstream Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into regional and national policy processes.

B. EXPECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND INDICATORS OF ACHIEVEMENT

Expected accomplishments	Indicators of achievement	Performance measures			
			2018-2019	2016-2017	2014-2015
(a) Increased alignment of national plans with SDGs, drawing upon the nexus approach to water, energy and food	(a) (i) Increased number of multisectoral institutional mechanisms established to mainstream the SDGs into national development plans	Target	4		
		Estimate		3	
		Actual			–
	(a) (ii) Increased number of strategies, plans and policies adopted by line ministries to support the integrated management of natural resources	Target	5		
		Estimate		3	
		Actual			–
(b) Increased engagement by member States in regional and subregional processes in support of agreements, strategies and standards related to water, energy, food and the environment	(b) (i) Increased number of harmonized tools, techniques and guidelines implemented by member States to enhance food, water and energy security	Target	5		
		Estimate		3	
		Actual			–
	(b) (ii) Increased number of joint initiatives and intergovernmental resolutions adopted to enhance regional cooperation on sustainability of natural resources	Target	23		
		Estimate		20	
		Actual			15
(c) Strengthened resilience of member States and of vulnerable communities to climate change and natural disasters	(c) (i) Increased number of intergovernmental recommendations, resolutions and decrees adopted by member States across sectors to coordinate responses to climate change adaptation and mitigation and disaster risk reduction	Target	16		
		Estimate		13	
		Actual			10
	(c) (ii) Increased number of measures adopted by member States to mainstream the science-policy interface in relation to climate change	Target	2		
		Estimate		–	
		Actual			–

C. STRATEGY*

19.18 The Sustainable Development Policies Division is responsible for the implementation of subprogramme 1. The year 2015 has been marked as the year of sustainable development. It witnessed the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which constitutes a robust and transformative agenda that builds on the social, economic, environmental and governance pillars of sustainable development, and converges with global development processes, namely the Sendai Declaration and Framework for Disaster

* The paragraphs under “Strategy” are numbered from 19-18 to 19-23, where 19 refers to programme 19 on economic and social development in Western Asia of the strategic framework of the United Nations for the biennium 2018-2019, and 18 to 23 are the consecutive numbers in that document which contains all United Nations programmes. This numbering is maintained in ESCWA documents containing the programme of work of the whole Commission and those containing the programme of work under each of the seven subprogrammes.

Risk Reduction 2015-2030, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development and the Paris Agreement (COP 21).

19.19 Nonetheless, challenges persist in the Arab region: a rising demand for food, water and energy, which is taking an increasingly heavy toll on the scarce natural resources and the environment, and exacerbating food insecurity; unsustainable production and consumption patterns; inefficient energy production, distribution and consumption, adding to an already high volume of waste; and climate change and its impact. ESCWA is well positioned to assist countries in following a more sustainable development path that relies on policy coherence across the water, energy and food sectors (nexus approach), and policy dialogue across line ministries and stakeholders at national and regional levels.

19.20 Through the implementation of the subprogramme, ESCWA will assist member States in moving towards this sustainable development path by building strong and resilient institutions; supporting a more efficient and transparent management of natural resources through the adoption of a rights-based approach to resource governance; implementing the 2030 Agenda; facilitating policy dialogue for greater food, water and energy security; and developing mechanisms for coordinated responses to climate change and other natural crises.

19.21 In that context, ESCWA will:

(a) Advocate for and raise awareness of regional and global commitments, particularly the Sustainable Development Goals, the agenda adopted by the five United Nations regional commissions to accelerate the implementation of the United Nations Decade of Sustainable Energy for All 2014-2024, and Arab strategies for the integrated management of natural resources, climate change mitigation and disaster risk reduction;

(b) Serve as a forum for promoting multisectoral policy dialogue on sustainable development issues towards forging regional positions based on enhanced science-policy interface, coherence across different sectors and institution-building;

(c) Support member States in their efforts to improve the efficient use of natural resources and adopt a rights-based approach by analysing performance in these sectors, providing policy recommendations, promoting the application of appropriate green technologies, and encouraging the integrated management of natural resources;

(d) Facilitate regional cooperation and coordination as a means to enhance food, water and energy security, alleviate poverty in rural areas and achieve social justice in terms of natural resources governance;

(e) Support the development of national or regional mechanisms, networks or green help desks for the integration of the different pillars of sustainable development;

(f) Foster regional approaches on climate change adaptation and mitigation by supporting the development of mechanisms to deal with climate change impacts, conduct impact and vulnerability assessments, and examine associated socioeconomic and environmental issues in order to inform policymaking processes and support member States in their negotiations.

19.22 This will be achieved through servicing intergovernmental bodies; conducting high-quality policy-oriented research and analytical work on the science-policy interface; organizing high-level and expert meetings; providing advisory services; implementing field projects; supporting dedicated knowledge platforms for professionals; and issuing technical materials to enhance capacity to address sustainable development issues and challenges.

19.23 Work under the subprogramme will strive to maximize synergies and strategic partnerships through cooperation with different United Nations agencies and regional commissions and organizations, and

participation in the United Nations inter-agency coordination mechanisms on water and energy, the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development and the Regional Coordination Mechanism.

D. EXTERNAL FACTORS

6. Subprogramme 1 will achieve its objective and expected accomplishments provided that: (a) member States remain committed to giving due priority to sustainable development issues and adopt appropriate measures for enhancing food, energy and water security; (b) political stability is improved, leading to institution-building and enhanced governance and transparency; (c) line ministries in member States cooperate and work together on key strategic issues; and (d) member States are willing to establish mechanisms/platforms at interregional and interministerial levels to cooperate on sustainable development issues and incorporate the SDGs.

E. OUTPUTS

7. SDPD, which comprises the Energy Section, the Water Resources Section and the Food and Environment Policies Section, is responsible for implementing the expected accomplishments under subprogramme 1. This document, however, only presents the activities falling under the responsibility of the Energy Section during the biennium 2018-2019.

(a) *Servicing intergovernmental and expert bodies (regular budget)*

(i) *Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (thirtieth session)*

Parliamentary documentation:

Report of the Committee on Energy on its eleventh session (1).

(ii) *Committee on Energy*

- a. Servicing the meetings of the twelfth session of the Committee on Energy;
- b. Parliamentary documentation:
 - i. Energy market development in the Arab region (1);
 - ii. The water, energy and food (WEF) nexus (1);
 - iii. Progress towards mainstreaming SDGs in national development plans (1).

(iii) *Ad hoc expert group meetings*

- a. Expert group meeting on gas flaring management in Arab countries (1);
- b. Expert group meeting on energy productivity in Arab countries (1);
- c. Expert group meeting on the WEF nexus (1);
- d. Expert group meeting on energy with a focus on the 2030 Agenda (1);
- e. Regional consultations: impact of climate change on implementation of the SDGs in the Arab region – 2018-2019 (2);
- f. Expert group meeting on technology transfer and adaptation for sustainable consumption and production in the Arab countries: case studies on waste, water and energy (1);
- g. Regional consultation on the alignment of national water, food and environment plans with the 2030 Agenda (1).

(iv) *Assistance to intergovernmental bodies and/or United Nations representatives/rapporteurs under their established mandates*

Substantive contribution and support to the Arab Ministerial Council for Electricity and technical committees on electricity and renewable energy/energy efficiency – 2018-2019 (2).

(b) *Other substantive activities (regular budget)*

(i) *Non-recurrent publication*

- a. Tracking progress with regard to energy-related SDGs in the Arab region (1);
- b. Addressing energy vulnerability in the Arab region (1).

(ii) *Booklets, pamphlets, fact sheets, wall charts and information kits*

- a. Fact sheet on renewable energy legislation in Arab countries (1);
- b. Booklet on electricity interconnections and natural gas interconnections in the Arab region (1);
- c. Fact sheet on energy efficiency legislation in Arab countries (1);
- d. Booklet on waste to energy (1);
- e. Fact sheet on technologies for greenhouse gas mitigation in the transport sector (1);
- f. Booklet on technologies for creating value from CO₂ in Arab countries (1).

(iii) *Technical material*

- a. Policy brief on best practices for the implementation of sustainable energy action plans (1);
- b. Technical material on the role of demand-side management in enhancing WEF security in the Arab region (1);
- c. Report on climate change and economic development with a focus on the 2030 Agenda (1);
- d. Report on energy with a focus on the 2030 Agenda (1).

(iv) *Substantive servicing of inter-agency meetings*

- a. Substantive contribution to the United Nations coordination bodies on energy, water and environment – 2018-2019 (2);
- b. Substantive contribution and support to the Arab Forum for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (ARFREE) – 2018 (1);
- c. Substantive contribution and support to global and regional forums on energy, water and food – 2018-2019 (2);
- d. Substantive contribution to and support for Arab States in preparation for the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change – 2018-2019 (2);
- e. Substantive contribution to and support for the High-level Political Forum – 2018-2019 (2);
- f. Substantive contribution by technical and policy briefs to the RCM meetings – 2018-2019 (2);
- g. Substantive input to the Arab Forum on Sustainable Development – 2018-2019 (2);
- h. Substantive input to the Arab Sustainable Development Report (1).

Annex

LEGISLATIVE MANDATES

General Assembly resolutions

- | | |
|---------|---|
| 68/2018 | Oil slick on Lebanese shores |
| 68/208 | Cooperative measures to assess and increase awareness of environmental effects related to waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea |
| 68/211 | International Strategy for Disaster Reduction |
| 68/212 | Protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind |
| 68/215 | Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its first universal session and the implementation of section IV.C, entitled “Environmental pillar in the context of sustainable development”, of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development |
| 69/220 | Protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind |
| 69/225 | Promotion of new and renewable sources of energy |
| 70/225 | Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources |

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia resolutions

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| 281 (XXV) | Addressing climate change issues in the Arab region |
| 305 (XXVII) | Sustainable development in the region and follow-up and implementation of the decisions of the Rio+20 Conference |
