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

Committee on Energy  
Sixth session  
Doha, 4-5 February 2007

Item 7 (a) of the provisional agenda

**REVIEW OF ACTION TAKEN IN THE FIELD OF ENERGY SINCE THE FIFTH  
SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY****FOLLOW-UP TO IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FIFTH  
SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY****Summary**

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) established the Committee on Energy pursuant to its resolution 204 (XVIII) of 25 May 1995, in recognition of the vital role played in economic and social development programmes by the energy sector. It is the responsibility of the Committee to take part in identifying the priorities of ESCWA programmes of work in the field of energy, coordinate the endeavours of member countries and assist them in implementing energy-related recommendations made by regional and international conferences, monitor progress made in that field, improve the contribution made by the energy sector to the achievement of sustainable development, and support cooperation between member countries with a view to strengthening their capacities in that respect.

Subprogramme 1: integrated policies for the management of regional resources for sustainable development.\*

Committee sessions are held once every two years. The fifth session was held in Beirut on 11 and 12 October 2004. The report on that session is contained in E/ESCWA/SDPD/2004/IG.1/7, which sets out a number of recommendations relating to the work of ESCWA in the field of energy, as part of the table set forth below contains a brief review of the measures that have been taken by ESCWA and the activities it has implemented pursuant to the recommendations made by the Committee on Energy at its fifth session.

\* ESCWA, Revised medium-term plan for period 2002-2005, Programme 18. Economic and social development in Western Asia, 19 March 2002 (E/ESCWA/S-4/3), paras. 7-17. United Nations General Assembly, Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007, Part V, Regional cooperation for development, Section 21, Economic and social development in Western Asia (Programme 18 of the biennial programme plan and priorities for the period 2006-2007), 2 May 2005 (A/60/6(Sect.21)).

Recommendation	Follow-up
<p>1. ESCWA is urged to include in its programme of work studies on policies that involve the social, economic and environmental aspects of energy resource management, with a view to achieving sustainable development.</p>	<p>As part of the aim of subprogramme 1 for the biennium 2004-2005, concerning integrated policies for the management of regional resources for sustainable development, namely, to strengthen environmentally sound policies and devote particular attention to policies and arrangements concerned with the integration of social development within the sustainable development process; and the aim of the programme for the biennium 2006-2007 to improve the sustainable management and consumption of natural resources, the activities that are being implemented as part of the programme include the analysis and evaluation of the social, economic and environmental aspects related to each activity. Against that background, ESCWA undertook the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It arranged a roundtable on the role of the energy sector in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in the countries of the region, in the framework of activities related to the third Middle East-North Africa Renewable Energy Conference, which was held in Cairo from 12 to 14 June 2006.</li> <li>• It prepared a study on the role of rural women in managing water resources, optimizing energy use and protecting the environment in ESCWA member countries, which will be issued in 2007. The study analyses the social, economic and environmental impacts of improving energy supplies to rural areas, using renewable forms of energy.</li> </ul>
<p>2. Work should continue on the building of national capacities and spreading of awareness and knowledge of aspects of energy related to sustainable development, by holding seminars, training courses and study groups and participating in the relevant conferences and seminars that are held at the regional and international levels.</p>	<p>ESCWA has paid a great deal of attention to supporting member country efforts to build national capacities and increase the awareness of the relevant parties at all levels of the issue of energy for sustainable development. To that end, ESCWA has organized many conferences, seminars and training courses, in cooperation with various national, regional and international parties, as is described in detail in E/ESCWA/SDPD/2007/IG.1/5 (Part II), which has been presented to the Committee. Those activities included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Regional Training Workshop on Photovoltaic Systems for Rural Electrification: systems design, installation, operation and maintenance, which was held in Aden, Yemen, from 26 to 30 November 2005. It was organized by ESCWA in cooperation with the Ministry of Electricity of Yemen, in coordination with the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) and with support from the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) Fund for International Development. A total of 35 engineers took part in the course, of whom 28 were involved with rural electricity in Yemen, while the remaining seven were from other member countries. Representatives of the rural population and, in particular, women, also attended.</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="804 161 1430 613">• The Arab Regional Conference on Energy for Sustainable Development: Progress Achieved and Environmental Issues, which was held in Cairo from 10 to 12 September 2005, organized by ESCWA in cooperation with the League of Arab States, the United Nations Environment Programme. Regional Office for West Asia (UNEP/ROWA) and the Ministry of Electricity and Energy of Egypt, as part of the Arab preparations for the fourteenth session of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development. The three main issues considered by the Conference were energy for sustainable development, air pollution and climate change. Experts from all ESCWA member and five non-ESCWA member countries took part.</li> <li data-bbox="804 654 1430 1106">• The third Middle East-North Africa Renewable Energy Conference, which was held in Cairo from 12 to 14 June 2006, organized by ESCWA in cooperation with the Ministry of Electricity and Energy of Egypt, represented by the New and Renewable Energy Authority, and UNEP/ROWA and with the support of the German Ministry of Environment, Natural Conservation and Nuclear Safety. The Conference issued the Cairo Declaration concerning the trends and policies of Arab countries in the field of developing renewable energy applications. That Declaration is covered in detail in E/ESCWA/SDPD/2007/IG.1/5(Part II), which is submitted to the Committee under agenda item 7 (b).</li> <li data-bbox="804 1146 1430 1411">• Seminar on the follow-up to the activities of the Regional Mechanism for the Development of Energy for Sustainable Development, which was held in Amman on 18 and 19 December 2006, organized by ESCWA in cooperation with the National Energy Research Center of Jordan, which considered reference documents on the experience of Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic in that field.</li> <li data-bbox="804 1451 1430 1863">• ESCWA experts took part in national and regional conferences and seminars organized by member countries and voluntary and non-governmental organizations, presenting technical papers, particularly on energy planning, improving energy efficiency and renewable energy. Such conferences included the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="836 1688 1430 1747">- The Eighth Arab Energy Conference, which was held in Amman from 17 to 21 May 2006;</li> <li data-bbox="836 1778 1430 1863">- Conference on Power Generation and Electricity in the Arab World, which was held in Beirut on 27 and 28 November 2006.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Recommendation	Follow-up
<p>3. Support should be given to member countries through the provision of consultancy on the development, transfer and nationalization of energy technologies for sustainable development in fields relating to energy conservation, clean fossil fuels and renewable energy, with special attention being given to activities concerning economically feasible applications of renewable energy technologies, with the focus on rural areas.</p>	<p>The ESCWA programme of work in the field of energy includes activities related to the implementation of this recommendation, including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The ESCWA Project on Disseminating Renewable Energy for Poverty Alleviation in ESCWA Member Countries. The Sustainable Development and Productivity is following up implementation phase two of the Project, which includes the design and implementation of a model project for the electrification of the Yemeni village of Qa'wah, using solar panels to generate electricity for electricity and pumps; and the evaluation of possibilities for alleviating poverty in rural villages by providing modern electricity services using renewable energy resources. The project will then be adopted as a model for the training and capacity-building in related fields of the inhabitants of rural areas. E/ESCWA/SDPD/2007/IG.1/5(Part II), which is submitted to the Committee under agenda item 7 (b), details the progress that has been made in implementing the Project.</li> <li>• A study on improving energy efficiency and the use of cleaner fossil fuels in selected sectors in some ESCWA member countries has been completed by ESCWA and issued in the following two parts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- E/ESCWA/SDPD/2005/1(Part I), which covers the improvement of energy efficiency in energy-intensive industries, including cement, steel, glass and fertilizer;</li> <li>- E/ESCWA/SDPD/2005/1(Part II), which covers the uses of cleaner fossil fuels in selected sectors in ESCWA member countries.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>E/ESCWA/SDPD/2007/IG.1/5(Part II) presents to the Committee a summary of the outcomes of both parts of the study, including the techniques that may be applied in the countries of the region and the measures necessary in order to disseminate and adapt their use.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A study on opportunities for optimizing and improving energy efficiency in high energy productivity sectors in selected countries of the ESCWA region is being prepared by the ESCWA Sustainable Energy Issues Team as part of the programme of work for the biennium 2006-2007. It covers such opportunities in the crude oil and natural gas exploration, extraction, assembly and transport sectors.</li> </ul> <p>That study comprises three case studies on the Syrian Arab Republic (completed) and Bahrain and Kuwait (being prepared). It is planned to publish those studies in mid-2007.</p>

Recommendation	Follow-up
<p>4. Programmes should include reports to follow up developments achieved in electrical interconnection and natural gas and its pipelines between Arab countries in general and ESCWA member countries in particular; and on the private sector participation in the electrical energy sector in member countries and the use that may be made of practical experiences.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Sustainable Energy Issues Team has, since 2004, prepared an annual report following up developments in the fields referred to. The report is published as part of the annual review of developments in globalization and regional integration in the countries of the ESCWA region. Issues four (E/ESCWA/GRID/2004/6) and five (E/ESCWA/GRID/2005/13) of the <i>Review</i> give full details of all projects to link the electricity grids and natural gas pipelines of the Arab countries in general and ESCWA member countries in particular, together with the most significant developments in those two fields in the biennium 2004-2005.</li> <li>• As part of its involvement in the activities undertaken by the experts of the executive office of the Council of Arab Ministers of Electricity, ESCWA is a member of the working group that was formed by that office in order to prepare the guidelines for a study of the comprehensive project for linking Arab electricity grids and to evaluate the use of natural gas for electricity exports to 2020, pursuant to a resolution on that issue which was adopted by the Arab Summit that was held in Algiers on 22 and 23 March 2005.</li> <li>• ESCWA presented a paper on the lessons learnt from the involvement of the private sector in electricity generation in several ESCWA member countries to the Power Make Up conference that was held in Beirut on 27 and 28 November 2006.</li> </ul>
<p>5. Work should continue on the development of an energy database, which should be updated to include energy use for sustainable development. The energy team should also develop its Internet site and periodically update the data and information available there. That site should include a subsidiary site on the RPMSES, and links should be provided to sites that specialize in energy issues, in order to allow those interested to access additional information.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At the end of 2005, the Sustainable Development and Productivity Division produced a set of brochures on the national and regional characteristics of sustainable development indicators in selected sectors in the ESCWA region. The set consists of five booklets, each of which contains tables and explanations of sustainable development indicators as well as priority policies in each country of the region in the energy, water, environment, agriculture, industry and technology sectors. Each booklet also deals with the same indicators at the regional level. The booklet covering the electricity sector appears in E/ESCWA/SDPD/2005/Booklet.1.</li> <li>• A special page has been developed for the energy for sustainable development team on the ESCWA Internet site <a href="http://www.escwa.org.lb">www.escwa.org.lb</a>. It contains information on ESCWA activities in the energy for sustainable development field, including meetings and workshops, current and forthcoming studies and existing mechanisms and projects. The site also provides links to ESCWA publications; all team studies can be downloaded in PDF file format. The site contains information on the Regional Mechanism for the Development of Sustainable Energy Systems and includes information on the relevant national focal points and some information on their representatives. Data are continually updated with the information that focal points wish to include.</li> </ul>

Recommendation	Follow-up
<p>6. Work programmes should continue to include studies aimed at improving energy efficiency and increasing the adoption of clean fossil fuel technologies, in order to reduce emissions at point of production and point of consumption. Current global developments should be followed up concerning the extraction and storage of carbon dioxide, including by the organization of workshops on the subject.</p>	<p>In order to complement previous activities aimed at improving energy efficiency and conserving the environment, ESCWA included the studies mentioned above with reference to recommendation No. 3 in its programmes for 2005-2007.</p>
<p>7. Member countries should be assisted in accessing information, in order to benefit from the clean development mechanism (CDM) defined in the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and to make use of the relevant regional and international expertise.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ESCWA took part in the First International Conference on Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) which was held in Riyadh from 19 to 21 September 2006. The Conference was organized by the Ministry of Petroleum and Minerals of Saudi Arabia, and provided an important opportunity for an exchange of views between the representatives of member countries on the need for data and training in that field.</li> <li>• ESCWA organized a regional workshop on project funding by CDM, and opportunities for ESCWA member countries to benefit therefrom, which was held in Amman on 20 and 21 December 2006. The workshop gave the representatives of member countries who are involved in the preparation of CDM-related projects the opportunity to meet experts and specialists and learn the requirements for preparing documents and forms related to CDM projects that are to be presented to the parties responsible for reviewing and adopting such projects. Details on that issue are given in E/ESCWA/SDPD/2007/IG.1/5(Part II), which is submitted to the Committee under agenda item 7 (b).</li> <li>• Several CDM-related documents have been placed on CD and distributed to the representatives of national focal points in member countries and to workshop participants.</li> </ul>
<p>8. Member countries should be assisted in preparing national reports on the progress achieved in the field of energy for sustainable development; and a pivotal role should be assumed in the preparations for the fourteenth session of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (2006-2007), in coordination with member countries and in cooperation with the technical secretariat of the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment, by holding a regional seminar to discuss the progress made and reach a regional Arab stance on issues regarding energy for sustainable development, with the aim of achieving outcomes that serve the interests of member countries.</p>	<p>ESCWA is continually following up the procedures necessary for Arab preparations for sessions of the Commission on Sustainable Development. In that context, it has undertaken, in cooperation with the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment and UNEP/ROWA, the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The preparation of four regional reports on the four thematic clusters for the implementation cycle 2006-2007 of the Commission on Sustainable Development, namely, energy for sustainable development, air pollution, climate change and industrial development. ESCWA prepared a report on the first of those themes and submitted the draft thereof to member countries for their comments.</li> <li>• The organization and convening of the Arab Regional Conference on Energy for Sustainable Development: Progress Achieved and Environmental Issues, which was held in Cairo from 10 to 12 September 2005.</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="820 181 1449 544">• The preparation of a draft Arab regional report for submission to the fourteenth session of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development on the progress that has been made by Arab countries in respect of the four themes. ESCWA presented that draft to the regional seminar that was held during the Joint Committee on Environment and Development in the Arab Region meeting that was held from 13 to 15 November 2005, where it was discussed and its final version formulated. ESCWA amended it and submitted it to Commission on Sustainable Development at United Nations headquarters.</li> <li data-bbox="820 555 1449 931">• The organization of a regional seminar on the submission to and discussion of the report at the fourteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development. The seminar attracted a large number of participants; ESCWA representatives took part in presenting and commenting on the report, as well as experts from Egypt and Saudi Arabia, the Union of Arab Banks and the Arab Centre for Youth and the Environment. The most important elements of the Arab regional report and the outcomes of the seminar were incorporated into paragraphs 194-197 of the report of the Commission on its fourteenth session (E/CN.17/2006/15).</li> <li data-bbox="820 943 1449 1384">• As part of the preparations for the fifteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, and on the basis of the outcomes relating to Arab countries of the fourteenth session, ESCWA prepared a proposal on policies that could be adopted by Arab countries during the fifteenth session consultations. The proposal was presented to, and discussed and amended by Arab experts during the eighteenth session of the Joint Committee on Environment and Development in the Arab Region, that was held in Cairo from 21 to 23 November 2006 before being adopted by the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment at a meeting held in Algiers on 19 December 2006.</li> <li data-bbox="820 1395 1449 1899">• ESCWA organized the Arab Regional Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development: Strategies, Policies and Plans, to be held in Abu Dhabi on 1 February 2007 in order to discuss the policies and plans concerning energy for sustainable development that have been adopted or are proposed by ESCWA member countries. The aim of the meeting is to afford Arab specialists and experts the opportunity to discuss and enrich such policies and give their views thereon and to make an Arab contribution to consultations at the fifteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development. The forum is being organized in cooperation with the League of Arab States Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment, UNEP/ROWA and the UNEP office in Abu Dhabi.</li> </ul>

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Follow-up</b>
<p>9. ESCWA is urged to continue to provide member countries in general, and members of the Committee on Energy in particular, with electronic copies of the energy-related technical documents it issues.</p>	<p>The ESCWA Sustainable Development and Productivity Division has put on CD all the documents that it has produced since 1997 and distributed copies to national focal points of the Regional Mechanism for the Development of Energy for Sustainable Development and to members of the Committee on Energy. The Division distributes copies on CD of the documents from the meetings and workshops which it organizes.</p>