



Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
Committee on Energy**Third session**

Bangkok, 24–26 February 2021

Report of the Committee on Energy on its third session**I. Matters calling for action by the Commission or brought to its attention****A. Matters calling for action by the Commission**

1. The following recommendations of the Committee on Energy are brought to the attention of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) for its consideration and action:

Recommendation 1

The Committee, reaffirming the need for energy transition for the Asia-Pacific region for sustainable development and in recovering from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic through regional cooperation, and recognizing, in this context, the work of the secretariat to address energy security and resilience issues, recommends the secretariat integrate these issues into its activities at the regional, subregional and national levels.

Recommendation 2

The Committee, acknowledging the efforts of member States to attain the national targets on energy access, renewables and efficiency, recognizing that the Asia-Pacific region is still far from achieving the vision of ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all, invites its members to accelerate the pace of progress towards Sustainable Development Goal 7 and further promote sharing of experiences and lessons learned, through regional cooperation, in order to effectively contribute to the achievement of Goal 7.

Recommendation 3

In preparing the organization of the third Asian and Pacific Energy Forum in 2023, the Committee recommends the agenda to be developed in consultation with member States, including through the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission and that the background documents be developed with advice from the Expert Working Groups on Energy Connectivity and on Universal Access to Modern Energy Services, Renewable Energy, Energy Efficiency and Cleaner Use of Fossil Fuels.

Recommendation 4

The Committee recommends strengthening national capacity on sustainable energy, including in terms of developing strategies for clean cooking and for the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 7, including at the municipal level, and requests the secretariat to support member States in these efforts.

2. The Committee requests the secretariat to facilitate the efforts of member States in further defining and strengthening energy connectivity in the Pacific to attain Sustainable Development Goal 7.

B. Matters brought to the attention of the Commission

3. The following decisions adopted by the Committee are brought to the attention of the Commission:

Decision 1

The Committee commends the work delivered by the Expert Working Group on Energy Connectivity and endorses the Regional Road Map on Power System Connectivity: Promoting Cross-border Electricity Connectivity for Sustainable Development. The Committee decides that the Expert Working Group will continue to provide advice to the secretariat in the implementation of the Regional Road Map.

Decision 2

The Committee endorses the terms of reference of the Expert Working Groups on Energy Connectivity and on Universal Access to Modern Energy Services, Renewable Energy, Energy Efficiency and Cleaner Use of Fossil Fuels with amendments.¹

II. Organization

A. Opening, duration and organization of the session

4. The Committee held its third session in Bangkok and online from 24 to 26 February 2021, owing to the COVID-19 pandemic. Opening remarks were made by the Executive Secretary of ESCAP and Mr. Mohammad Hossain, Director General, Power Cell, Bangladesh, and Chair of the second session of the Committee on Energy. A video message from Mr. Kulit Sombatsiri, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Energy, Thailand, was played.

B. Attendance

5. The Committee session was attended by representatives of the following members and associate members of the Commission: Armenia; Australia; Azerbaijan; Bangladesh; Bhutan; Cambodia; China; Democratic People's Republic of Korea; Fiji; Georgia; India; Indonesia; Japan; Kazakhstan; Kyrgyzstan; Malaysia; Maldives; Marshall Islands; Mongolia; Nauru; Nepal; Pakistan; Papua New Guinea; Philippines; Republic of Korea; Russian Federation; Singapore; Sri Lanka; Tajikistan; Thailand; Timor-Leste; Tonga;

¹ Annex III.

Turkey; Turkmenistan; Tuvalu; United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; United States of America; Uzbekistan; Vanuatu; and Viet Nam.

6. A representative of Spain attended as a Permanent Observer to ESCAP.

7. Representatives of the following United Nations bodies, specialized agencies and funds attended: International Atomic Energy Agency; International Labour Organization; United Nations Development Programme; United Nations Environment Programme; United Nations Industrial Development Organization; and United Nations Office for Project Services.

8. Representatives of the following intergovernmental organizations attended: Asian Development Bank; Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Centre for Energy; Greater Tumen Initiative; International Renewable Energy Agency; Pacific Community; South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation Energy Centre; and Sustainable Energy for All.

9. Representatives of the following non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations and other entities attended: Asia Pacific Energy Research Centre; China Electricity Council; Economic Research Institute for Northeast Asia; Global Energy Interconnection Development and Cooperation Organization; Melentiev Energy Systems Institute, Siberian Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences; and Stockholm Environment Institute.

C. Election of officers

10. The Committee elected the following officers:

Chair:	Mr. Jone Usamate (Fiji)
Vice-Chairs:	Ms. Raushan Yesbulatova (Kazakhstan)
	Mr. Tumur Amarsanaa (Mongolia)
	Mr. Ganesh Prasad Dhakal (Nepal)
	Ms. Premrutai Vinaiphath (Thailand)

D. Agenda

11. The Committee adopted the following agenda:

1. Opening of the session:
 - (a) Opening statements;
 - (b) Election of officers;
 - (c) Adoption of the agenda.
2. Energy security and resilience in the context of the coronavirus disease crisis.
3. Follow-up on the Ministerial Declaration on Regional Cooperation for Energy Transition towards Sustainable and Resilient Societies in Asia and the Pacific of the Second Asian and Pacific Energy Forum:
 - (a) Review of progress towards Sustainable Development Goal 7 in Asia and the Pacific;

- (b) Status of national road maps for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 7;
 - (c) Regional road map on power system connectivity, entitled “Promoting cross-border electricity connectivity for sustainable development”;
 - (d) Preparatory work for the third Asian and Pacific Energy Forum, to be held in 2023.
4. Work of the subprogramme on energy:
 - (a) Activities in the period 2018–2019 and 2020;
 - (b) Planned activities for 2021 and 2022.
 5. Consideration of the future focus of the subprogramme.
 6. Other matters.
 7. Adoption of the report of the Committee on its third session.

E. Other events

12. The following seminars, side events and special sessions were held in conjunction with the Committee session:

- (a) 25 February 2021: Special session on the High-level Dialogue on Energy to be held in 2021, Ms. Damilola Ogunbiyi, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Sustainable Energy for All, Chief Executive Officer, Sustainable Energy for All, and Co-Chair, UN-Energy;
- (b) 26 February 2021: Side event on energy access in the Asia-Pacific region;
- (c) 26 February 2021: Policy dialogue on the phase out of coal in the Asia-Pacific region.

III. Chair’s summary

13. The deliberations during the online session will be summarized in the Chair’s summary, which will be available within a week following the conclusion of the session and included as annex II to the present report.

Annex I

List of documents

<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Agenda item</i>
<i>General series</i>		
ESCAP/CE/2021/1	Energy security for a greener, more resilient and more inclusive energy future in the Asia-Pacific region	2
ESCAP/CE/2021/2	Follow-up on and review of progress towards Sustainable Development Goal 7 in Asia and the Pacific	3 (a)
ESCAP/CE/2021/3	National road maps for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 7	3 (b)
ESCAP/CE/2021/4	Regional road map on power system connectivity: promoting cross-border electricity connectivity for sustainable development	3 (c)
ESCAP/CE/2021/5	Review of the work of the Committee on Energy	4
ESCAP/CE/2021/6	Report of the Committee on Energy on its third session	
<i>Limited series</i>		
ESCAP/CE/2021/L.1	Annotated provisional agenda	1 (c)
ESCAP/CE/2021/L.2	Draft report	7
<i>Information series</i>		
ESCAP/CE/2021/INF/1	Information on preparatory work for the third Asian and Pacific Energy Forum	3 (d)
<i>Information available online</i>		
www.unescap.org/events/committee-energy-third-session	Information for participants	
www.unescap.org/events/committee-energy-third-session	List of participants	
www.unescap.org/events/committee-energy-third-session	Tentative programme	

Annex II

Chair's summary of proceedings of the third session of the Committee on Energy

I. Introduction

1. Owing to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, the third session of the Committee on Energy was held as a three-day online session, four hours per day on 24 and 25 February 2021 and on 26 February 2021 for the adoption of the report. Given the time constraints of the online session, and to facilitate an exchange of views on the substantive agenda items, country interventions focused on the issues outlined in agenda items 2–5. The Chair's summary covers the discussions and proceedings of the third session of the Committee. The statements received, as delivered during the session, are available on the website of the Committee at www.unescap.org/events/committee-energy-third-session.

II. Summary of discussions under agenda items 2–6

A. Energy security and resilience in the context of the coronavirus disease crisis

(Agenda item 2)

2. The Committee had before it the note by the secretariat on energy security for a greener, more resilient and more inclusive energy future in the Asia-Pacific region (ESCAP/CE/2021/1).

3. Representatives of the following members and associate members of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) made statements: Australia; Bhutan; China; India; Japan; Nepal; Pakistan; Republic of Korea; Russian Federation; Singapore; and United States of America.

4. The Committee noted the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on national and regional energy production, demand and recovery. Particular importance should be given to the diversification of energy production to ensure the stability of the energy sector in the region.

5. The Committee noted the adoption of policies by member States to meet the Sustainable Development Goal 7 targets. Progress had been made by the Governments of Pakistan and India, which had achieved access to energy for all. The Government of Nepal was taking active steps towards that achievement as well.

6. The Committee noted with satisfaction the bilateral and multilateral working arrangements implemented by member States to assist in building a resilient energy sector through cross-border energy sharing and multi-country working groups designed to enable sustainable access to energy for all.

7. The Committee noted that member States had focused on exploring, expanding and diversifying renewable energy sources and new energy technologies such as those using hydrogen and ammonia and noted the impetus towards electric vehicle uptake and the continued energy research and development activities occurring throughout the region.

B. Follow-up on the Ministerial Declaration on Regional Cooperation for Energy Transition towards Sustainable and Resilient Societies in Asia and the Pacific of the Second Asian and Pacific Energy Forum
(Agenda item 3)

Review of progress towards Sustainable Development Goal 7 in Asia and the Pacific
(Agenda item 3 (a))

8. The Committee had before it the note by the secretariat on follow-up on and review of progress towards Sustainable Development Goal 7 in Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/CE/2021/2).

9. Representatives of the following members and associate members made statements: Armenia; Australia; Bangladesh; Bhutan; China; India; Japan; Nepal; Pakistan; Republic of Korea; Russian Federation; and Singapore.

10. The representative of the United Nations Environment Programme made a statement.

11. The representative of the International Renewable Energy Agency made a statement.

12. The representative of the Global Energy Interconnection Development and Cooperation Organization made a statement.

13. The Committee highlighted Governments' efforts towards the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 7. Governments had included Goal 7 targets or national indicators aligned with Goal 7 in their strategic development documents and road maps.

14. Some Governments put in place ambitious targets to increase energy access to 100 per cent by 2030. The implementation of electrification projects and of projects to increase capacities was occurring in urban and rural areas due to the development of grid and off-grid systems. The Committee noted the role of bilateral and regional electricity trade agreements in enhancing electricity trading and ensuring a reliable electricity supply.

15. The Committee noted member States' efforts to ensure universal access to clean cooking fuels and technology, including projects to expand the use of electric induction stoves and liquefied petroleum gas. The Committee noted the need for the development of all types of renewable energy and highlighted the policy measures implemented in some countries to promote the deployment of renewables that had led to increased investments. The Committee noted ambitious targets to increase the share of renewable energy and the possibilities for the deployment of off-grid renewable energy solutions.

16. The Committee noted the work of member States to increase energy efficiency by 2030, which contributed to mitigating climate change, including upgrading and replacing power generation plants and transmission and distribution infrastructure and the reduction of losses, as well as the implementation of energy efficient technologies. Energy transition measures represented an important part of Governments' energy policies.

17. The representative of Australia stated that the country was committed to supporting other countries in climate change-related challenges and had allocated funds for that purpose. The Government of Japan had extended its

assistance to the Governments of Samoa and Tonga on the development of renewable energy in order to assure a stable and disaster-resilient energy supply.

18. The Committee noted the role of natural gas in the regional energy mix and in the energy transition and recognized the efforts of some member States to reduce the use of coal in their energy balance and to increase the use of greener technologies.

19. With regard to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the energy sector, and new challenges with regard to achieving Sustainable Development Goal 7, the Committee recognized that current crises might bring new opportunities for the energy transition towards sustainability. As part of the preparations for the third Asian and Pacific Energy Forum, in 2023, a proposal to conduct research on the impact of COVID-19 on the achievement of Goal 7 was made.

20. The representative of the Republic of Korea invited members of the Committee to attend the Partnering for Green Growth and the Global Goals 2030 Summit in Seoul in 2021.

21. The representative of the Russian Federation stated that the twenty-fifth World Energy Congress would be held in the Russian Federation in 2022.

22. The representative of Bhutan highlighted that it was the Chair of the Least Developed Countries Group on Climate Change, through which Bhutan promoted a target of 100 per cent renewable energy in least developed countries by 2040.

Status of national road maps for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 7

(Agenda item 3 (b))

23. The Committee had before it the note by the secretariat on national road maps for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 7 (ESCAP/CE/2021/3).

24. Representatives of the following members and associate members made statements: Bhutan; Georgia; Japan; Nepal; Pakistan; and Tonga.

25. The representative of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Centre for Energy made a statement.

26. The Committee stated that it expected that the road maps would help to guide the development of policies to deliver on Sustainable Development Goal 7 through the implementation of the road map recommendations. The secretariat had played a crucial role in supporting the process of road map development. One representative thanked the secretariat for its support, noting that the road map would provide significant guidance for policy development in her country and that engagement with local stakeholders had been important in the development of the road map.

27. The road maps were expected to provide insights into policies relating to new renewable energy generation, the development of transmission and distribution infrastructure, and opportunities for international power trade. A platform to support renewable energy system design across the Pacific member States was needed. A member State had sought support from the secretariat for the development of a national road map and a clean cooking sector needs assessment and analysis.

28. A representative from a subregional energy organization emphasized the opportunity for future collaboration with the secretariat on accelerating the potential of renewable energy in the South-East Asian subregion to achieve an affordable and sustainable energy supply.

Regional road map on power system connectivity, entitled “Promoting cross-border electricity connectivity for sustainable development”

(Agenda item 3 (c))

29. The Committee had before it the note by the secretariat entitled “Regional road map on power system connectivity: promoting cross-border electricity connectivity for sustainable development” (ESCAP/CE/2021/4).

30. Representatives of the following members and associate members made statements: China; India; Japan; Nepal; Pakistan; Republic of Korea; Russian Federation; Singapore; Thailand; Tonga; and United States of America.

31. Representatives of the following intergovernmental organizations made statements: ASEAN Centre for Energy; and South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Energy Centre.

32. The representative of China Electricity Council made a statement.

33. The Committee noted the vision and principles contained in the document as important to follow in the implementation plans of the regional road map on cross-border power system connectivity in the Asia-Pacific region in a way specific to each subregion’s context.

34. The Committee recognized the important role played by cross-border power system connectivity and of its implications for the economy, society and the environment. The Committee noted in particular its role in maintaining energy security, increasing electricity supply and the uptake of renewable energy, and building resilience while rebuilding the economy from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. One representative noted that increased connectivity raised concerns about energy security.

35. In that regard, several representatives informed the Committee of existing bilateral agreements for power trade and exchange, as well as specific subregional frameworks, including those from ASEAN and SAARC subregions, on building connectivity plans and their implementation. In that regard, the Committee noted the importance of harnessing synergies and avoiding duplication. The development of multilateral power trade arrangements in the ASEAN region as well as between Central and South Asia was encouraging.

36. In developing cross-border power system connectivity plans, the importance of political commitments to harmonize legislation and grid codes at the national and subregional levels was emphasized. In that context, the Committee noted that the nine strategies contained in the regional road map could facilitate such a dialogue.

37. The Committee noted the requests by member States to ensure that the implementation of the regional road map would be accomplished within existing resources. It also recognized that the implementation of the regional road map should include member States from all subregions as well as private sector representatives and other stakeholders.

38. Representatives of subregional energy organizations informed the Committee of their initiatives and emphasized the potential for collaboration.

One representative suggested that the secretariat conduct a survey on future energy needs and to explore possible collaboration among member States on implementing the regional road map.

Preparatory work for the third Asian and Pacific Energy Forum, to be held in 2023

(Agenda item 3 (d))

39. The Committee had before it the information document on preparatory work for the third Asian and Pacific Energy Forum (ESCAP/CE/2021/INF/1).

40. The representative of the Russian Federation made a statement.

41. A suggestion was made that the Committee consider the organizational modalities of the third Asian and Pacific Energy Forum. The suggestion emphasized the importance of consultations with member States in the preparatory process for the Forum, including through informal consultations with members of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission in order to enable member States to express their preferences in terms of the topics and priorities for discussion, as well as their views and wishes for the organization of the Forum.

C. Work of the subprogramme on energy

(Agenda item 4)

Activities in the period 2018–2019 and 2020

(Agenda item 4 (a))

Planned activities for 2021 and 2022.

(Agenda item 4 (b))

42. The Committee had before it the note by the secretariat on the review of the work of the Committee (ESCAP/CE/2021/5).

43. Representatives of the following members and associate members made statements: China; Mongolia; Russian Federation; and United States of America.

44. The Committee expressed its appreciation for the work promoting sustainable energy, in particular on the development of the draft regional road map on power system connectivity as a contribution of the energy sector to sustainable development. Regional cooperation was one modality for promoting the development of renewable energy in support of sustainable development.

45. The Committee discussed the terms of reference of the Expert Working Groups on Energy Connectivity and on Universal Access to Modern Energy Services, Renewable Energy, Energy Efficiency and Cleaner Use of Fossil Fuels regarding the arrangements for the chairs, the organizational modality and participation. The Committee proposed modifications to the text of the terms of reference as contained in annex III to the present document. It also noted that the Expert Working Groups should ensure the engagement of member States in all subregions and that information should be shared in advance of each meeting.

D. Consideration of the future focus of the subprogramme
(Agenda item 5)

46. The secretariat made an introductory presentation on the future focus of the subprogramme.

47. The representative of the Russian Federation made a statement.

48. The Committee noted the future focus of the subprogramme in 2022. The Committee requested the secretariat share information related to the subprogramme in advance of future Committee sessions for deliberation.

E. Other matters
(Agenda item 6)

49. No other matters were discussed.

Annex III

Terms of reference of the Expert Working Groups on Energy Connectivity and on Universal Access to Modern Energy Services, Renewable Energy, Energy Efficiency and Cleaner Use of Fossil Fuels

1. The Expert Working Groups on Energy Connectivity and on Universal Access to Modern Energy Services, Renewable Energy, Energy Efficiency and Cleaner Use of Fossil Fuels will carry out the following activities:

(a) Examine issues related to national, subregional and regional policy frameworks and identify specific economic, institutional and regulatory measures in order to facilitate the region's transition to a more sustainable energy future;

(b) Prepare comprehensive regional studies on the current state of and future prospects for selected areas of work with a view to identifying issues and challenges that could be addressed through regional cooperation;

(c) Explore opportunities to enhance cooperation with other intergovernmental organizations and with non-governmental organizations and the business community by preparing joint studies and participating in joint activities such as surveys, seminars and workshops;

(d) Provide the secretariat of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) with advice on the implementation of the subprogramme on energy, including the formulation and implementation of capacity-building and technical cooperation activities in the region;

(e) Examine and discuss any other issue recommended to them by the secretariat or requested by the Committee on Energy of ESCAP.

2. The Expert Working Groups are open to participation by all member States. Meetings are attended by experts nominated by member States on the basis of criteria such as possession of the required technical expertise, practical experience, and willingness and ability to contribute to the substantive work of the Expert Working Groups. The required area of technical expertise should be explicitly mentioned in the invitation letter conveyed to the member States through the existing channels.

3. In practice, the meetings of the Expert Working Groups are led by the Chair and/or Vice-Chairs of the Committee on Energy. The Chair and Vice-Chairs supervise and coordinate the work of the Expert Working Groups and, where possible, seek opportunities to consolidate and streamline their activities.

4. The secretariat, in consultation with the Chair and/or Vice-Chairs of the Committee, may invite experts, as appropriate, from civil society, academia and the private sector to provide important technical advice and support as needed.

5. The Expert Working Groups report to and seek guidance from the Committee.

6. The Expert Working Groups conduct their meetings in conjunction with energy-related meetings held by the secretariat.