




## MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

<b>Evaluation Title:</b>	Integrated Energy and Water Resources Management in Support of Sustainable Development in South-Eastern Europe and Central Asia		
<b>Period of Review:</b>	1 January 2018- 31 December 2021		
<b>Date of Evaluation Report:</b>	02/05/2022		
<b>Approved by</b>	Nicolas Dath-Baron Chief, a.i. Programme Management Unit	Date	Signature
		22/06/2022	
<b>Cleared by:</b>	Director of Division Michal Drabik, OiC	22/06/2022	
<b>Prepared by:</b>	Manager of the evaluation Oleg Dzioubinski	20/06/2022	

### **Recommendation 1:**

Preserve and maintain the networks created by the Project: While this may seem obvious, momentum from this project can only be carried forward if beneficiary countries are engaged at a close level and feel that they benefit from membership in this network. Internally, it will help establish UNECE as a serious counterparty on this issue for its member states. External benefits of this will be many, but not least, it will help develop further policy ownership from member nations and could work to enhance better institutional cooperation from line ministries.

### **Management Response:**

UNECE accepts the recommendation.

### **Follow up actions and responsibilities:**

UNECE Sustainable Energy Division (SED) will work on maintaining and developing the networks created by the Project in the six beneficiary countries and beyond. Government officials and experts involved in the project implementation will be invited to the events and activities organized by UNECE on the topics related to integrated energy and water resources management, starting with the following meetings in 2022: (1) Annual Sessions of the Committee on Sustainable Energy (September); (2) Annual Sessions of the Expert Group on Resource Management (October); (3) UNECE Workshops related to

sustainable resource management (November); and (4) Annual Meetings of the International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development (November).

Responsibility: Harikrishnan Tulsidas, Economic Affairs Officer, SED

Timeline: 31 December 2022

### **Recommendation 2:**

Continue country-level capacity building: This project has been successful in discussing key areas of potential focus. While there was general appreciation of the work done on this project, there was some expectation from stakeholders interviewed that there should have been a greater element of ‘hands on’ capacity building. However, for this project it was not possible due to the Covid-19 crisis, where the majority of project activities were implemented online. For future projects, UNECE should launch a project with a presentation for all UN Country Teams (UNCT) of the project beneficiary countries and follow up with UNCTs in the process of project implementation. If further technical assistance is needed after the completion of the project, UNECE should work with UNCTs in the countries on providing such technical assistance and/or consider using other resources available internally for this purpose.

### **Management Response:**

UNECE accepts the recommendation.

### **Follow up actions and responsibilities:**

- i. SED will make all possible efforts to continue country-level capacity building on energy and water resources management in the beneficiary countries, including hands-on training and the development of case studies, through Regular Programme of Technical Cooperation (RPTC) and United Nations Development Account (UNDA) funds as well as through in-kind contributions. In 2022, SED plans to utilize RPTC funds to support Ukraine in producing a report on critical raw materials and holding a national workshop. As part of UNDA Global Initiative towards post-COVID-19 resurgence of the MSME sector, in 2022 SED will support national workshops in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. In 2023, RPTC and UNDA funds availability will be explored to support all the six countries.
- ii. In all its upcoming projects, SED will keep UN RCOs in the beneficiary countries abreast and will ensure thorough communication and coordination with relevant UNCT members, including by making presentations on the projects to the UNCTs.

Responsibility: Harikrishnan Tulsidas, Economic Affairs Officer, SED

Timeline: 30 June 2023

### **Recommendation 3:**

Enhance focus on gender, vulnerable groups and human rights issues: ECE should in its future activities related to water-energy-climate change-natural disasters nexus address more explicitly gender inequalities and the challenges faced by vulnerable populations, including by strengthening capacity building on gender mainstreaming and leaving no one behind, involving key UN partners such as UN-Women and OHCHR, as appropriate.

### **Management Response:**

UNECE accepts the recommendation.

### **Follow up actions and responsibilities:**

In its future activities related to water-energy-climate change-natural disasters nexus, UNECE will try to address more explicitly gender inequalities and the challenges faced by vulnerable groups, including by strengthening capacity building on gender mainstreaming and leaving no one behind, involving key UN partners such as UN-Women and OHCHR, as appropriate. The Women in Resource Management Working Group, part of the Expert Group on Resource Management, will do the following work in 2022 and 2023: (a) Update specifications and guidelines for women and diversity in UNFC and UNRMS; (b) Hold policy dialogue(s) on promoting gender participation in resource management; (c) Set-up a network of women engaged in resource management projects; (d) Provide inputs for the development of UNRMS requirements; (e) Conduct case studies and recommendations on mainstreaming gender in resource management in various positions from young professionals to senior leadership, including in the post-COVID-19 recovery.

Responsibility: Harikrishnan Tulsidas, Economic Affairs Officer, SED

Timeline: 31 December 2023

#### **Recommendation 4:**

Mitigate the Project's sustainability risks: UNECE should guide the Governments of the beneficiary countries on how the activities related to UNFC application should be mainstreamed into the operations and programmes of the relevant Ministries. Specifically, the following actions are recommended:

- i. Maintain momentum to ensure continuity in the recipient countries by identifying ways to keep stakeholders motivated and engaged in the process and by keeping the issue of the integrated energy and water resource management high on the UNECE strategic and programmatic levels.
- ii. UNECE should enhance dialogue and bilateral cooperation with the beneficiary countries aiming at a formal decision by the Governments of these countries to apply the UNFC system. As an initial step, consider supporting enhanced participation of national experts in the activities of the Expert Group on Resource Management.
- iii. Water, geology, energy, economy, and ecology interconnectedness needs to be addressed and awareness-raising enhanced through future UNECE projects. To enhance the coherence of such future UNECE projects, efforts should be made to integrate into the Project Document a clear strategy for linkages with other similar initiatives by defining the nature of these linkages per each relevant activity in the work plan.
- iv. Future UNECE efforts to strengthen the integrated energy and water resource management should focus on providing the beneficiary countries with practical examples and consultancy support on the institutional, legal and technical measures needed for the full implementation of the UNFC.

#### **Management Response:**

UNECE accepts the recommendation.

#### **Follow up actions and responsibilities:**

- i. UNECE will include integrated and sustainable resource management elements at strategic and programmatic levels, in the programme of work of the Committee on Sustainable Energy as well as in the programme of work contained in proposed programme budgets under subprogramme 5: Sustainable Energy, to keep stakeholders motivated and engaged.
- ii. UNECE will support enhanced participation of national experts of the beneficiary countries in the activities of the Expert Group on Resource Management.
- iii. Future projects will include a clear strategy for integrated resource management linkages in their Project Documents.

iv. Future projects will provide practical examples and consultancy support on the institutional, legal, and technical measures needed to fully implement the UNFC and UNRMS.

Responsibility: Harikrishnan Tulsidas, Economic Affairs Officer, SED

Timeline: 31 December 2023

**Recommendation 5:**

Expand and standardize “post-Project” lessons learned and knowledge management: Establish a sustainable platform/workspace for ongoing capture of the Project learning (lessons learned, good practices) and document these for adaptive management and future projects. Ensure adequate documentation of project activities and establish an archival system (SharePoint site) for storing and accessing data and information.

**Management Response:**

UNECE accepts the recommendation.

**Follow up actions and responsibilities:**

UNECE will save the project outputs on the website for broader dissemination. The project outputs, lessons learned, and good practices will be captured in the SharePoint folder and documented for adaptive management and future projects.

Responsibility: Harikrishnan Tulsidas, Economic Affairs Officer, SED

Timeline: 31 December 2022