

Third Research Coordination Meeting/Workshop on Indicators for Sustainable Energy Development, New York, 13-16 September 2004

The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs hosted the Third Research Coordination Meeting/Workshop on Indicators for Sustainable Energy Development in New York, 13-16 September 2004. The meeting was intended to provide input to work currently underway to apply energy indicators for sustainable development in seven developing countries. Experts from Brazil, Lithuania, Mexico, Russia, Slovakia and Thailand as well as from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the International Energy Agency, Eurostat and the European Environment Agency participated. The meeting was held as part of an IAEA-sponsored project.

DESA, IAEA and other agencies participating in the meeting have developed a set of energy indicators for use by countries as a tool to achieve sustainable development. Early results were presented at the ninth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-9) in 2001 when a methodology that guided the initial selection of indicators was presented. Since then work has continued on identifying a core set of indicators, preparing a manual and testing the indicators in various countries. This effort is in line with and is complementary to DESA's work on developing and testing sustainable development indicators.

The indicators can be used in assessing current energy trends and policies geared to achieving objectives articulated at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, 2002), and providing information in a format that aids implementation of Summit decisions at the national level. Specifically, they can help to integrate energy into socio-economic programmes; to enhance the contribution of renewable energy, energy efficiency and advanced energy technologies to meeting the growing need for energy services; to increase the share of renewable energy; to reduce the flaring and venting of gas; to establish domestic programmes on energy efficiency; to improve functioning, transparency and information in energy markets; to reduce market distortions; and to assist developing countries in their domestic efforts to provide energy services to all sections of their populations.

This meeting enabled countries to share results, raise and discuss problems and lessons learned in applying the indicators to their countries. Indicators were used very flexibly depending on the energy and development characteristics and specifics of each country. Preliminary results with respect to possible options and measures for enhancing sustainable development at the national level were also highlighted. Experts from international organizations provided feedback on individual case studies and an overall view how work at the national level fits into efforts undertaken at the regional and international levels. The seven case studies are currently being finalized with a view to providing relevant information for the deliberations on energy for sustainable development to be undertaken by the CSD in 2006 and 2007.

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