ESCAP-GTI Seminar on Energy Cooperation in North-East Asia: Regional Power Trade and Connectivity in North-East Asia (Online)

7 July 2021 (Tuesday, 14:30 – 16:30, Beijing time)

CONCEPT NOTE

Background

Energy cooperation and power interconnections have been a long-discussed topic in North-East Asia with the presence of some of the largest producers and consumers of energy in the region, representing the potential for a regional power grid that could benefit all countries through power trade. Many studies carried out over the years have demonstrated the technical and economic feasibility of different interconnection options. Political support has also been given at the highest levels of government of all countries in the Greater Tumen Region as well. Particularly, power interconnections using the region's abundant renewable sources of energy is gaining traction as China and the Republic of Korea have announced their pledge to achieve carbon neutrality by 2060 and 2050 respectively, and Mongolia and the Russian Federation are also committed to reducing carbon emissions.

Despite these positive discussions and developments over the years, there are equally significant challenges to overcome in order to launch a multilateral power interconnection programme in North-East Asia, such as the need to build trust, balance competing interests of various stakeholders and coordinate large investment projects, just to name a few. In other parts of the world where similar cross-border power interconnection projects have been developed or are currently in development, a common starting point was establishing a cooperation mechanism and building a roadmap that is technically, financially and politically feasible for all countries. The need for such a cooperation mechanism and a common vision have also been highlighted by member States during the 8th GTI Energy Board Meeting held in 2019.

In this regard, the United Nations ESCAP is working closely with partners including the Greater Tumen Initiative to support the North-East Asia subregion in strengthening energy cooperation and power interconnections. Just recently, ESCAP and GTI, together with ADB co-organized a workshop to discuss the next steps in regional power interconnections where the new phase of ESCAP and ADB projects have been introduced to incorporate views from governments, experts and stakeholders.

As a follow up, the first ESCAP-GTI Seminar on Energy Cooperation in North-East Asia is organized to examine specific issues relating to increasing the use of renewable energy in member countries in line with national plans, and the institutional, regulatory and policy framework required to promote power trade and interconnections in the region.

Objectives and Scope

The main objective of the Seminar is to:

a. Share national plans for increasing the use of renewable energy;
b. Examine the technical and regulatory challenges for effectively using renewable energy;
c. Discuss potential opportunities for cooperation in addressing the above challenges;
d. Discuss the key institutional, regulatory and policy requirements that would enable regional power trade and interconnections.

Participants

The Seminar is held in conjunction with GTI Energy Board meeting. Participants include GTI Energy Board members, stakeholders and experts involved in energy cooperation and power interconnection.

Organization

The Seminar will be held on a virtual platform using MS Teams with technical support provided by ESCAP ENEA Office and GTI Secretariat. The Seminar will be conducted in English.

Programme	
14:30 -14:45	**Opening Session** • Mr. Ganbold Baasanjav (Head, ESCAP East and North-East Asia Office) • Mr. Andrey Smorodin (Director, GTI Secretariat) • Mr. Xiang Qianfei (Division Director, Department of International Cooperation, National Energy Administration, China), Chair of GTI Energy Board
14:45 – 15:40	**Session 1: Promoting stable and effective use of renewable power in East and North-East Asia** Moderated by: ESCAP ENEA Office • Overview on policies and plans for increasing the use of renewable energy in East and North-East Asia from member States: - Mr. Wang Jun, Deputy Division Director, International Department, China Electric Power Planning and Engineering Institute (EPPEI), China - Mr. G. Enkhtuvshin, Analyst of Policy Planning Department, Ministry of Energy, Mongolia - Mr. Rhee Han Woo, Executive Manager, Korea Energy Agency, Republic of Korea

	- Ms. Nelly Segizova, General Director, SCT Group, Russian Federation • Technical and regulatory challenges including intermittency, curtailment and storage for stable and effective use of renewable energy and opportunities for regional cooperation - Mr. Jaeyoung Yoon, Principal Researcher, Korea Energy Research Institute - Mr. Romain Zissler, Senior Researcher, Renewable Energy Institute Q&A
15:40-16:20	**Session 2: Institutions, regulations and policies for regional power trade and interconnections** Moderated by: GTI Secretariat • Institutional and regulatory issues on power interconnections in North-East Asia by Kohji Iwakami, Economic Affairs Officer, Energy Division, ESCAP • Experiences from existing power connectivity mechanisms: - Mr. Ahmad Talha, Research Fellow, SAARC Energy Centre - Mr. Fabian Barrera, Programme Officer, Latin America and the Caribbean, IRENA Q&A
16:20 -16:30	**Closing Session** • Mr. Ganbold Baasanjav (Head, ESCAP East and North-East Asia Office) • Mr. Andrey Smorodin (Director, GTI Secretariat) • Mr. Xiang Qianfei (Division Director, Department of International Cooperation, National Energy Administration, China), Chair of GTI Energy Board