



General Assembly

Thirteenth Session

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Second Committee – Economic and Financial

This committee wants to improve the world economy to help the poor. They discuss how national, regional and international economies affect the world. They also focus on countries that have special needs. Some examples are the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) or the Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs).

This group believes people in poverty do not have to be poor forever. For this reason, they focus on how developing nations can improve their economies. They also find ways to directly help people in poverty. They might talk about how to help countries get access to money. Or, they might find ways that technology can help countries develop faster.

This committee works closely with the UN Economic and Social Council. Some of the resolutions they have passed deal with sustainable development, harmony with nature, and migration.

Agenda Item 19.I – Ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all

Focus Questions

Affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy would do a lot in order to lower inequality in the world. With your fellow delegates you need to find a way to work towards making the following goals a reality.

- How can countries work together in order to limit dependence on fossil fuels for energy?
- How can we make sure that all people in the world have access to affordable energy?
- How can developed countries support developing countries in order to meet their energy goals?

Background

For most of human history, humans used traditional biomass for their energy needs. This means they would use anything from wood (if it was available) to dried animal dung. Most people had access to this energy but it was very unhealthy and not efficient. It releases carbon which is bad for the environment. Also, the smoke it gives off is bad for health and still is a major cause of death for women and children under five around the world. There is also the danger of accidental fires and injury.

Electricity is a much safer form of energy. In the 19th century it became possible for many cities to use electric lights. The energy made in a central plant powered all the lights in the network. Now, almost all technology runs on energy from electricity. Even a phone battery is recharged using electricity. Electricity has changed the lives of people around the world but still 1.1 billion people do not have access to it.

Background

There are many ways of producing energy and electricity. However, they can either be sustainable or unsustainable. Sustainable means that it can be used for a long time without negative effects. Examples would be wind, solar, or wave power. Unsustainable means products that only have a limited amount. Once they are used the Earth will no longer have that resource. Examples are oil, coal and gas.

Over the last several centuries humans have used a lot of the planet's unsustainable resources. Fossil fuels were cheap to get and easy to use. They provided a lot of the energy needed in order to build our modern world. We still are using them daily to live our modern lifestyle. However, they also pollute the Earth...a lot. We are now dealing with the problem of two hundred years of releasing carbon into the environment. It is the major cause of climate change.

Something needs to be done to reduce carbon emissions but also provide energy to all people at a fair price.

In 2000 the UN declared a list of 8 goals which were known as the Millennium Development Goals. These were things the world's governments wanted to do in order to reduce poverty in the world. Access to energy was considered an infrastructure project that could help get people out of extreme poverty. The UN did a lot to promote this idea. 2012 was the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All. It wanted to bring attention to the fact that access to clean energy can help people escape poverty. 2014-2024 was made the Decade of Sustainable Energy for All.

To build on the work of the Millennium Development Goals the UN created the Sustainable Development Goals. Goal 7 is to ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all. This means all the countries of the world should work together to meet this goal. They want to do this by 2030 but still have a lot of work to do.

Some scientists believe oil will run out by 2052. Gas will run out by 2060 and coal will last until 2088. These numbers are not exact. If we begin using more fossil fuels (because of a growing population) it might go faster. We might also find better ways to use oil. For example, cars in the 1970s could go 13 miles for every gallon. Now, most cars go at least 35 miles for every gallon. This is an improvement of almost three times!

Many scientists are working on advanced fossil fuel technologies. This means finding new ways to use fossil fuels so that they are less harmful for the environment. The new technology could capture carbon so it does not pollute or use less of the resource and produce more energy. These types of technologies are very important especially in areas where 100% renewable energy would be impossible.

Buildings can also be made to be more energy efficient. A lot of energy goes to heating them and cooling them. But, paying attention to how it a building works with the environment can reduce the need for heating and cooling. Some of our energy problems can be fixed by looking at how we use energy differently.

All people need access to affordable energy. It provides power for needed technology and improves the lives and health of people. Businesses also need access to power so they can continue their work and fund jobs. Developing countries are especially in need of power because their economies are growing at a faster rate and their people could benefit the most from energy. The more renewable sources of energy a country has the more a country will be prepared for the future. However, it is important to keep the cost of energy low so that all people can access it.

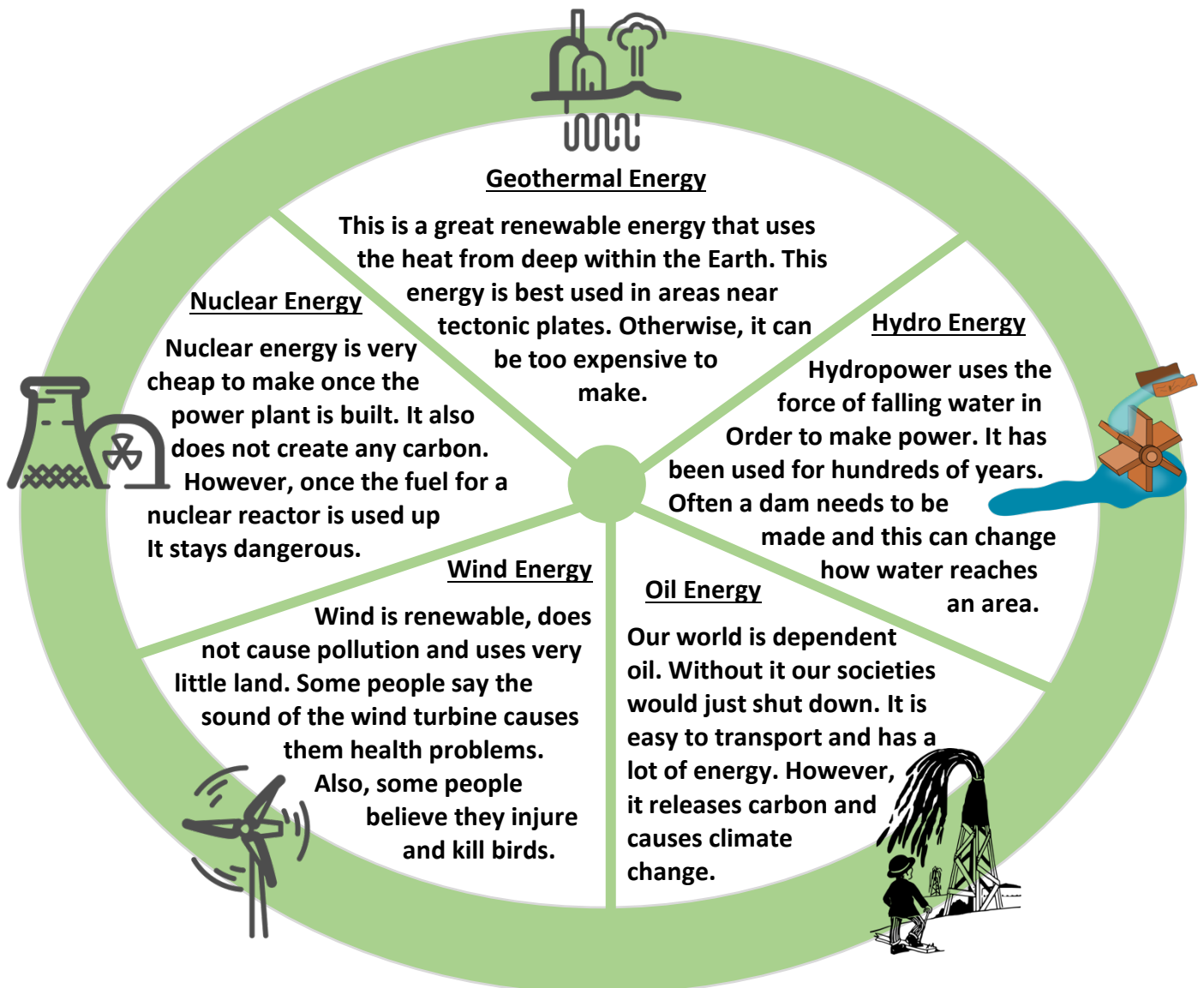
Recent Developments

Sustainable Development Goals

This movement began in 2016 to replace the Millennium Development Goals. These goals are much broader and tackle the causes of poverty. The first goal is to end poverty in all its forms. Goal 7 is to ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all. It also wants to increase energy efficiency and how much power is made from renewable resources. Countries will work together to reach the goals by 2030.

The International Energy Charter

This Charter started as the European Energy Charter. It works to help make it easier for countries to cooperate about energy. It brings together countries that export energy and those that use it. It also is concerned about states that have energy move through them from one country to another. It also looks at energy efficiency and renewable energy. The International Charter was signed in 2015 and now has 88 members.

Energy: Sustainable & Unsustainable Resources

Research Questions

1. 3 billion people use traditional biomass for cooking and heating. What solutions can reduce this number to zero?
2. How is climate change, poverty, and gender equality linked to this issue?
3. How can countries be encouraged to use more renewable energy?
4. What are solutions to lack of energy in areas that cannot have a power plant close by?
Examples can be small groups of people living in the desert or mountains.
5. How can energy efficiency be improved in your country?
6. Why might some countries not want to change to renewable energy?
7. How can countries work together on this issue?
8. Does the problem exist in your community?
9. Who is working on it? NGOs, not for profits, other groups or individuals?
10. Knowing about this problem, how does it impact your world view?
11. How could you make an impact on this issue through your life choices?

Resources

Title	Hyperlink	How is it helpful?
<i>UN Chronicle</i>	https://unchronicle.un.org/article/goal-7-ensure-access-affordable-reliable-sustainable-and-modern-energy-all	UN article about Goal 7 of the Sustainable Development Goals.
<i>Green Facts</i>	https://www.greenfacts.org/en/digests/energy.htm	Information on the energy sector.
<i>Sustainable Development Goals</i>	https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/	Overview of the Sustainable Development Goals.
<i>Sustainable Energy for All</i>	https://www.seforall.org/	The official website for SDG 7.
<i>International Energy Agency</i>	http://www.iea.org/	Site about energy around the world and includes country profiles.
<i>Oxford Energy</i>	https://www.energy.ox.ac.uk/wordpress/energy-in-developing-countries/	Article about energy in the developing world.
<i>Alliant Energy Kids</i>	http://www.alliantenergykids.com/EnergyandTheEnvironment/RenewableEnergy/022402	Simple site about renewable and non-renewable energy.
<i>The Economist</i>	https://www.economist.com/special-report/2015/01/15/invisible-fuel	Article about energy efficiency.
<i>Global Energy</i>	https://yearbook.enerdata.net/	Has statistics on every country and how they use energy.