

Panel of experts on resources and reserves – minerals and their sustainable use

**Report on the meeting of the
“Expert Group on Resource Classification, Second Session, Geneva, 6-8
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held at the UNECE.**

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The object of the meeting was to progress the development of a globally acceptable form of resource classification, the UNFC classification, that is equally applicable to minerals and hydrocarbons. The classification proposed to date is a 3 dimensional classification with the three axis being, project feasibility, geological knowledge, and socio-economic viability. Apparently the meetings that have developed this have been taking place for some ten years but the project was only recognised as significant two years ago and so officially this is the second session.

The meeting took place in the old League of Nations building in Geneva which is now occupied by the UNECE. There were about 100 attendees and initially the meeting appeared well organised and well run. However, the process of introducing oneself with 100 people present took such a long time that we were well behind schedule at lunch time.

The second problem that arose was that the main item on the agenda ‘Specifications’ could not be discussed because the sub-committee, or task force, had not completed their work. The task force was made up of representatives from what is considered to be the main interested groups and the representative from CRIRSCO, Ferdinando Camisani-Calzolari stated that he could not agree the specification until such time as CRIRSCO had discussed it. As the meeting went on it became quite clear that the CRIRSCO template was very important within the development of the UN classification.

There were numerous presentations which compared or mapped pre-existing resource classification systems to the UNFC system. One thing that was very noticeable was that these comparisons were all done in two dimensions and many also compared themselves to CRIRSCO.

Although the CRIRSCO Template was recognized and held up as the basic and best system for mineral resources/reserves reporting, they want to go ahead with their 3D system and simply map it to CRIRSCO. I also noted that the requirement for a Competent Person was questioned as it "disenfranchised whole areas of the world".

Ferdi Camisani-Calzolari from CRIRSCO clearly has many reservations on the UNFC but we never got to talk privately so I never fully understood his position or his opinion.

It is my opinion that they should revert to 2 dimension and concentrate on and standardise the description of potential and keep the area of exploration results, indicated and measured resources (and their reserve equivalents) to that defined by CRIRSCO. The core CRIRSCO section of the overall classification system could be reserved to 'competent persons' whilst the upper part of classification system dealing with potential need not.

I found the experience very interesting but believe that all their efforts will be wasted because the 3 dimensional approach is very hard to understand and use.