



Opening green windows: Technological opportunities for a low-carbon world

Perspectives from Asia and the Pacific

25 April 2023 (9:00 to 10:30 Geneva, 14:00 to 15:30 Bangkok)

Concept note

Objective

This webinar co-organized by UNCTAD and ESCAP will present UNCTAD's [Technology and Innovation Report 2023](#) and ESCAP's Report on [enabling the green transition of business](#). The presentations will be followed by a panel discussion by experts and policymakers from Asia and the Pacific region. The discussion will be centered around ways of moving forward with policy options for countries in the region to strategically position themselves to take advantage of green windows of opportunity. The event will serve as a platform for peer learning and raise awareness of policy options to harness the frontier technologies to achieve the dual goal of economic growth and environmental sustainability.

Background

The world is facing pressing social and economic challenges of unprecedented nature. In particular, climate crisis is a global challenge that calls for global solutions. As of 2023, carbon emissions are at a record high, reflecting historical growth patterns sourced by fossil fuels and lack of political will to transition towards renewable energies. Governments are facing complex trade-offs between promoting inclusive economic growth and mitigating climate change.

Green technologies offer transformative solutions to achieve this dual goal. Green technologies are usually associated with renewable energy technologies but also include the strategic use of traditional and new digital technologies like blockchain, artificial intelligence and the Internet of Things. They enable cleaner and more efficient production, thus creating a synergy between economic development and climate change mitigation.

Green transformation, supported by frontier technologies, offers a viable route for countries in Asia and the Pacific to claim agency in their own development narrative and move from crisis to sustainable development. To benefit from the green technology revolution, strong government efforts are needed to take strategic, long-term action to build innovation and technological capacities to spur sustainable economic growth and increase their resilience to future crises.

Technology and Innovation Report 2023

UNCTAD's *Technology and Innovation Report 2023* "Opening green windows: Technological opportunities for a low-carbon world" analyses the opportunities presented by the green transition and the technologies linked to it. By unleashing green innovations, countries can have access to 'green windows of opportunity' for not only building resilience and climate change mitigation mechanisms but also for spurring economic growth and technological development. These opportunities can particularly support developing countries to "leap" out of the cascade of crises and move forward.

The Report has three key messages. Firstly, developing countries must strategically position themselves to catch the green technological revolution early. Secondly, the international community needs to step up in gathering enough resources and building the required knowhow to support developing countries to take advantage of the green windows of opportunity. Lastly, agency and urgency are pivotal in the fight against climate change and inequalities – if we all share the same problem, then we must also share the same tools to solve it.

Enabling the green transition of business

The *Enabling the Green Transition of Business* report highlights examples of existing policy measures implemented in the 10 Asian and Latin American countries represented in the South-South Community of Practice for the Green Transition of Business, conveyed by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) in partnership with the Government of Colombia.

Structured according to the framework of the impact economy policy toolbox, this report brings case studies related to three functions of Governments in their interaction with the private sector: (1) Market facilitator – Creating strategies and organizations that set the direction and enable the implementation of the green transition of business; (2) Market regulator – Implementing laws that enable, support and incentivize the green transition of business; (3) Market participant – Taking part in market exchanges by providing capital or sourcing from green enterprises. This framework can serve as a toolbox to identify policy gaps and opportunities for government measures to promote the green transition of business and the transition to a green economy.

Format

This webinar is part of a set of events conducted to disseminate the findings of the Technology and Innovation Report 2023 and the Enabling the Green Transition of Business report to a broader audience comprised of policymakers, international organisations, the academia, the private sector, and other stakeholders. It will be comprised of presentations followed by a moderated panel discussion by experts and policymakers on the ways to leverage technologies for a low-carbon world. After discussion, the floor will be opened to questions and contributions from the audience (via chat function). The event will be conducted in English (without translation) on the Zoom online platform.

Guiding questions for discussion

- How could countries in Asia and the Pacific take advantage of the green technology revolution to build a greener, smarter, more resilience, inclusive and sustainable society?
- What are the challenges that countries have faced or may face in promoting green technology and innovation to contribute to national development priorities and accelerate the progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals?
- What should governments, the private sector, civil society, and other stakeholders do to harness the full potential of these technologies? In particular, how could public policies promote local access to green technologies, including opportunities to facilitate access to finance?
- How could the international community support developing countries to seize green windows of opportunity?

Tentative Programme

<p>9:00 – 9:10 (CEST) 14:00 – 14:10 (Bangkok)</p>	<p>Opening remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Shamika N. Sirimanne, Director of the Division on Technology and Logistics, UNCTAD • Ms. Rupa Chanda, Director of Trade, Investment and Innovation, ESCAP
<p>9:10 – 9:30 (CEST) 14:10 – 14:30 (Bangkok)</p>	<p>Presentations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology and Innovation Report 2023 – Mr. Clovis Freire Junior, Team Leader of the Technology and Innovation Report 2023, UNCTAD • Enabling the green transition of business – Ms. Elena Mayer-Besting, Programme Management Officer and Report Leader, ESCAP
<p>9:30 – 10:15 (CEST) 14:30 – 15:15 (Bangkok)</p>	<p>Panel discussion</p> <p>Moderator: Mr. Angel Gonzalez Sanz, Chief of Technology, Innovation and Knowledge Development Branch, Division on Technology and Logistics, UNCTAD</p> <p>Panelists</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Rasmus Lema, Associate Professor, UNU-MERIT • Mr. Md Abdul Bari, Innovation Specialist, Digital Entrepreneurship and Innovation EcoSystem Development Project, Bangladesh Hi-Tech Park Authority • Mr. Amarit Charoenphan, Managing Partner, Aim Ventures • Ms. Heather L. Taylor-Strauss, Economic Affairs Officer, ESCAP
<p>10:15 – 10:25 (CEST) 15:15 – 15:25 (Bangkok)</p>	<p>Q&A</p>
<p>10:25 – 10:30 (CEST) 15:25 – 15:30 (Bangkok)</p>	<p>Conclusion by the moderator</p>