



ESCAP Sustainable Business Network



Asia-Pacific Business Forum

Asia-Pacific Business Forum (APBF) 2022

**Towards an Asia-Pacific Green Deal for Business**

United Nations ESCAP Bangkok

26 August 2022

### **Overview and objectives:**

With less than ten years left to deliver on the 2030 agenda, efforts are underway to mobilize action by governments, businesses, civil society and people on the sustainable development goals (SDGs). While much progress has been made, overall, the world is not on track to meet the 2030 sustainable development goals. Research by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), shows that the Asia-Pacific region is not on track to achieve any of the 17 SDGs by 2030. Moreover, over half the SDGs' progress has either stagnated or is heading in the wrong direction. While the region has made some progress in ending poverty (SDG1), access to education (SDG4) and clean energy (SDG7), the advances are too slow for these goals to be met by 2030. The situation has been further exacerbated by the Covid19 pandemic and the resulting economic slowdown, which in some cases threatens to erode some of the progress made in recent years.

Achieving the SDGs by 2030 will require coordinated action by public and private sector actors and civil society. Recognizing the critical role of the private sector in advocating and scaling up business action in support of the SDGs, the ESCAP Sustainable Business Network (ESBN) has been promoting business action and innovation to transition to a low carbon, climate-resilient and sustainable new economy. More recently, ESNB has formulated the Asia-Pacific Green Deal for Business declaration to demonstrate that businesses must take a leading role in the green transformation of the Asia-Pacific region. The Asia-Pacific Green Deal for Business is about harnessing transformational opportunities of a new green economy. It is more than building back better, it is about building back stronger and smarter. Through the Green Deal for Business, five priority business actions have been identified, and ESNB through its taskforces will advocate for these actions to businesses across the region by actively supporting initiatives, to implement the spirit of the Asia-Pacific Green Deal for Business.

Against this backdrop, the Asia-Pacific Business Forum will discuss the rollout of the Green Deal for Business and its five priority action areas:

1. Advancing a zero carbon, affordable and resilient energy system. The energy system must be decarbonized in accordance with the commitments of the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, while providing reliable and affordable access to zero carbon energy for all.
2. Building smart, low carbon, water-secure and climate-resilient cities, infrastructure and mobility. Greenhouse gas emissions from construction and operations of urban infrastructure and its activities, including buildings and transport infrastructure, must be reduced further, while water security and resilience to future crises are strengthened.
3. Mobilizing public and private finance for green transformation. New investment must be directed to sustainable energy, infrastructure, logistics, food production, water supply and other innovations for the new green economy.
4. Accelerating and scaling up innovations for sustainable development. Now is the time to implement new business models and solutions to improve efficiency, lower costs and reduce environmental impact from the way we produce, consume, transport, work, trade and conduct business.
5. Changing towards a more circular economy. New circular production and consumption practices will bring new business and employment opportunities, to maximize resource efficiency and minimize environmental impacts.

The Asia-Pacific Business Forum has been held annually since 2004. APBF 2022 will be held in a hybrid format on 26 August 2022 in cooperation with the ESCAP Sustainable Business Network (ESBN). The Forum will invite stakeholders, from governments, businesses, civil society and academics from all over the region to foster dialogue and identify innovative solutions and recommendations to advance the Asia-Pacific Green Deal for Business in the region.

10th ESCAP Sustainable Business Network (ESBN) Meeting	
13:00-13:05	Welcome and opening remarks <i>Dr. George Lam</i> , Chair, ESCAP Sustainable Business Network and President, Hong Kong-ASEAN Economic Cooperation Foundation
13:05-13:20	Updates on the Asia-Pacific Green Deal for Business Speaker: <i>David Morris</i> , ESBN Green Economy Task Force
13:20-13:50	Major activities of the ESBN in 2021/2022 Major activities and achievements of the Taskforces 2021/2022 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Green Economy</li><li>- Digital Economy</li><li>- Disaster and Climate Risk Reduction</li><li>- Sustainable and Inclusive Finance</li></ul>

	- Youth & Women Entrepreneurship
13:50-14:00	Other Matters, next steps and closing  <i>Dr. George Lam</i> , Chair, ESCAP Sustainable Business Network and President, Hong Kong-ASEAN Economic Cooperation Foundation
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ASIA-PACIFIC BUSINESS FORUM 2022</b>  <b>“Towards an Asia-Pacific Green Deal for Business”</b>  Hybrid  26 August 2022, 14:00-17:00 hours (UTC+7)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>TENTATIVE PROGRAMME</b></p>	
14:00-14:30	<p><b>Opening Session</b></p> <p><b>Welcome Statement</b> by <i>Dr. George Lam</i>, Chair, ESCAP Sustainable Business Network and President, Hong Kong-ASEAN Economic Cooperation Foundation</p> <p><b>Opening Address</b> by <i>Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana</i>, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of ESCAP</p> <p><b>Inaugural address:</b> <i>Arkhom Termpittayapaisith</i>, Minister of Finance, Royal Government of Thailand (TBC)</p>
14:30-15:15	<p><b>Roundtable:</b>  <b>Asia-Pacific Green Deal for Business: Aligning business action and innovation in support of sustainable development.</b></p> <p>With less than ten years to go to deliver on the 2030 goals, there is a need to scale up ambition and action in support of the SDGs. The private sector has an important role to play by taking a leadership role in the green transformation of the region. Through advocating business action and innovation to transition to a low carbon, climate-resilient and sustainable new economy, businesses in the region can raise awareness and accelerate action in support of sustainable development.</p> <p>This session will discuss how businesses across Asia and the Pacific can take a leadership role in the implementation of the Asia-Pacific Green Deal for Business.</p> <p>Moderator: <i>Barbara Meynert</i>, Senior Advisor, Fung Group (TBC)</p> <p>Keynote speakers</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>John W.H. Denton</i>, Secretary-General, International Chamber of Commerce (TBC): how to translate the Asia-Pacific Green Deal for Business into an action agenda for the ICC</li> <li>• <i>Supachai Chearavanont</i>, President of UN Global Compact Network Association Thailand (TBC): the role of the Global Compact in implementing the Green Deal for Business</li> <li>• <i>David Morris</i>, ESNB Green Economy Task Force: on how the ESCAP Sustainable Business Network can realign its task forces to implement the Green Deal for Business</li> </ul> <p>Discussion</p>
15:15-16:05	<p><b>Roundtable:</b>  <b>Asia-Pacific Green Deal for Business: Priority Action Areas for Business</b></p> <p>The Asia-Pacific Green Deal for Business proposes five priority areas for action by businesses in support of the sustainable development goals and to transition businesses in the region to a greener, resilient low carbon pathway. This roundtable will focus on the priority action areas and showcase initiatives from across the ESNB members and beyond that are already delivering impact in these priority areas</p> <p>Moderator: <i>Kaveh Zahedi</i>, Deputy Executive Secretary of ESCAP</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advancing a zero-carbon, affordable and resilient energy system  <i>Mr. Hendrik Rosenthal</i>, Sustainability Director of CLP, Hong Kong, China (TBC)</li> <li>• Building smart, low-carbon, water-secure and climate-resilient cities, infrastructure and mobility  <i>Thailand-BTS (TBC)</i>  <i>Australia: Worley (TBC)</i></li> <li>• Mobilizing public and private finance for green transformation  <i>Mr. George Yuen</i>, ICBC (Asia), Hong Kong, China</li> <li>• Accelerating and scaling up innovations for sustainable development  <i>Mr. N.R. Narayana Murthy</i>, Founder, Infosys, India</li> <li>• Changing towards a more circular economy  <i>Singapore-Nestle (TBC)</i></li> </ul>
16:05-16:50	<p><b>ESG for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprise</b></p> <p>SMEs are increasingly looking at ESG principles and sustainability reporting to improve their competitiveness and to attract investments and capital. As corporations move to decarbonize supply chains, SMEs are increasingly being called upon to provide ESG data on their operations. SMEs that track and report on sustainability metrics have a competitive edge. At the same time, investors around the globe are increasingly looking at directing their investments into companies that track and report their sustainability metrics.</p>

	<p>This session will look at how SMEs can focus on ESG principles to improve their competitiveness.</p> <p>Moderator: <i>Tientip Subhanij</i>, Chief of Investment and Enterprise Development, ESCAP</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Professor Louis Cheng</i> – Dr. S H Ho Professor of Banking and Finance; Director of the Research Centre for ESG; The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong (<i>TBC</i>)</li><li>• Gabriel Tan, CEO, Guava Amenities Pte.Ltd, Singapore (<i>TBC</i>)</li><li>• Admen Hassan, Head, SME Academy, Center for Entrepreneur Development and Research (CEDAR) (<i>TBC</i>)</li></ul>
16:50-17:00	<p><b>Closing session</b></p> <p>Conclusions and Closing statements by:</p> <p><i>Dr. George Lam</i>, Chair, ESCAP Sustainable Business Network and President, Hong Kong-ASEAN Economic Cooperation Foundation</p> <p><i>Rupa Chanda</i>, Director, Trade, Investment and Innovation Division, ESCAP</p>