



ESCAP Sustainable Business Network

ESBN Monthly Update

November 2021

ESBN news and updates

ESBN members who earlier joined in a personal capacity are kindly reminded of the need to convert to corporate membership before the end of 2021, by submitting the commitment form shared earlier, and to become signatories of the UN Global Compact. Please contact the ESBN secretariat for more information: esbn@un.org

Activities by ESBN members

Pacific Basin Economic Council: PBEC welcomes you to “Save the Date” – November 11th & 12th (NZ, Asia)/November 10th & 11th (N. & S. America) 2021 – for the first hybrid Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) CEO Summit. Live attendees in Auckland, New Zealand will join virtual participants from around the world who will be attending the event through the online event platform. ESBN members who would like to join, are invited to indicate their interest to the PBEC secretariat. For PBEC non-members and those of you who wish to request and secure an invitation directly, [please click here](#). Additional information on the event can be found [here](#), and queries can be sent to pbec@pbec.org

Pacific Basin Economic Council: PBEC is organizing virtual events, Striving Forward in Asia Pacific - reflections and predictions by Leading Experts & Commentators, during the #pbecvirtualweek21, between 22-26 November 2021. Given all the major events that have happened in 2021 and the major summits that will have taken place shortly prior to this week of discussions, PBEC will host experts, business leaders, academics, economists & NGOs to provide their latest perspectives. With the realization that this pandemic is a multi-year problem,, there is growing pressure on Governments to open up their borders and economies from business leaders and the general public. More information will follow.

Upcoming events of ESBN interest

November 2021: SDG Ambition Month 2021

The SDG Ambition Month 2021, organized by UN Global Compact Network Malaysia & Brunei, is a call to action for companies to engage in sustainable actions for business resilience. This month-long virtual event offers a series of sustainability-focused conferences, forums, workshops and exhibitions catered to Corporates, Micro, Small Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), and Academic institutions. The events that are presented to the public during the month include the [PRME Forum](#), [SME SDG Festival](#), [GO ESG ASEAN 2021 Summit](#) and [Sustainability & Renewable Energy Forum \(SAREF 2.0\)](#), featuring various international

speakers from Bloomberg, UN, Bursa Malaysia, Thai Stock exchange, and more. For more information and to register, please visit: <https://www.sdgambitionmonth.com/>

The banner for SDG Ambition Month November 2021 features the UN Global Compact logo on the left and the SDG wheel on the right. The main text reads "SDG AMBITION MONTH NOV 2021". Below this, a dark blue bar contains the tagline "Inspiring Sustainable Actions for Business Resilience". At the bottom, four event cards are displayed:

- PRME forum**: Malaysia Principles for Responsible Management Education Virtual Forum on Sustainability Education by Business Schools in Malaysia, 3 NOV 2021.
- SME SDG festival**: Digital Sustainability Festival for Malaysian MSMEs, 8 - 12 NOV 2021.
- GO ESG ASEAN**: Corporate Sustainability Virtual Summit & Exhibition, 24 & 25 NOV 2021.
- SAREF ENERGY FORUM**: SUSTAINABILITY & RENEWABLE ENERGY FORUM, 24 NOV 2021.

A MONTH OF SUSTAINABILITY-FOCUSED EVENTS, CONFERENCES & EXHIBITION

Recently concluded

25 October 2021: 4th Augmenting Tsunami Monitoring Steering Committee Meeting

The 4th ESNB Augmenting Tsunami Monitoring Steering Committee Meeting (virtual mode) took place on 25 October 2021. The Steering Committee Meeting Chaired by Mr. Asif Ibrahim, Vice Chairman, Newage Group of Industries, Bangladesh and ESNB Task force Chair on Disaster and Climate Risk Reduction met and shared updates on the three strategies for augmenting tsunami monitoring, since the last Roundtable held in Singapore. The steering committee also discussed the possibility of holding an in person High-level follow-up Meeting in Jakarta in 2022 <https://www.unescap.org/events/2021/4th-esbn-augmenting-tsunami-monitoring-steering-committee-meeting>



26 October 2021: Consultation Workshop: Building Capacity for Climate Action by SMEs

The Private sector, including SMEs, will be critical actors in addressing climate change. Private sector involvement is essential for multiple reasons. First of all, given the scale and pace of emissions reductions needed, it is critical that companies across the board urgently act to reduce carbon emissions both in their direct operations and in their supply chains. Secondly, climate change presents material risks to business operations, e.g., through infrastructure damage from flooding, droughts and extreme weather conditions, which in turn introduces new challenges to a fragile and vulnerable enterprise system, in particular for SMEs. Thus, it is critical for SMEs to both find ways to mitigate emissions, and to be prepared to deal with future climate impacts. <https://www.unescap.org/events/2021/consultation-workshop-building-capacity-climate-action-smes>

26-27 October 2021: Sustainable Investing and ESG Conference 2020/21

The World Green Organisation (WGO) partnered with ESCAP to organise the second Sustainable Investing and ESG Conference 2020/21 in Hong Kong. The Conference gathered policymakers and representatives of private business, financial institutions, international organisations, and other relevant stakeholders to discuss pressing issues in promoting climate-resilient investment to finance the SDGs. The meeting proposed innovative mechanisms to support the recovery effort from the pandemic and increase sustainable investment, as well as identified best practices for ESG investment, mainstreaming, accessing and leveraging finance for climate mitigation and adaptation. For more information, see: <https://www.unescap.org/events/2021/sixth-meeting-infrastructure-financing-and-public-private-partnerships-ppp-network-asia>.

28 October 2021: South Aral Sea: Bringing Back Blue Infrastructure – ESNB Expert Group Pre-meeting (Hydro Resources)- (by invitation only)

Before its shallowing, the Aral Sea was the fourth-largest lake in the world, creating its own microclimate benefiting the communities around it. At one time there was also a vibrant fishing industry and a resort area. Today, the once great Sea is mostly an arid desert and a major source of toxic dust and sandstorms. However, Hydro-resource technologies exist that can now source water that most likely lies beneath the surface of the dried-up Aral basin and which may be tapped to replenish portions of the Aral Sea basin. The Sustainable Business Network (ESBN) aims to bring the private sector and public sector to address this challenge. For more information, see:

<https://www.unescap.org/events/2021/south-aral-sea-bringing-back-blue-infrastructure-expert-group-pre-meeting-hydro>

3 November 2021: Session #6: RCEP and the 2030 Agenda: Sustainable Investment of the Fifth South-East Asia Multi-Stakeholder Forum, Resilient, Inclusive, and Sustainable Development: COVID-19 Recovery and SDG Implementation

The session discussed implementing Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) in support of the 2030 Agenda, particularly the role of foreign direct investment (FDI) and public private partnerships (PPPs) to better promote sustainable development in the region. It also touched on how RCEP could and has changed the investment landscape within the region and how it could contribute to the COVID-19 recovery efforts in the region through boosting investment prospects and facilitating ICT and social infrastructure development through PPPs that bring in new sources of finances, and the specific areas within the Agreement that offer room for incorporating more of a sustainable development orientation. The session was held virtually on 3 November 2021. Questions regarding the forum can be sent to: escap-sro-sea@un.org





Ms. Tientip Subhanij
Chief, Investment and Enterprise Development Section (IEDS), Trade, Investment and Innovation Division (TIID), UN ESCAP



Mr. Manjiao Chi
Professor, Center of International Economic Law and Policy, Law School, University of International Business and Economics



Ms. Heather Taylor-Strauss
Economic Affairs Officer, Investment and Enterprise Development Section, Trade, Investment and Innovation Division, UN ESCAP.



Mr. Eric Roeder
Coordinator, IEDS, TIID, UN ESCAP



Mr. Sar Senera
Director, Legal Affairs Department, Council for the Development of Cambodia



Mr. Syed Mohd Faizal Syed Mohd Dardin
Director, Investment Policy & Trade Facilitation Division, Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI)



Ms. Marjorie O. Ramos-Samaniego
Governor, Board of Investments, Philippines



Ms. Ankiti Bose
CEO and Co-founder, Zilingo



Ms. Intan Murnira Ramli
Policy Fellow, Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia

THE FIFTH SOUTH EAST ASIA MULTI-STAKEHOLDER FORUM ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

14:00 to 16:00 hours (UTC:+7),
Wednesday November 3

RCEP and the 2030 Agenda:
Sustainable Investment



4 November 2021: ESBN EGM on Bathymetric Crowdsourcing for Resilient and Sustainable Development

The EGM called upon the maritime sector to join in a bathymetric mapping crowd sourcing project to advance mapping of the ocean floor in the ASEAN region. Accurate and high-resolution bathymetric maps are essential for simulations of tsunami wave inundation along beaches. Further, bathymetric maps contain information on the depths of landforms below sea level and can support the conservation of our oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development. For more information, see: <https://www.unescap.org/events/2021/esbn-egm-bathymetric-crowdsourcing-resilient-and-sustainable-development-0>

Upcoming ESCAP activities and events

15-28 November 2021: UNESCAP – UNCTAD Online Course on Non-Tariff Measures (NTMs) and Sustainable Development

The course on NTMs and sustainable development – jointly prepared and organized by UNESCAP and UNCTAD – explores how NTMs relate to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This is followed by a discussion of the impacts of NTMs on trade and investment, together with a private sector perspective outlining the difficulties posed by NTMs and related procedural obstacles. The importance of aligning NTMs with international standards as one way to bring down trade costs of NTMs, as well as other policy recommendations and good practices on streamlining NTMs towards sustainable development are discussed. For more information, see: <https://www.unescap.org/events/2021/unescap-unctad-online-course-non-tariff-measures-and-sustainable-development>

17-18 November 2021: 2021 SPECA Economic Forum

The United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA) Economic Forum is an annual event jointly organized by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE). This year, under the chairmanship of Uzbekistan, seven SPECA participating countries, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, as well as representatives of United Nations agencies and programmes, relevant international and regional organizations, international financial institutions and donors will discuss and develop ideas for coordinated actions in response to the forum's theme topic. For more information, see: <https://unescap.org/events/2021/2021-speca-economic-forum#>

22 November-14 December 2021: Global Course on Negotiating Trade Agreements for Trade in Times of Crisis and Pandemic

ESCAP, UNCTAD in collaboration with UN regional commissions, the World Trade Organization (WTO) and other partner organizations launched the global [Initiative on Model Provisions for Trade in Times of Crisis and Pandemic in Regional and Other Trade Agreements \(IMP\)](#). The major outcome of the IMP is a newly published UN [Handbook on Provisions and Options for Trade in Times of Crisis and Pandemic](#). Based on the Handbook, ESCAP and UNCTAD are co-organising a free online Global Course on Negotiating Regional Trade Agreements for Trade in Times of Crisis and Pandemic. For more information, see: <https://www.unescap.org/events/2021/global-course-negotiating-trade-agreements-trade-times-crisis-and-pandemic>

23 November 2021: Webinar on Closing the trade finance gaps

Join this webinar to learn more about the impacts of the pandemic on banks' trade finance provision, including other factors that have hindered the expansion of trade finance. The webinar will also cover results of the differential impacts of trade finance shortages on various firm sizes, the availability of alternative and digital sources of finance for small and medium enterprises, and the policies needed to strengthen the path toward recovery. To visit the webinar series on accelerating cross-border paperless trade facilitation, please click [here](#). For more information, see:

<https://www.unescap.org/events/2021/webinar-closing-trade-finance-gaps#>

3 December 2021: Policy Discussion on Expanding Frontiers of Inclusive Innovation: The Way Forward

ESCAP, in collaboration with Digital Pathways at Oxford, the Inclusive Business Action Network (iBAN), the Honey Bee Network, and the Gujarat Grassroots Innovations Augmentation Network (GIAN), is organizing a Forum on Frontiers of Inclusive Innovation: Formulating Technology and Innovation Policies that Leave No one Behind. The forum is taking place through a series of six online sessions in November and December 2021. This policy discussion session will explore the way forward to expand the frontiers of inclusive innovation. The session will build on the policy exchanges and identify recommendations and suggestions for promoting technology and innovation policies that leave no one behind.

<https://www.unescap.org/events/2021/policy-discussion-expanding-frontiers-inclusive-innovation-way-forward>

8 December 2021: Impact of COVID-19 on progress towards Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in South Asia: Challenges and Way Forward for Regional Cooperation

The ESCAP Subregional Office for South and South-West Asia will bring together experts from South Asia, in an interactive session, to share their perspectives on the implications of COVID-19 pandemic for achieving the SDGs and the potential of regional cooperation for accelerating SDG progress and in building back better from the crisis. The COVID-19 pandemic which began as a health crisis, has become a monumental human and socio-economic crisis. The ongoing pandemic has devastated South Asian economies, exposing the systemic weaknesses and common challenges faced by the subregion. The COVID-19 pandemic poses serious perils for the achievement of the SDGs in the subregion. For more information, see: <https://www.unescap.org/events/2021/impact-covid-19-progress-towards-sustainable-development-goals-sdgs-south-asia>

9 December 2021: Sixth Meeting of the Infrastructure Financing and Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) Network of Asia and the Pacific: SDG Infrastructure Investment Fair

There is an urgent need to mobilize commercial finance and private investment on a vast scale to achieve the SDGs, especially in Asia and the Pacific. At the same time, mobilizing private investment, a fundamental tenet of any country's Public-Private Partnership (PPP) strategy, is challenging for many developing countries. Essential investment projects in developing countries need additional support to develop green and bankable infrastructure project proposals. To address this challenge, ESCAP is co-organizing the sixth meeting of the Infrastructure Financing and Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) Network of Asia and the Pacific with the Public and Private Infrastructure Investment Management Center (PIMAC) under the Korea Development Institute (KDI) with the support of the China Public-Private Partnerships Center (CPPPC) under the Ministry of Finance. This meeting will serve as an SDG Infrastructure Investment Fair by providing an opportunity for participating member States to present their infrastructure project proposals to potential investors for financing support. For more information, see:

<https://www.unescap.org/events/2021/sixth-meeting-infrastructure-financing-and-public-private-partnerships-ppp-network-asia>

For a short overview of ESCAP related news, please see <https://www.unescap.org/news> or subscribe: <https://unescap.us10.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=c0fdb6e03fa08a5e575b433c0&id=e318af22fc>

All ESCAP upcoming events: <https://www.unescap.org/events>

Recently published by ESCAP

[Green and Climate Finance Options to Support the Post-Covid-19 Pandemic Recovery and Climate Action \(4 November 2021\)](#)

[Frontiers of inclusive innovation: Formulating technology and innovation policies that leave no one behind \(1 November 2021\)](#)

[Business Initiatives to Reduce Poverty and Inequality: Strengthening the Evidence Base to Leave No One Behind \(26 October 2021\)](#)

[Public Sector Initiatives for Reducing Inequality: Strengthening the Evidence Base to Leave No One Behind \(25 October 2021\)](#)

[Is 1.5°C within Reach for the Asia-Pacific Region? Ambition and Potential of NDC Commitments of the Asia-Pacific Countries \(25 October 2021\)](#)

Working paper series

Macroeconomics: Click [here](#)

Trade: Click [here](#)

Please don't hesitate to get in touch with us to provide input, questions or suggestions for the monthly update: esbn@un.org

Best regards,

ESBN Secretariat