



ESCAP Sustainable Business Network

## ESBN Monthly Update

October 2021

### ESBN news and updates

#### Activities by ESNB members

**KSI Strategic Institute for Asia Pacific:** the KSI Strategic Institute for Asia Pacific and the Economic Club of Kuala Lumpur jointly organize the ASEAN Leadership and Partnership Forum on 7 October 2021, which runs concurrently with the ASEAN Summit. The theme for this year's forum is on Rebuilding ASEAN toward's Sustainable Recovery. The Executive Secretary of ESCAP, Ibu Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana, will also give special address together with Hon. Dato Seri Setia Haji Erywan bin Pehin Datu Pekerma, Jaya Haji Mohd. Yusof, Minister of Foreign Affairs II, Brunei Darussalam, and Chair of ASEAN 2021, and YB Dato' Sri Hajah Nancy Shukri, Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture Malaysia, H.E. Pan Sorasak, Minister of Commerce, Cambodia and Dato' Sri Dr. Vijay Eswaran, Executive Chairman, Qi Group. For further enquiries or registration, please email to [mradhi@kasi.asia](mailto:mradhi@kasi.asia) or [wani@kasi.asia](mailto:wani@kasi.asia). <https://kasi.asia/events/asean-leadership-and-partnership-forum-2021/>



**KSI Strategic Institute for Asia Pacific and Pacific Basin Economic Council:** the ESNB members; the KSI Strategic Institute for Asia Pacific, and the Pacific Basin Economic Council (PBEC) together with China Daily

organized 2021 Asia Economic and Entrepreneurship Summit (AEES) “Asia in the New Normal – Rebuilding Resilience, Overcoming Challenges” on 30 September 2021 virtually. The Summit is a meeting of minds for Government, Business, Civil Society and Thought Leaders to discuss the key trends, strategic challenges and major issues impacting on business and industry in Asia. The Covid Pandemic has caused tremendous disruptions across Asia with lives and livelihoods being threatened. Building back in the new normal requires resilience, agility and adaptability as well as Government support. In the new normal greater focus will have to be given to digitalization, technology and innovation. Building shared prosperity as well as sustainable and inclusive growth is a key challenge.

**Pacific Basin Economic Council:** PBEC warmly welcome 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. It is expected that more than six world leaders will also present at the Summit this year, with an audience of up to 1000 in the live venue, and several thousand online. Registration is strictly by invitation only. ESNB members are invited to express interest to the PBEC secretariat to join. Limited complimentary passes are available, with preference for PBEC members. For PBEC non-members and those of you who wish to request and secure an invitation directly can [please click here](#). For more information on this year’s event, please click [here](#), or [watch a short video](#). If you have any questions, please send an email for the attention of Michael Walsh at email [pbec@pbec.org](mailto: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 dialogue discussions, PBEC will host experts, business leaders, academics, economists & NGOs to provide their latest perspectives. With the realisation that this pandemic is a multi-year problem still, there is pressure growing on Governments to open up their borders and economies from business leaders and the general public. More information will follow.

### **Upcoming events of ESNB interest**

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

The 4<sup>th</sup> ESNB Augmenting Tsunami Monitoring Steering Committee Meeting (virtual via MS Teams) will take place on 25 October 2021. The timing will be 15:00 - 16:30 Bangkok time. The Steering Committee Chaired by Mr. Asif Ibrahim, Vice Chairman, Newage Group of Industries, Bangladesh and ESNB Task force Chair on Disaster and Climate Risk Reduction. The Meeting will share updates on the three augmenting tsunami monitoring strategies since the [Roundtable in Singapore](#) (ships, drilling platforms and undersea cables) as well as moving ahead with a High-level Follow-up Meeting in Jakarta in 2022 (if conditions improve)

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

Private sector action, 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 severe weather systems, which in turn introduces new challenges to a fragile and vulnerable enterprise system, in particular for

the SMEs. Thus, it is critical for SMEs to both find ways to mitigate emissions, and to be prepared to deal with future climate impacts to increase resilience. For more information, see: <https://www.unescap.org/events/2021/consultation-workshop-building-capacity-climate-action-smes>



**Consultation Workshop - Building SMEs' Capacity on Climate Action in South-East Asia**  
**26 October, Tuesday, 13:00-17:30 BANGKOK time (GMT+7)**

- *Breakout Session 1: Climate-risk informed strategies and investment plans by SMEs (UNFCCC)*
- *Breakout Session 2: Climate actions in the time of the pandemic – voice from the SMEs (UNIDO)*
- *Breakout Session 3: Green finance opportunities for SMEs (ESCAP)*







**South Aral Sea: Bringing Back Blue Infrastructure – ESNB Expert Group Pre-meeting (Hydro-resources)- 28 October 2021, (Sustainable Agriculture)-9 November 2021 (by invitation only)**

Before its shallowing, the Aral Sea was the fourth-largest lake in the world, an oasis in the Central Asian desert creating its own micro climate benefiting the communities around it. At one time here was a vibrant fishing industry and a resort area. Today, the once great Sea is mostly an acrid desert and major source of toxic dust and sandstorms. The number of people affected by the drying of the Aral exceeds 5 million. Communities that get the brunt of such toxic dust-storms are diagnosed with respiratory diseases, esophageal diseases, laryngeal cancer and even blindness. Countries in the region also use too much fossil fuel-based inputs that need large amounts of water. UN ESCAP brings considerable inhouse resources and will call upon its Pacific and the Sustainable Business Network (ESBN) to bring the private sector and public sector as well as key UN partner agencies into this technical cooperation project. For more information, see: <https://unescap.org/events/2021/south-aral-sea-bringing-back-blue-infrastructure-expert-group-pre-meeting-hydro#> and <https://unescap.org/events/2021/south-aral-sea-bringing-back-blue-infrastructure-expert-group-pre-meeting-sustainable>

**3 November 2021: Session #2: 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 will raise the discussion of 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. Discussion will also

touch on how RCEP can and has changed the investment landscape within the region, how it can contribute to the COVID-19 recovery efforts in the region through boosting investment prospects, how it can facilitate 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 will take place in a virtual modality on 3 November 2021. All questions regarding the subregional SDG Forum can be sent to: [escap-sro-sea@un.org](mailto:escap-sro-sea@un.org)

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

This EGM will call 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. As all ships are equipped with equipment to conduct bathymetric mapping, it was agreed to call upon ships that are part of the project as well as other new companies to join the initiative. For more information, see: <https://www.unescap.org/events/2021/esbn-egm-bathymetric-crowdsourcing-resilient-and-sustainable-development-0>

**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 UN, Bloomberg, Thailand Stock exchange, Bursa Malaysia, Aware Super (Australia), Microsoft, TATA Consultancy Services and more. For more information and to register, please visit: <https://www.sdgambitionmonth.com/>

**UN GLOBAL COMPACT**  
Network Malaysia

**SDG  
AMBITION  
MONTH NOV 2021**

**Inspiring Sustainable Actions for Business Resilience**

<p>Malaysia <b>PRME</b> Principles for Responsible Management Education forum Virtual Forum on Sustainability Education by Business Schools in Malaysia 3 NOV 2021</p>	<p><b>SME SDG</b> festival Digital Sustainability Festival for Malaysian MSMEs 8 - 12 NOV 2021</p>	<p><b>GO ESG</b> <b>ASEAN</b> Corporate Sustainability Virtual Summit &amp; Exhibition 24 &amp; 25 NOV 2021</p>	<p><b>SUSTAINABILITY &amp; RENEWABLE ENERGY FORUM</b> SAREF 24 NOV 2021</p>
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## A MONTH OF SUSTAINABILITY-FOCUSED EVENTS, CONFERENCES & EXHIBITION

### Recently concluded

**30 September 2021: Third Thematic Workshop of the Infrastructure Financing and Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) Network of Asia and the Pacific: Increasing access to cost-effective digital healthcare through ICT infrastructure in rural and remote areas: The role of Public-Private Partnership**

To realize the promise of telemedicine in rural and remote areas via more resilient Information and communication technology (ICT) infrastructure development, ESCAP, the China Public-Private Partnerships Center (CPPPC) under the Ministry of Finance and Asian Development Bank (ADB) will kickstart work via the Third Thematic Workshop of the Infrastructure Financing and Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) Network of Asia and the Pacific: Increasing access to cost-effective digital healthcare through ICT infrastructure in rural and remote areas: The role of Public-Private Partnership. Based upon the interests and suggestions raised by the member States during the Second Thematic Workshop, ESCAP is organizing the subsequent Third Thematic Workshop with a more specific focus on the digital healthcare sector and telecommunications sector on strategies to uptake cost effective telemedicine innovations in rural, remote and disaster-prone areas in Asia and the Pacific region. It will also provide capacity building to PPP units to advance pilots and projects to build more resilient ICT infrastructures to ensure that no one is left behind. For more information, see: <https://www.unescap.org/events/2021/third-thematic-workshop-infrastructure-financing-and-public-private-partnerships-ppp>



#### **11 October 2021: Thailand's Climate Leadership Summit 2021**

The UN in Thailand co-organized the Global Compact Network Thailand (GCNT) Forum on 11 October 2021, which was 100% virtual. It was a full day event around the theme climate action with discussions on the current situation of climate change in Thailand; solutions by the business sector with parallel sessions for the food and agriculture sector, energy and other industries; the role of the financial sector; and the role of innovation and technology in addressing climate change. With the Prime Minister in attendance, it was envisaged that companies would sign a Statement of Commitment to join the Race to Zero. <https://gcntforum2021.globalcompact-th.com>

#### **11 October 2021: Accelerating climate-smart trade and investment for sustainable development: Global Launch of Asia-Pacific Trade and Investment Report 2021**

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss accelerating climate-smart trade and investment for sustainable development based on the new Asia-Pacific Trade and Investment Report 2021 on this topic, jointly prepared by ESCAP, UNCTAD and UNEP. Climate action has been designated by the UN Secretary General as both a priority and a driver of the decade. To address the worsening climate crisis, there is a need for trade and investment policies that can more directly support reducing GHG emissions, while preserving trade and investment as key engines of growth and sustainable development. For more information, see: [https://www.unescap.org/events/2021/APTIR2021\\_Launch](https://www.unescap.org/events/2021/APTIR2021_Launch)

### **Upcoming ESCAP activities and events**

#### **20 October 2021: Outward Foreign Direct Investment: Policies to support firm investment and maximize home country sustainable development**

This session will address these knowledge and policy development constraints by presenting and discussing the first draft of a groundbreaking, innovative OFDI for Home Country Sustainable Development Policy Toolkit that UN ESCAP and the World Economic Forum (WEF) have jointly developed and will launch in early 2021. The presentation of the Toolkit will be followed by an interactive panel

discussion with investment policymakers from both developed and developing countries and the private sector. The aim of the panel discussion is to learn from the experiences of these countries in introducing OFDI policies, and the extent to which economies and firms are able to benefit from these policies and measures in support of home country sustainable development. For more information, see: <https://unescap.org/events/2021/outward-foreign-direct-investment-policies-support-firm-investment-and-maximize-home>

**20 October 2021: Regional Conversation Series 2021: Financing Sustainable Development and Addressing Debt Risks in the Aftermath of COVID-19**

The purpose of this Regional Conversation is to exchange views with policymakers and experts on how to increase the availability of financing for sustainable development and climate action and address debt risks in Asia and the Pacific. The conversation builds on an a high-level event on Debt relief in the aftermath of the pandemic organized by ESCAP during its 77th Commission Session in April 2021, and will complement discussions to take place at the third session of the Committee on Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Financing for Development during 20-22 October 2021. For more information, see: <https://unescap.org/events/2021/regional-conversation-series-2021-financing-sustainable-development-and-addressing-debt>

**27 October 2021: Fourth Asia-Pacific Day for the Ocean**

On 21 May 2020, ESCAP member States adopted a resolution on “Strengthening cooperation to promote the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific,” underscoring the importance of the Ocean for the region, and requesting the secretariat “to continue to strengthen current partnerships and to develop new partnerships, where appropriate, for the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources, including through participatory, multi-stakeholder dialogue platforms.” In line with this mandate, the secretariat will host its Fourth Asia-Pacific Day for the Ocean to continue to support member States, and key stakeholders, through systematic and inclusive dialogue on priority areas and challenges in our region. For more information, see: <https://unescap.org/events/2021/fourth-asia-pacific-day-ocean-4>

**28-29 October 2021: Regional Workshop on Sustainable, Inclusive and Resilient Urban Passenger Transport: Preparing for Post-Pandemic Mobility in Asia**

The purposes of the workshop are to: (i) discuss the current situation of urban passenger transport in Asian cities; (ii) share the results of sustainability assessment of urban passenger transport in Asian cities using the Sustainable Urban Transport Index (SUTI); (iii) share the experiences of Asian countries and cities in dealing with the impacts of COVID-19 on urban mobility; and (iv) discuss post-pandemic policies and strategies to enhance sustainability, inclusiveness and resilience of urban passenger transport systems in the region. For more information, see: <https://unescap.org/events/2021/regional-workshop-sustainable-inclusive-and-resilient-urban-passenger-transport>

**28-29 October 2021: North-East Asian Multistakeholder Forum on Sustainable Development Goals 2021**

As a part of the preparatory process for the 9th Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD) and the 2022 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), the Forum will provide a unique opportunity to bring together stakeholders to share experiences, key challenges and opportunities for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in view of the COVID-19 pandemic, offering subregional inputs

and perspectives for regional and global forums. The theme of the subregional SDG Forum this year is “Building back better from COVID-19 while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda”, with in-depth review of SDGs 4, 5, 14, 15 and 17, aligned with the thematic focus of the 2022 HLPF. For more information, see: <https://unescap.org/events/2021/north-east-asian-multistakeholder-forum-sustainable-development-goals-2021>

#### **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 theme topic (TBC). For more information, see: <https://unescap.org/events/2021/2021-speca-economic-forum#>

**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**

[ESCAP Financing for Development Publication Series No. 4: Financing the SDGs to build back better from the COVID-19 pandemic in Asia and the Pacific \(12 October 2021\)](#)

[MPFD Policy Brief No 119: Adopting good practices on public debt management in Asia and the Pacific \(29 September 2021\)](#)

[MPFD Policy Brief No. 120: Boosting sustainable investing in Asia and the Pacific by public institutional investors \(29 September 2021\)](#)

[Green and sustainable logistics network: micro mobility in the first - last mile \(28 September 2021\)](#)

[Handbook on Provisions and Options for Trade in Times of Crisis and Pandemic \(24 September 2021\)](#)

[Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation in Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation \(CAREC\) 2021 \(23 September 2021\)](#)

[Towards meaningful connectivity: Insights from Asia-Pacific Case Studies \(17 September 2021\)](#)

[Steps taken by India to Contain the Second Wave of COVID-19 \(16 September 2021\)](#)

[Landscape Study of Inclusive Business in Viet Nam \(14 September 2021\)](#)

[Energy Transition Pathways for the 2030 Agenda: SDG7 Roadmap for Nepal \(13 September 2021\)](#)



[COVID-19 and the Unpaid Care Economy in Asia and the Pacific \(13 September 2021\)](#)

**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](mailto:esbn@un.org)

Best regards,  
ESBN Secretariat