



ESCAP Sustainable Business Network

## ESBN Monthly Newsletter: April 2024

### Asia-Pacific Green Deal for Business

The ESNB Executive Council adopted the Green Deal for Business at its 7<sup>th</sup> Meeting in May 2022. The Green Deal for Business was officially launched at the Asia Pacific Business Forum held in Bangkok Thailand on 26 August 2022.

Pledge your support to the Green Deal for Business at: <https://www.unescap.org/projects/gd>

### Upcoming events of ESNB interest

*22-26 April 2024:* [80<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission](#)

The eightieth session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) will be held from 22 to 26 April 2024 at the United Nations Conference Centre in Bangkok. Guided by the theme “Leveraging digital innovation for sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific”, the eightieth session will be an opportunity to strengthen region-wide cooperative action on leveraging digital innovation for the accelerated implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The session will bring together government leaders and ministers from across Asia and the Pacific and other key stakeholders to discuss how digital innovation can more inclusively contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals across multiple disciplines.



*24 April 2024:* [11<sup>th</sup> ESNB Executive Council Meeting](#)

The Executive Council of the ESCAP Sustainable Business Network (ESBN) will meet on 24 April in Bangkok. The meeting will review the progress of the ESNB Task Forces activities, and the update in implementing the Asia-Pacific Green Deal for Business and the Green Deal digital platform.

24 April 2024: [Accelerating Corporate Sustainability in Asia Pacific and Empowering SMEs to navigate the evolving ESG landscape](#)

2024 sees a rise in mandatory ESG reporting regulations and requirements, extending to not just listed companies but also non-listed smaller companies. With SMEs making up 90% of businesses globally, this calls for collective action across the sustainability value chain, from SMEs in supply chains, to corporates, and financial institutions. Join this Roundtable session as esteemed leaders of various backgrounds in the sustainability space in the APAC regions dive into the intersection of green, finance, and technology to drive Corporate Sustainability. As a follow-up on the official launch one year ago, the session will showcase the actualisation of the ESBN Asia-Pacific Green Deal through the ESGpedia digital platform in bringing about real-world benefits, with real case study examples including Sustainable Financing and greening supply chains across Asia.

The banner features a green background with white text on the left: "ACCELERATING CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY IN ASIA PACIFIC AND EMPOWERING SMES TO NAVIGATE THE EVOLVING ESG LANDSCAPE". To the right is a QR code labeled "Register here" and an illustration of a globe surrounded by icons for ESG (Environment, Social, Governance) and business growth. At the bottom, logos for ESCAP, ESBN, and United Nations Global Compact are displayed. The event details are: "03:20 PM – 05:00 PM (GMT +7) | Register here: https://indico.un.org/event/1010848/ | Wednesday, 24 April 2024".

## Recently concluded

28 March 2024: [Co-creation Workshop to develop a National Action Plan for Inclusive and Sustainable Business Capacity Development](#)

The Government of Sri Lanka is seeking to promote Inclusive and Sustainable Businesses (ISBs), that is, businesses that generate profit while also contributing positively to society and the environment. To support this, the Ministry of Industries as the lead government agency responsible for developing and implementing capacity building, in partnership with the National Enterprise Development Agency (NEDA) and the Sustainable Development Council of Sri Lanka, with the technical support of the ESCAP and United Nations Sri Lanka, organized a one-day workshop aimed at bringing together stakeholders from various sectors to develop an action plan for building capacities within the private sector. In line with Government priorities for economic recovery and development, the first phase will primarily target export-oriented medium and large enterprises, in developing inclusive and sustainable business models.

1-5 April 2024: [Asia-Pacific Trade Facilitation Forum 2024](#)

The Asia-Pacific Trade Facilitation Forum (APTFF) is the leading regional platform for the exchange of good practices and knowledge on trade facilitation. The APTFF has been organized by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), in cooperation with a growing number of partners, since 2009. The Forum attracts over 250 participants from over 30

countries, and offers extensive opportunities for capacity building and cooperation. The 11th APTFF is co-organized by ADB and ESCAP with the Ministry of Investment, Industry and Trade of Uzbekistan, and will be held in Samarkand on 1-5 April 2024.

*2 April 2024:* [Advancing Inclusive Businesses in Thailand: Breakfast with Executives](#)

Advancing Inclusive Businesses in Thailand: Breakfast with Executives event in Thailand offered a unique platform for stakeholders to delve into the transformative potential of inclusive business models. Participants explored how these models can drive economic growth while benefiting marginalized communities. With a focus on sharing insights and generating recommendations, this event aimed to shape the future landscape of inclusive business in Thailand, fostering a more equitable and sustainable economy.

*4 April 2024:* [Meeting of the ESNB Task Force on Circular Economy](#)

The ESNB's new task force on Circular Economy held its inaugural meeting on 4 April 2024. Participants at the meeting discussed the current pressing challenges that businesses face as they try to reorient their production and consumption processes toward more circular models. The Task Force deliberated on a program of work that will bring Circular Economy topics to the forefront of common practice among its members, and also to the attention of policymakers and other interested parties.

## Upcoming ESCAP activities and events

*7-8 May 2024:* [Feminist Finance Forum 2024](#)

The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) is hosting its second edition of the Feminist Finance Forum in Bangkok, Thailand from 7 – 8 May 2024. The in-person Forum will convene women entrepreneurs, investors, financial service providers, policymakers, thought leaders, ecosystem enablers, representatives from civil society and women grassroots organizations, and academia. The interactive event will include a diverse mix of plenaries, concurrent sessions, as well as side-events and networking spaces.

*9 May 2024:* [Advancing Inclusive Businesses in Thailand: Breakfast with Executives](#)

The second "Advancing Inclusive Businesses in Thailand: Breakfast with Executives event in Thailand" will offer a unique platform for stakeholders to delve into the transformative potential of inclusive business models. Participants will explore how these models can drive economic growth while benefiting marginalized communities. With a focus on sharing insights and generating recommendations, this event aims to shape the future landscape of inclusive business in Thailand, fostering a more equitable and sustainable economy.

*23-24 May 2024:* [Impact Harvest Forum: Investing in Inclusive Businesses](#)

There are valuable models of inclusive business – including many agribusinesses - across Asia and the Pacific that are commercially viable and have social impact at scale. Inclusive business models are effectively supporting smallholder farmers, providing them with technical assistance, access to finance, and facilitating integration into regional and global value chains. Inclusive businesses are harnessing technologies and business innovations to improve productivity and create entrepreneurship opportunities. Access to finance remains an issue for many inclusive businesses seeking to expand their operations or deepen their impact. Business faces multiple challenges including the cost of capital and the scarce availability of affordable finance beyond the early stage. Investment readiness is also an issue, with companies facing difficulties in measuring and

demonstrating impact. The Impact Harvest Forum will identify opportunities to invest in and finance inclusive business models and facilitate their scaling up.

**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**

[Asia-Pacific Trade Facilitation Report 2024: Promoting Sustainability and Resilience in Global Value Chains \(01 April 2024\)](#)

[Digital and sustainable trade facilitation in Asia and the Pacific 2023 \(26 March 2024\)](#)

[Blog: Accelerating sustainability reporting in Asia and the Pacific \(25 March 2024\)](#)

[Data governance : practices in Asia and the Pacific \(25 March 2024\)](#)

[Seizing the Opportunity: Digital Innovation for a Sustainable Future \(18 March 2024\)](#)

[Understanding every step of cross-border e-commerce: exporting food products from Chile to China \(14 March 2024\)](#)

[Financial resilience, inclusion, and entrepreneurship : is Asia and the Pacific close to gender parity? \(13 March 2024\)](#)

[Review on the impacts of climate change on rice production and cross- sectoral transboundary water issues in the Lower Mekong Basin \(01 March 2024\)](#)

[Transitioning to low carbon transport in Asia and the Pacific through regional cooperation \(01 March 2024\)](#)

[Inequality of opportunity in Asia and the Pacific: Birth Registration \(01 March 2024\)](#)

[Policies to promote private sector engagement in Science, Technology and Innovation: Workbook \(29 February 2024\)](#)

[The landscape of B2C e-commerce marketplaces in Singapore \(27 February 2024\)](#)

[The landscape of B2C e-commerce marketplaces in Viet Nam \(27 February 2024\)](#)

[The landscape of B2C e-commerce marketplaces in Brunei Darussalam \(27 February 2024\)](#)

[The landscape of B2C e-commerce marketplaces in Thailand \(27 February 2024\)](#)

[The landscape of B2C e-commerce marketplaces in the Republic of Korea \(27 February 2024\)](#)

[The landscape of B2C e-commerce marketplaces in the Philippines \(27 February 2024\)](#)

[The landscape of B2C e-commerce marketplaces in Mongolia \(27 February 2024\)](#)

[The landscape of B2C e-commerce marketplaces in Malaysia \(27 February 2024\)](#)

[The landscape of B2C e-commerce marketplaces in Cambodia \(27 February 2024\)](#)

[The landscape of B2C e-commerce marketplaces in Indonesia \(27 February 2024\)](#)

[The landscape of B2C e-commerce marketplaces in Lao People's Democratic Republic \(27 February 2024\)](#)

**Working paper series**

Macroeconomics: Click [here](#)

Trade: Click [here](#)

Please do not hesitate to get in touch with us to provide input, questions or suggestions for the monthly update:  
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Best regards,  
ESBN Secretariat