



ESCAP Sustainable Business Network

## ESBN Monthly Update: June 2023

### 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. A soft launch of the Green Deal was held during the Asia Pacific Business Forum 2022 at the United Nations Conference Centre in Bangkok, Thailand, on 26 August 2022.

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

### Recently concluded

15-19 May 2023: [79<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission](#)

The seventy-ninth session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) was held from 15 to 19 May 2023 at the United Nations Conference Centre in Bangkok under the theme “Accelerating climate action in Asia and the Pacific for sustainable development”. Dr. George Lam, Chair of the ESCAP Sustainable Business Network, delivered the keynote speech at the opening session on 15 May 2023, and the [ESBN statement](#) on 18 May 2023. The keynote speech of the Chair of ESNB can be viewed at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3fnn0hCLMxU> (1:44:14-1:50:44). The ESNB statement can be viewed at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zwjC\\_ObgKyo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zwjC_ObgKyo) (5:38:14-5:43:49).



*17 May 2023: [9th Meeting of the ESNB Executive Council](#)*

The Executive Council of the ESCAP Sustainable Business Network (ESBN) met on 17 May 2023. The meeting discussed the realignment of the ESNB taskforces with the Asia-Pacific Green Deal for Business and related developments. The meeting also reviewed the preparations for the Asia Pacific Business Forum 2023.



*17 May 2023: [Accelerating Climate Action in Asia and the Pacific for Sustainable Development – The ESNB Asia-Pacific Green Deal for Business](#)*

Organized by ESCAP, ESNB and UN Global Compact, this event allowed participants to understand how the Asia-Pacific Green Deal for Business brings together the private sector and financial institutions, to enable MSMEs towards climate action. Participants at the event learned how businesses can use the new Green Deal live digital platform and tools to track, report, and analyze their climate action initiatives, and in turn creating change in the real economy.

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

*6-7 June 2023: [2nd Asia Pacific Regulatory Forum for Power System Connectivity](#)*

At the 77th Commission Session in 2021, UN ESCAP Member States endorsed the regional road map on power system connectivity. Among the nine strategies contained in this document is one that highlights regulatory harmonization as key to supporting sustainable power system integration across the region. ESCAP convened the first Forum in July 2022. The second Forum will follow up on the success of the first Forum. The Forum will invite energy regulators, representatives from government agencies, and other relevant stakeholders from ESCAP member States to share experiences supporting efforts to increase cross-border power sector connectivity and the energy transition more broadly.

*7-8 June 2023: [Expert Group Meeting on Vienna Programme of Action Subregional Review in North and Central Asia](#)*

The 2023 Expert Group Meeting (EGM) on the VPoA Review in North and Central Asia will review progress, gaps, and challenges and examine key action areas in transport and energy connectivity and trade facilitation. The EGM shall facilitate the exchange of expert opinions, best practices, and lessons learned

to accelerate progress towards long-term transformation for LLDCs. The outcome of this subregional review will provide inputs to the Euro-Asian Final Review of the Vienna Programme of Action in Bangkok, Thailand, in August 2023 and, in turn, to the Third UN Conference on LLDCs in 2024.

*9 June 2023:* [Workshop on Leveraging the Public and Private Investment to accelerate the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action in North and Central Asia](#)

ESCAP is organizing a workshop to enhance policymakers' knowledge on opportunities to access and scale up public and private sources of financing in line with the Vienna Programme of Action (VPoA) for Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) priority areas. The workshop will place particular emphasis on financing regional connectivity and sustainable infrastructure investment in the sub-region. Through the exchange of experiences and good practices from policymakers and experts, the workshop will contribute to a better understanding of the subregion's opportunities to unlock more and diverse investments for the next global programme of action on LLDCs. Discussions will also highlight the importance of engagement with various stakeholders, including governments, international financial institutions, and the private sector, in addressing emerging challenges and seizing the opportunities offered by innovative and sustainable finance for LLDCs.

*13 June 2023:* [Viet Nam Inclusive Business Accreditation System Presentation](#)

Inclusive businesses models are specific innovative business models that explicitly seek to address the needs of low-income groups (such as small holder farmers) by "providing goods, services, and livelihoods on a commercially viable basis, either at scale or scalable, to people living at the base of the economic pyramid making them part of the value chain of companies' core business as suppliers, distributors, retailers, or customers". ESCAP is working with AED to promote inclusive business by supporting the design and piloting of an inclusive business accreditation system in Viet Nam.

*14 June 2023:* [Policy Dialogue: Public Debt in Southeast Asia "Rethinking Public Debt for the Sustainable Development Goals"](#)

ESCAP launched its annual flagship publication "Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2023: Rethinking Public Debt for the SDGs" in April 2023. The report calls for a significant shift in thinking about leveraging public debt for development gains. It argues that developing countries should continue to explore ways to strengthen fiscal positions and view public debt as a powerful tool to promote sustainable development, especially if used judiciously and with a long-term horizon. The Survey 2023 also proposes an innovative approach to long-term public debt sustainability analysis that considers a country's SDG investment needs and financing strategies along with structural development policies in determining the future trajectories of public debt.

*20 June 2023:* [Workshop on Advancing Cross-border Paperless Trade](#)

Electronic exchange of trade-related documents across borders remains a work in progress. The purpose of this meeting is to evaluate the current state of cross-border electronic exchange of trade-related data and documents in electronic form, examine the lessons learned, and explore the possibility of initiating further pilot projects within the region, particularly for parties involved in the Framework Agreement.

*21 June 2023:* [Workshop: Undertaking Feasibility Studies on Cross-border Paperless Trade](#)

This capacity building workshop will aim to provide participants with guidance on conducting feasibility studies on cross-border electronic exchange of trade data. A feasibility study template, developed and

utilized for four national studies, will be presented and guidance will be given on utilizing the template to establish a step-by-step approach for engaging in cross-border electronic trade data and document exchange, including identifying feasible trade documents and data exchange systems to initiate cross-border exchange. Additionally, a case study from the Philippines will be presented that utilizes an in-depth feasibility study template aimed at surveying a wide range of trade stakeholders and covering diverse areas for cross-border electronic exchange of trade-related data and documents.

*22 June 2023:* [Workshop: Cross-border Legal Recognition and Technical Interoperability of Trust Services](#)

This capacity building workshop will discuss a building block of cross-border paperless trade: interoperability and cross-border recognition of trust services. Trust services are services that provide assurance of quality of data such as electronic signatures and timestamping. UNCITRAL has recently adopted a new text in the field, the Model Law on the Use and Cross-border Recognition of Identity Management and Trust Services. The workshop will address the legal framework required for trust services and the technical aspects of their implementation to achieve interoperability and, ultimately, enable dataflows.

*23 June 2023:* [Presentation of Landscape Study of Inclusive Business in Agriculture and Food Systems in Thailand](#)

Inclusive businesses models are specific innovative business models that explicitly seek to address the needs of low-income groups (such as small holder farmers) by “providing goods, services, and livelihoods on a commercially viable basis, either at scale or scalable, to people living at the base of the economic pyramid making them part of the value chain of companies’ core business as suppliers, distributors, retailers, or customers”. To explore inclusive business opportunities in Thailand and explore means to promote these impact businesses, the Office of SMEs Promotion (OSMEP) is conducting a Landscape study of Inclusive Business in Agriculture and Food Systems in Thailand with the support of ESCAP. The landscape study will take stock of opportunities for inclusive business models in Thailand and to provide recommendations on how to support them, by offering details about 20 IB models in Thailand, assessing the enabling environment for IB to develop, and identifying opportunities to promote inclusive business.

*23 June 2023:* [Workshop: Lessons Learned from 18 National Readiness Assessments for Cross-border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific](#)

This workshop will present legal and technical readiness for paperless and cross-border paperless trade in Asia and the Pacific, based on initial readiness assessment studies conducted in 18 countries. The session will highlight key commonalities and divergences among countries, regions and country groupings of their advancement towards cross-border paperless trade, which could support identification of regional priorities and challenges. A country case conducting and utilizing readiness assessment will also be presented, as well as some recommendations for enhancing future readiness assessments.

*27 June 2023:* [Regional webinar on measuring illicit financial flows](#)

It will showcase success stories in the measurement of IFFs and share key lessons that are critical to regularizing the production of data on SDG 16.4.1 and how they can be applied and used in national policies. It will also provide a forum that will raise awareness on the upcoming activities of the DA15 project on illicit financial flows that will officially kick off in September 2023 with a seminar in Geneva.

*13 July 2023:* [Regional Conference for Logistics Service Providers](#)

The annual Conference provides an enabling platform for freight forwarders, multimodal transport operators and logistics service providers in Asia and the Pacific to share knowledge and experience, discuss emerging issues and promote the development of their services. The Conference will be held on 13 July 2023 in Danang, Viet Nam. The event will review the latest developments in freight forwarding, multimodal transport and logistics services in the region, and aim to identify and promote good practices and innovative solutions to shared challenges.

*24-27 July 2023:* [ESCAP Disaster Resilience Week](#)

The fourth ESCAP Disaster Resilience Week will be held from 24-27 July 2023 at the United Nations Conference Centre in Bangkok. The deliberations of the week will be guided by the Executive Action Plan of Early Warning for All 2023-2027 and the Sharm el-Sheikh Implementation Plan (paragraph 34 that urges Parties to adopt a transformational approach to enhancing adaptive capacity, strengthening resilience, and reducing vulnerability to climate change).

*25-27 July 2023:* [Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction, Eighth Session](#)

The eighth session of the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction will be held from 25 to 27 July 2023 As a subsidiary body of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction is the intergovernmental legislative forum on disaster risk reduction. The Committee is charged with addressing the following issues: (a) targeting transformative adaptation; (b) Building resilience to compounding and cascading risks and highlighting the Midterm Review of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-2030); (c) regional plan of action to achieve early warning for all by 2027 in Asia and the Pacific; and (d) status of regional co-operation efforts. The Committee session will take place during the ESCAP Disaster Resilience Week, which will be held from 24 to 27 July 2023.

**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

[Blog: Forging the right partnerships for climate-resilient infrastructure development in Asia and the Pacific \(26 May 2023\)](#)

[Exploring new horizons : Nepal's pilot in implementing data integration approaches \(23 May 2023\)](#)

[ESCAP Biweekly Newsletter \(22 May 2023\)](#)

[Strengthening regional cooperation for seamless and sustainable connectivity \(15 May 2023\)](#)

[Asia-Pacific sustainable development journal. Vol. 30, No. 1, May 2023 \(15 May 2023\)](#)

[Southeast Asia-North and Central Asia transport corridors to support strengthening transport connectivity between the two subregions \(12 May 2023\)](#)



[The future of employment in Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand : demographic and labour market trends of ageing societies in the context of the fourth industrial revolution \(11 May 2023\)](#)

[ESCAP Multi-Donor Trust Fund for Tsunami, Disaster and Climate Preparedness : 2022 annual report \(08 May 2023\)](#)

[ESCAP Biweekly Newsletter \(1 May 2023\)](#)

[Sign language, what is it? : an ESCAP guide towards legal recognition of sign languages in Asia and the Pacific \(28 April 2023\)](#)

[A practical guide : developing and revising policy documents on older persons in Asia and the Pacific \(25 April 2023\)](#)

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

Best regards,

ESBN Secretariat