



ESCAP Sustainable Business Network

ESBN Monthly Newsletter: May 2024

Asia-Pacific Green Deal for Business

The ESNB Executive Council adopted the Green Deal for Business at its 7th 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

3-7 June 2024: [Paperless Trade Week 2024](#)

The Paperless Trade Week 2024 will be held at the United Nations Conference Centre, Bangkok, Thailand from 3 to 7 June 2024. It will feature the third session of the Standing Committee of the Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific (CPTA) and the third session of Paperless Trade Council of CPTA. Furthermore, the secretariat of United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), in collaboration with partners, will organize a series of capacity building side events to complement Standing Committee and Paperless Trade Council sessions.

The registration form can be accessed through this [link](#) (Deadline: 30th May 2024).

The banner features a colorful horizontal bar at the top with various colored squares. Below it is the ESCAP logo (United Nations emblem and 'ESCAP Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific'). The main background is blue with a globe and various icons representing trade and technology. The text 'Paperless Trade Week 2024' is prominently displayed in white, followed by the dates '3-7 June 2024, 09.00-17.00 hrs. (UTC+7)'. A QR code is located in the bottom left corner with the text 'SCAN TO REGISTER' below it. In the bottom right corner, it says 'Hybrid Meetings, UNCC (CR 3, MR A, F, G), Bangkok'.

Recently concluded

4 April 2024: [Inaugural 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 will deliberate 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.

22-26 April 2024: [80th session of the Commission](#)

The eightieth session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) was organized from 22 to 26 April 2024 at the United Nations Conference Centre in Bangkok under the theme "Leveraging digital innovation for sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific. A number of ESNB members participated in the Commission Session. Dr. George Lam, Chair of the ESNB Executive Council, also made a [statement](#) at the Commission on 23 April, see: <https://webtv.un.org/en/asset/k1d/k1df8vxc4h> (time 3:15:09-3:19:16).

24 April 2024: [11th ESNB Executive Council Meeting](#)

The Executive Council of the ESCAP Sustainable Business Network (ESBN) met on 24 April in Bangkok. The meeting reviewed the progress of the ESNB Task Forces activities, and heard updates on the implementation of 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](#)

The Roundtable session gathered esteemed leaders of various backgrounds in the sustainability space in the APAC regions to dive into the intersection of green, finance, and technology to drive Corporate Sustainability. The session showcased the benefits of digital self-assessment and reporting frameworks, such as those led by UN Global Compact and its country Networks, and how these have led to improving sustainability performance, especially in SMEs. In addition, as a follow-up on the official launch one year ago, the session also showcased the actualisation of the ESNB 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.



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 the 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.

9 May 2024: [Regional Forum on Women's Entrepreneurship](#)

The Regional Forum will bring together representatives from relevant ministries of the Asia-Pacific countries, particularly those responsible for SME development, national banks and National Women’s Machineries. It will also include women entrepreneurs/ representatives from women entrepreneurs’ associations, relevant UN agencies, the private sector, and academic institutions working towards advancing women's entrepreneurship and economic empowerment.

23 May 2024: [The Landscape of B2C E-commerce Marketplaces in East Asia](#)

There is an urgent need for governments to step up their assistance to businesses, in particular MSMEs, to reap the benefits from the rapidly growing domestic and international ecommerce markets. However, there is a lack of timely data and national statistical capacity that allows for the monitoring of trends in both domestic and international e-commerce marketplaces and to better assess the supply and demand of domestic and cross-regional e-commerce. To fill this data gap, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the International Trade Center (ITC) and the Amsterdam University of Applied Science undertook a regional study to create a unique database mapping the traffic volumes and characteristics of a selection of Asian marketplaces. This seminar aims to promote discussion on regional e-commerce by presenting the results of the study to researchers, policymakers, e-commerce experts and private sector professionals.

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.

27-29 May 2024: [Unlocking and Future-Proofing Air Quality Management in Asia: Multi-stakeholder consultation workshop for improved multilateral and international cooperation on air pollution](#)

This workshop is jointly organized by UNEP, ESCAP, and the Acid Deposition Monitoring Network in East Asia (EANET) to support regional implementation of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) resolution on promoting regional cooperation on air pollution to improve air quality globally and support discussions to “unlock” and “future-proof” air quality management in the region. The workshop serves as EANET’s Regional Awareness Workshop in 2024 to inform its Participating Countries on the key challenges and emerging issues on air quality management and provide inputs to its Medium-Term Plan for 2026-2030. It also serves as an important opportunity for ESCAP to inform stakeholders about the development of an online Partnership and Coordination Platform for the Regional Action Programme on Air Pollution (RAPAP), map out activities of potential partners, and obtain feedback and suggestions on the Platform as a shared resource for information exchange and coordination, thus facilitating multilateral and international cooperation in support of RAPAP.

4 Jun 2024: [Workshop on advancing cross-border paperless trade: take advantage of the Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-Border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific](#)

The workshop is part of the Paperless Trade Week 2024 to be held at the United Nations Conference Centre, Bangkok, Thailand from 3 to 7 June 2024. Paperless Trade Week 2024 will feature the third session of the Standing Committee of the Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific (CPTA) and the third session of Paperless Trade Council of CPTA, as well as a series of capacity building side events organized by the secretariat of United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and its partners.

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

[Technical cooperation highlights 2022-2023 \(24 April 2024\)](#)

[Asia-Pacific sustainable development journal. Vol. 31, No. 1, May 2024 \(16 April 2024\)](#)

[Cross-border e-commerce for SME exports : opportunities, challenges and policy recommendations \(08 April 2024\)](#)

[Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2024: Boosting affordable and longer-term financing for Governments \(04 April 2024\)](#)

[ESCAP Multi-Donor Trust Fund for Tsunami, Disaster and Climate Preparedness : 2023 annual report \(03 April 2024\)](#)

[Advancing cross-border paperless of China : reviewing selected documents and exploring pilot projects \(02 April 2024\)](#)

[Advancing cross-border paperless of Mongolia : reviewing selected documents and exploring pilot projects \(02 April 2024\)](#)

[Advancing cross-border paperless of the Republic of Korea : reviewing selected documents and exploring pilot projects \(02 April 2024\)](#)

[Gender-responsive financing solutions for sustainable and resilient energy and food systems in Asia-Pacific \(01 April 2024\)](#)

[Asia-Pacific Countries with Special Needs Development Report 2024: Leveraging Digitalization for Productivity and Decent Employment \(01 April 2024\)](#)

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