

Policy Dialogue on Priorities for subregional cooperation for climate action and SDGs in South and South-West Asia

**18 May 2023
12:45 – 13:45 (Bangkok Time)**

**Hybrid
Venue: CR-4, Level 1, United Nations Conference Centre (UNCC), Bangkok**

Concept Note

Background

During the sixth South and South-West Asia Subregional Forum on SDGs (December 2022), one priority issue that was highlighted was Climate Action and the need for more sub-regional cooperation. The South and South-West Asia sub-region is already vulnerable to various climate shocks and this is expected to increase in frequency and intensity. Climate shocks often cross borders as rivers and eco-systems extend across countries and extreme weather events affect several countries at a time. A vicious cycle forms as the impact of climate-induced disasters (and other natural disasters) hinders SDG progress and squeezes the much-needed fiscal and capacity space for investments in SDGs and building climate resilience. Progress towards climate action (Goal 13) is regressing unequivocally worse than on any other goal.¹ Even though there have been some improvements toward SDG 13.1 (Resilient and adaptive capacity); Goal 13.2 (Climate change policies) has shown a regressing trend in 2022.

The breakthrough in COP27 to change the global financial architecture around climate change will need careful and persistent follow-up to be operational. Countries in the subregion, therefore, must push for stronger cooperation towards common goals and collaborative actions at sub-regional, regional and global levels. This side-event is a multi-stakeholder consultation to identify specific issues and opportunities for cooperation on Climate Action to fast-track implementation and progress on Goal 13.

The South and South-West Asia Network on SDGs (SANS) is a sub-regional network of thinktanks actively providing evidence-based policy advice and advocacy on SDGs in their respective countries and beyond. SANS collaborates with ESCAP in sub-regional platforms and initiatives. SANS members have worked together to examine common issues and opportunities for cooperation in the sub-region.

The policy dialogue will invite policy makers, parliamentarians, private sector, civil society, academia and development partners to explore ways of strengthening cooperation on Climate Action in the sub-region.

Objectives

The objectives of the meeting are to:

- 1) Identify priority areas and opportunities for climate action and subregional /regional cooperation; and

¹ Asia & Pacific SDG progress report, ESCAP, 2023

- 2) Identify the role of policymakers, parliamentarians, SANS and ESCAP in advancing climate action and subregional/regional cooperation.

Participants

1. Government officials
2. Parliamentarians
3. Experts, think tanks, civil society organizations, and private sector representatives
4. Representatives of the UN Country Teams, regional and subregional organizations

Organization

- This meeting will be held in English.

Programme	
Thursday, 18 May 2023	
12:45 – 12:50	<p>Welcome:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Mikiko Tanaka, Head, ESCAP South and South-West Asia office
12:50 – 13:05	<p>Priority areas for climate action in South and South-West Asia and areas of collaboration</p> <p>Moderator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Mikiko Tanaka, Head, ESCAP South and South-West Asia office <p>Presentation (5 minutes each):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prof. Nagesh Kumar, Director, Institute for Studies in Industrial Development (ISID), New Delhi, India • Dr. Abid Suleri, Executive Director, Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), Islamabad, Pakistan • Dr. Paras Kharel, Executive Director, South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics and Environment (SAWTEE), Kathmandu, Nepal
13:05-13:20	<p>Actions for regional cooperation on climate change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H.E. Ms Romina Khurshid Alam, Minister of State and Special Assistant to the Prime Minister and Convener, Parliamentary Taskforce on SDGs, Government of Pakistan
13:20-13:40	<p>Open Discussion</p>
13:40 –13:45	<p>Closing remarks and way forward</p> <p>Ms. Mikiko Tanaka, Head, ESCAP South and South-West Asia office</p>