



ESCAP Sustainable Business Network

ESCAP Sustainable Business Network – Monthly Update

Dear ESNB members,

We hope you are doing well and staying safe in this challenging period. We hope this monthly update will help you stay updated with ESCAP activities to plan your engagement and volunteer for opportunities. Please don't hesitate to get in touch with us to provide input, questions or suggestions for the monthly update: esbn@un.org.

COVID-19 - call for good practices and initiatives by ESNB members

We want to share stories of what our ESNB members are doing to mitigate the impact of the crisis on their supply chains and communities, to spread creative ideas and inspire action. We plan to share stories within the ESNB and through social media platforms. If you have positive stories to share, please send us a message at esbn@un.org with a copy to nilsesm@un.org

Recent ESNB activities

On 1 April 2020 the Digital Economy taskforce of the ESNB held a virtual discussion on the COVID crisis and its impact on SMEs. A short summary from the discussion is available at <https://esbn.unescap.org/events/digital-economy-task-force-virtual-meeting-covid-19-and-smes>.

ESBN members action in response to COVID-19

- ICC - Ms. Barbara Meynert, Senior Advisor, Fung Group shared that the Fung Group had initiated with ICC the ICC's Save our SMEs campaign (SOS), focusing on the breakdown in supply chains and the impact on SMEs, with six recommended actions, available at: <https://iccwbo.org/publication/call-to-action-to-save-our-smes> . ICC has also issued a corporate call to action for supply chain leadership, available at: <https://iccwbo.org/publication/corporate-call-to-action-supply-chain-leadership-during-covid-19/>.
- Pakistan - Ms. Fuad Hashimi, Executive Director of the Pakistan Business Council, Centre of Excellence in Responsible Business (CERB), and ESNB member, has shared two documents on the Pakistan Business Council's work in response to COVID-19: 1) [COVID Induced Economic Crisis: PBC's Call to Action.....to Sustain Employment & Ensure Business Continuity](#) and 2) [COVID-19 Crisis: PBC Members Response](#).
- USA – Mr. Xiaochen Zhang, Founding Partner, Fintech4Good, has informed that a FinTech4Good COVID19 Task Force was launched to address the pandemic: 1) They changed the focus of their Weekly show to the World Responsible Leaders Dialogue to feature COVID19 related policies,

solutions and good practices; 2) They launched a Network Economy Incubator to solicit and accelerate COVID19 solutions; 3) They build a PPEs Matching Program for cities and hospitals to sourcing critical medical supplies; 4) Their Digital Economy Institute created free offers on emerging technologies for people to take during social distancing.

Upcoming ESCAP events of interest to ESNB members

7 May 2020 (14.00-15.00 Bangkok time)

COVID-19: Opportunities for Resilient Recovery (webinar)

Organized jointly by ESCAP and UNDRR, this webinar will highlight lessons learned from past disaster recovery events, and consider how countries can start preparing for a recovery that is climate-sensitive, inclusive and contributes to global efforts to build more resilient systems that are better placed to prevent such crises in the future. <https://www.unescap.org/events/webinar-covid-19-opportunities-resilient-recovery> and <https://www.undrr.org/event/webinar-covid-19-opportunities-resilient-recovery>

12 May 2020 GC virtual academy (11.00-12.00 Bangkok time)

Perspectives from Asia-Pacific on Leadership in a Global Crisis

The impact of COVID-19 is likely to wipe out the progress made in poverty alleviation by South Asia and may widen the income inequalities with over a billion people in the region already in poverty. At this pivotal juncture in the fight against the pandemic, the role of responsible business in the Asia-Pacific region is critical to protecting the workforce and developing innovative solutions to ensure business continuity. Join us for a regional spotlight session as part of a special series from the UN Global Compact Academy highlighting new and existing approaches to leadership in a time of global crisis. In this session, you'll hear from leaders from the United Nations and business in the Asia-Pacific region as they share their experiences responding to COVID-19 and discuss how to pursue immediate and coordinated multi-stakeholder action in the region.

https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_qRNhSbGrQYeBHmEMewipNw

13 May 2020 (11.00-12.00 Bangkok time)

Virtual Regional Launch of ESCAP Theme study “Changing Sails: Accelerating Regional Action for Sustainable Oceans in Asia and the Pacific”

As the Theme study for the 76th Session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, this report examines three key areas – maritime connectivity, sustainable fisheries and marine plastic pollution – around which regional platforms can rally cross-sectoral solutions for the oceans.

<https://www.unescap.org/events/virtual-regional-launch-changing-sails>

13 May 2020 (15.00-16.30 Bangkok time)

The 2nd ESNB Augmenting Tsunami Monitoring Steering Committee Meeting (virtual via MS Teams)

While COVID 19 consumes our lives down to our daily routines in the ESCAP region, the threat of natural disasters does not diminish, calamities such as tsunami are not a matter of if but when. Given such, the 2nd Augmenting Tsunami Monitoring Steering Committee Meeting (virtual via MS Teams) will take place on 13 May 2020. The timing will be 15:00 to 16:30 BANGKOK time. The Steering Committee will share updates on the three strategies since the [Roundtable in Singapore](#) this past August (ships, drilling platforms and undersea cables) as well as moving ahead with a High-level Follow-up Meeting in Jakarta at the end of 2020 (if conditions improve).

<https://esbn.unescap.org/events/2nd-esbn-augmenting-tsunami-monitoring-steering-committee-meeting>

15 May (13.00-16.45 Bangkok time)

Executive Council of the ESNB, 3rd meeting (virtual, only Executive Council members)

The third meeting of the Executive Council of the ESCAP Sustainable Business Network (ESBN) will be held on 15 May 2020 through video-conference. The meeting will discuss strategies and potential ESNB action in the coming years, including in relation to the impact of the current COVID-19 crisis on SMEs, as well as potential action for reducing marine pollution and ensuring healthy oceans.

<https://esbn.unescap.org/events/executive-council-escap-sustainable-business-network-esbn-3rd-meeting>

20 May 2020

Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development

Webcast will be available at: <https://www.unescap.org/apfsd/7/>

To register: <https://meetings.unescap.org/events/apfsd2020/>

21 May 2020

ESCAP 76th Commission Session

Webcast at: <https://www.unescap.org/commission/76/webcast>

For more info, see: <https://www.unescap.org/commission/76/>

9-11 June 2020 (10.00-16.30 Bangkok time daily + side-events on 12 June)

United Nations Virtual Forum on Responsible Business and Human Rights (virtual)

Organized by ESCAP, UNDP, ILO, UNICEF, UN Women and the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights, the forum will for the first time be held fully virtually. The Forum aims to assess the drivers for and challenges in promoting responsible business conduct in Asia and the Pacific, especially as the region is entering the COVID-19 recovery phase, share best practices by business, and explore how governments and business can collaborate on post-COVID-19 recovery, building back stronger, more sustainable, more resilient and with a focus on responsible business practices.

<https://www.rbhrforum.com/>

Other events of interest to ESNB members

19 May 2020

COVID-19 and RBC

As part of the OECD Global Forum on Responsible Business Conduct, this event will focus on how governments and businesses can use an RBC approach to address the COVID-19 crisis and build more resilient supply chains.

<https://mneguidelines.oecd.org/global-forum/>

15-16 June 2020 (virtual, round the clock)

Global Compact Leader's Summit

This year's Global Compact Leader's Summit will virtually convene leading voices from the UN, Government, Business and Academia to kick-start a global conversation about how we rebuild more inclusive economies and societies - to set a new course for a socially just, low-carbon and climate resilient world, where no one is left behind. United, we will recover better, recover stronger, and recover together. Participation in the Virtual Summit is complimentary for UN Global Compact

Participants, Signatories, Government Officials, and United Nations Representatives. For Non Business and Non Global Compact members the fee for the Virtual Summit is \$99 USD.

<https://registration.unglobalcompact.org/website/12559/agenda/>

Recently published by ESCAP

The Impact and Policy Responses for COVID-19 in Asia and the Pacific (26 March 2020)

This policy note summarizes the key impacts of COVID-19 in the Asia-Pacific region and suggests short- and medium-term recommendations for consideration by member States to shape responses for a sustainable future. <https://www.unescap.org/resources/impact-and-policy-responses-covid-19-asia-and-pacific>

Earth Day: Learn how to take climate action in your workplace! (22 April 2020)

This webinar shared best practices and provide guidance on how to get started on climate action in the workplace, and what main operational areas to target. The aim is to help workplaces step up their commitment to curb their carbon footprint and take action by providing tools and tips. Presentation available at: <https://www.unescap.org/events/earth-day-learn-how-take-climate-action-your-workplace>

Outward Foreign Direct Investment and Home Country Sustainable Development, Studies in Trade, Investment and Innovation No. 93 (20 April 2020)

This study explores the potential of outward foreign direct investment (OFDI) to stimulate sustainable development outcomes in home economies in the Asia and Pacific region. It provides an overview of the OFDI trends in the Asia-Pacific region; conceptually links OFDI home country effects with the Sustainable Development Goals; empirically assesses the existence of home country effects in selected Asia-Pacific countries; outlines a non-exhaustive list of home country measures, i.e. policy measures and institutional arrangements, that home countries can put in place to leverage OFDI for their respective country's sustainable development; and provides a case study analysis of the home country measures currently in place and planned in three developing countries in the ASEAN subregion.

<https://www.unescap.org/publications/studies-trade-investment-and-innovation-no-93-outward-foreign-direct-investment-and>

Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2020 (8 April 2020)

The longest running UN publication on the region's progress, this year's edition of the Survey proposes a transition towards cleaner production, and less material-intensive lifestyles, supported by enabling policies. It further calls for all stakeholders, notably Governments, businesses and consumers, to urgently align their own goals and actions with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Publication: <https://www.unescap.org/publications/economic-and-social-survey-asia-and-pacific-2020>

Launch event: <https://www.unescap.org/events/survey-2020> (webcast)

Asia and the Pacific SDG Progress Report 2020 (25 March 2020)

This report analyses trends as well as data availability for monitoring progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Asia and the Pacific.

Publication: <https://www.unescap.org/publications/asia-and-pacific-sdg-progress-report-2020>

Launch event: <https://www.unescap.org/events/SDG-Progress-Report-Launch-2020> (webcast)

Selected issues in cross-border e-commerce development in Asia and the Pacific, Studies in Trade, Investment and Innovation No. 91 (31 December 2019)

This report focuses on a few selected issues related to the development of cross-border e-commerce include governance from the national to the multilateral level; logistics; and de minimis values.

<https://www.unescap.org/publications/studies-trade-investment-and-innovation-no-91-selected-issues-cross-border-e-commerce>

Best regards,

ESBN Secretariat