



DESA



Global Policy Dialogue Series

Version 27 April 2021

Imagining the Carbon-neutral Future: Transformations in Energy and Transport

Building a Global Coalition for Sustainability after COVID-19 *Session 2 of the UN DESA Global Policy Dialogues for Climate Action*

Wednesday, 28 April 2021, 8:30-10:00 a.m. EDT

Background

In line with the United Nations Secretary-General's priority to build a "global coalition for carbon neutrality,"¹ the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs is hosting a four-part series to discuss ways the world can place climate action at the heart of recovering better from the COVID-19 crisis. The series showcases key areas that the Department has been supporting to achieve the shared goals of the Paris Agreement on climate change and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In monthly sessions, which addressed food and water (March), and now focusing on energy and transport (April), with forests and the ocean forthcoming (May), as well as climate financing and digital solutions (June), the series is bringing together leading voices in these fields with DESA's own experts, to make the connections between these issues and discuss practical solutions.

The second session, organized with the support of UN-Energy and UN-Habitat, will bring together leading voices in the fields of clean energy and sustainable transport with experts from the UN system to discuss practical solutions and ways to reform these systems minimizing their effect on the environment, in the context of recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic. Cross-cutting issues such as financing, governance, gender, data and statistics will be part of the discussion, as well as how the world can best make systemic transformations to a more sustainable world while leaving no one behind.

Additionally, the event will support the upcoming UN High-level Dialogue on Energy (New York, September 2021), the UN Sustainable Transport Conference (Beijing, 2021, exact date tbc), and UN Climate Change Conference (Glasgow, November 2021), and the Department's upcoming

¹ <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2021-01-11/secretary-generals-remarks-the-one-planet-summit-bilingual-delivered-scroll-down-for-all-english>

policy briefs related to climate action, such as SDG-climate synergies, energy, and sustainable transport in the context of COVID-19. It will also build on DESA’s recent publication “Managing Infrastructure Assets for Sustainable Development”²

To enhance engagement, participants will be invited to submit questions online at the time of registration and in the webinar and Facebook chat during the event. The results of the discussion will be shared with UN leadership and be used to support future UN DESA policy briefs on the economic and social impacts of the pandemic, pandemic recovery, and the Department’s support to the Decade of Action.

Date and time

This session, the second of four dialogues in the series, will be held on Wednesday, 28 April 2021, from 8:30-10:00 a.m. EST.

Location

The events will be held on UN DESA’s Zoom account and streamed to UN DESA’s [Facebook channel](#). Events will be held in English with live captioning available in six UN languages.

Moderator

A leading climate journalist, Jeremy Lovell, former environment editor for Reuters, will moderate the event.

Event format

(all participants tbc)

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| I. | <u>Welcome</u>
Moderator | (2 minutes) |
| II. | <u>Introductory remarks</u>
Ms. Maimunah Mohd Sharif , Executive Director, UN-Habitat | (5 minutes) |
| III. | <u>Discussion 1: Smart Policies for Enabling Energy Alternatives</u> | (35 minutes) |

Suggested panelists:

- **Mr. Xiangkun (Elvis) Cao (China)**, Micro and nanoscale engineer, and finalist in the 2021 SEforALL Youth Summit “Troubleshooting for SDG 7” innovation competition

² <https://www.un.org/development/desa/financing/document/un-handbook-infrastructure-asset-management>

- **Mr. Adekoyejo Kuye (Nigeria)**, project lead, Manamuz Electric LTD, winner of the 2021 SEforALL Youth Summit “Troubleshooting for SDG 7” innovation competition
- **Ms. Bahareh Seyedi**, Senior Sustainable Development Officer, UN DESA
- **Mr. Kandeh Yumkella (Sierra Leone)**, former chair of UN-Energy and former Director-General of UNIDO

Guiding questions:

- How can we accelerate a global transition to clean energy, while ensuring universal energy access, especially in least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States? What policies should Governments undertake?
- What are some of the necessary means and tools to ensure policies are put into practice and deliver our promises of the Paris Agreement? (e.g. finance, investment, new technologies, capacity building and quality data)
- How do we ensure that the energy transition is inclusive and equitable for women?

IV. Keynote remarks (5 minutes)

Ms. Kristen Siemen (USA), Vice President of Sustainable Workplaces and Chief Sustainability Officer, General Motors

V. Discussion 2: Sustainable and Resilient Approaches for Moving People and Goods (35 minutes)

Suggested panelists:

- **Mr. Arturo Steinworth Alvares (Costa Rica)**, Partnership on Sustainable, Low Carbon Transport (SLOCAT)
- **Ms. Stefanie Holzwarth**, Mobility Expert, UN-Habitat
- **Mr. Daniel Platz**, Economic Affairs Officer, Financing for Sustainable Development Office, UN DESA, co-author of the Managing Infrastructure Assets report
- **Ms. Kalpana Viswanath (India)**, Co-founder and CEO of Safetipin, a social enterprise which uses technology and apps to collect data for the safe movement of women in urban spaces

Guiding questions:

- What are ways in which we can ensure structural transformation of transport infrastructure and services that ensures they are more inclusive and resilient, while alleviating negative environmental impacts?
- How should we reinvest in and revitalize older transportation systems to make them greener and more relevant to the needs of people today?
- Are there specific challenges or opportunities towards achieving these, resulting from the experience with COVID-19?

VI. **Closing remarks**

Ms. Damilola Ogunbiyi, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Sustainable Energy for All

VII. **Conclusion**

Moderator