



Asia-Pacific Business Forum (APBF) 2018

Harnessing Business to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals
through Technology, Innovation and Financing

Cyberport, Hong Kong, China, 10-11 April 2018

Overview and objectives:

The Asia-Pacific Business Forum 2018 aims to identify how business engagement in achieving inclusive and sustainable development in the Asia-Pacific region can be strengthened. Specifically, the Forum will discuss how private sector-led innovation, technology and financing can enhance efforts towards achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and associated Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The transformative power of technology and innovation can support concrete actions towards realizing the aspirations of the SDGs. The private sector is at the core of developing affordable technology and innovation. With its cross-cutting, multi-sectoral and multidisciplinary approaches, technology and innovation are powerful means of implementation of the sustainable development agenda.

Improving access to financing is one area where technology and innovation can make a significant contribution through the development of alternative business models and utilizing the power of the Internet. The Asia-Pacific region has a high-level of unbanked people, with many of them women. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) account for most of all enterprises, yet receive a low level of total bank lending. Financial inclusion is crucial to advance the 2030 Agenda forward. Technology and innovation, coupled with financing services could offer leapfrog solutions for both business and people in need. For example, micro-finance and social investment establishments that offer basic financial services and FinTech companies that are leveraging information technology to enhance access to finance to those that currently rely on informal markets would contribute to more business, employment, income generation and, hence, less poverty.

The Asia-Pacific Business Forum 2018, jointly organised by ESCAP and the Cyberport, with the support from the Innovation and Technology Bureau of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, and in cooperation with the ESCAP Sustainable Business Network (ESBN), will be held on 10 and 11 April 2018 in Hong Kong, China which is at the cutting edge of developing digital solutions and alternative business models for sustainable development. The Forum will witness the participation of multi-stakeholders, in particular governments, business, civil society and academics from all over the region to foster dialogue and identify innovative solutions to address the challenges and utilize the opportunities for business in realizing and achieving the SDGs.



TENTATIVE PROGRAMME

Tuesday, 10 Apr	
09:00-10:30	Inaugural Session Keynote speeches Leaders from Technology, Business and Finance to articulate how economies and societies are transforming towards more sustainable model of development
11:00-12:30	Plenary Session 1 Responsible investment: how can governments and business work together to scale up sustainable investing
14:00-15:30	Plenary session 2 Fintech: Unleashing a sustainable development revolution <i>Presentation of Conference Special Publication</i>
15:30-17:00	Plenary session 3 The Artificial Intelligence Revolution: implications for work and society
17:00-20:00	Gala Dinner with Cultural Performance

Wednesday, 11 April			
09:00-10:30	Special Session: Digital Silk Road Fostering regional cooperation in technology and finance for the Belt and Road Initiative		
10:30-11:30	Economic outlook and key policy challenges in emerging Asia <i>Presentation on Economic Outlook for Southeast Asia, China and India 2018 by OECD</i>		
11:30-13:00	<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;"> Parallel session 1 Impact entrepreneurship – leapfrogging into the innovative future and nurturing AP-based entrepreneurial ecosystems </td> <td style="width: 50%;"> Parallel session 2 Business innovations in disaster risk reduction </td> </tr> </table>	Parallel session 1 Impact entrepreneurship – leapfrogging into the innovative future and nurturing AP-based entrepreneurial ecosystems	Parallel session 2 Business innovations in disaster risk reduction
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14:30-16:00	<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;"> Parallel session 3 Enhancing social inclusion through disruptive innovations </td> <td style="width: 50%;"> Parallel session 4 How can “Smart Energy” support sustainable development </td> </tr> </table>	Parallel session 3 Enhancing social inclusion through disruptive innovations	Parallel session 4 How can “Smart Energy” support sustainable development
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16:00-17:00	Reports of the parallel sessions Closing Session Way Forward: adopting the APBF 2018 resolution: Technology, innovation and finance for sustainable development		