



Fifteenth South Asia Economic Summit (SAES XV) Unleashing an equitable green transformation in South Asia

Kathmandu | 11-13 December 2024

Parallel session: Technology and innovation for an equitable green transformation

Date: 13 December 2024 Time: 14:00-15:45

South Asia, a region facing rapid urbanization, environmental degradation, and economic inequality, stands to benefit significantly from technology and innovation in achieving an equitable green transformation. This transition is crucial for improving environmental conditions and reducing socioeconomic inequalities. By prioritizing clean energy, sustainable agriculture, and digital access, South Asia can move towards a low-carbon and resilient future.

Renewable energy is one of the most impactful sectors for this transformation. Decentralized solar grids and affordable solar panels could bring electricity to remote communities often overlooked by conventional power infrastructure. Additionally, wind energy and hydropower can help diversification of clean energy. Investment in these areas can create jobs, stimulate local economies, and lower greenhouse gas emissions, fostering both environmental and economic benefits.

Agriculture, a backbone of the South Asian economy, is also ripe for transformation. Technologies like precision farming, climate-resilient crop varieties, drought-resistant seeds, and efficient irrigation techniques can enhance productivity despite challenging climate conditions. Digital platforms and mobile technologies can further empower farmers, even in remote areas, by providing access to market data, resources, and climate-resilient farming practices.

In South Asia's densely populated cities, the risk of pollution and resource strain is high. Innovations in waste-to-energy, smart transportation, and efficient water management offer sustainable solutions for managing urban growth. To make the green transformation equitable, policies must prioritize inclusivity. Digital education, skill-building programmes, and access to affordable green technologies are essential for involving marginalized communities. Gender-inclusive policies are also key, particularly for women who are disproportionately affected by climate change. Regional cooperation among South Asian countries can strengthen collective efforts toward sustainable development. Collaborative research, shared technologies, and knowledge exchange can address common challenges, enabling long-term sustainable development.

The issues and questions for discussion this session include:

- What are the economic, regulatory and institutional barriers impeding green transformation in South Asia through the use of technology and innovation?

FIFTEENTH SOUTH ASIA ECONOMIC SUMMIT (SAES XV): UNLEASHING AN EQUITABLE GREEN TRANSFORMATION IN SOUTH ASIA

Parallel session: Technology and innovation for an equitable green transformation

- How can the policy ecosystem in South Asia support and ensure inclusivity in the region's green transformation?
- How can regional cooperation help catalyze green transformation through the channels of shared technologies and knowledge exchange? Are intellectual property rights a barrier in this regard?
- How should policymakers address the distributional impact of green transformation via the use of technology and innovation so that those adversely impacted are adequately compensated?
- How should the education and training systems be updated so that future labour market demands, in view of green transformation, are met?