

HL Panel discussion at COP 25, Madrid

“Climate resilient transport infrastructure for sustainable trade, tourism and development in SIDS”

co-organized by UNCTAD and UNEP

(with support of Germany, in collaboration with the OECS Commission, Commonwealth Secretariat, UNFCCC and ISO)

Tuesday 10 December 18:30-20:00 Room 5

Seaports and coastal airports are critical infrastructure assets that serve as catalysts of trade, economic growth and development. For SIDS, ports and coastal airports are lifelines for external trade, food and energy security, and tourism, often one of the main drivers of economic development and prosperity, as well as in the context of DRR. Compelling scientific studies (IPCC, 2014; IPCC, 2018) project that climate change will increase the hydro-meteorological hazards for the coastal transport infrastructure of SIDS, with potentially significant socio-economic consequences. Climate-related extreme events affecting coastal transport infrastructure, trade and tourism are also likely to exacerbate existing challenges, making resilience-building and effective adaptation action an urgent imperative. Trade is dependent on well-functioning and climate-resilient transport infrastructure assets. At the same time, trade can help create climate, economic and social resilience by promoting Environmentally Sound Technologies, interconnectivity, diversified production, enhanced productivity and adding value to exports. Building resilience for and through trade needs to be part of the solutions to the climate crisis. Coastal hazards for SIDS critical transport infrastructure are projected to increase significantly in the 2030s (IPCC 2018), when the 1.5 degrees warming level is likely to be reached. UNEP’s Emissions Gap Report has made clear that we are in a climate emergency and cannot afford to waste a single day. The world is looking to the Climate COP 25 in Madrid for leadership and decisions that answers the scale of the crisis made clear by the science. Against this background, the panel discussion provides a unique opportunity to highlight the important nexus between climate, transport, trade, and tourism and to propose concrete actionable measures to address the challenges SIDS face.

Speakers:

- Gonzalo Muñoz, High-Level Champion of Chile for COP 25 (opening remarks)
- Inger Andersen, Executive Director, UNEP (opening remarks)
- Hon Simon Stiehl, Minister for Climate Resilience, the Environment, Forestry, Fisheries, Disaster Management & Information, Grenada
- Rt Hon Patricia Scotland QC, Secretary-General, Commonwealth Secretariat
- Ambassador Peter Thomson, UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Ocean
- Isabelle Durant, Deputy Secretary-General, UNCTAD
- Youssef Nassef, Director, UNFCCC Adaptation Programme

Moderator: Dr Koko Warner, Manager, Impacts, Vulnerability and Risk, UNFCCC

Expected outcomes:

- Raise awareness of the important nexus between climate resilient transport infrastructure, sustainable trade, tourism and development in SIDS
- Identify the specific needs for SIDS as related to improve transport infrastructure for trade and tourism in the face of climate change and how trade can better promote climate resilience
- Propose policy recommendations and a plan to catalyze actions and new partnerships