Monday, 12 May

10 a.m.–1 p.m.

Opening plenary
Ms. Rebeca Grynspan, Secretary-General, UNCTAD

Programme item: Opening remarks

Mr. Torbjörn Fredriksson, Head, E-Commerce and Digital Economy Branch, Division of Technology and Logistics, UNCTAD

Programme item: Presentation of background document

Keynotes

Mr. Marcel J. Dorsch, Senior Expert Digital Change and Sustainability Transformation, German Environment Agency

Marcel J. Dorsch works at the interface of science and politics, mainly on conceptual and practical problems of global sustainability policy. Since 2021, he has been a senior researcher at the President's department of the German Environmental Agency (UBA) focusing on strategic priorities for a sustainable digital age. In this capacity, he is UBA's focal point for the Coalition for Digital Environmental Sustainability (CODES) as well as co-coordinator and co-author of the new CODES Action Plan for a Sustainable Planet in the Digital Age. Previously, Mr. Dorsch was the global governance researcher at the German Advisory Council on Global Change (WBGU) and co-author of the WBGU expert reports (incl. WBGU, 2019: Towards Our Common Digital Future). He worked at the Mercator Research Institute on Global Commons and Climate Change and holds a PhD for a thesis on polycentric sustainability governance at the Technical University Berlin.

Ms. Paz Peña, independent researcher focused on technology, and social justice, author of "Technology for a burning planet"

Paz Peña is a consultant and author with over 15 years of experience in the intersection of technologies, social justice, and gender. Her expertise includes cybersecurity, digital security, human rights and the environment. She has worked with international organizations like the Association for Progressive Communications and the Chilean Cybersecurity Coordination Unit, integrating gender approaches into cybersecurity policies. She also teaches Cybersecurity and Gender at the University of Chile.

Her recent work explores the socio-environmental impacts of digital technologies in Latin America. She founded the Latin American Institute of Terraforming to explore technology's relationship with the ecological crisis from a feminist perspective, and in 2025 she is a Mozilla Senior Fellow conducting research on the environmental impacts of data centers for artificial intelligence in Latin America. She authored the book "Tecnologías para un planeta en llamas". She holds degrees in social communication and gender studies.

3–6 p.m. **Session 1: Production phase of the digitalization lifecycle: transition minerals, trade and development**

Mr. Alejandro González, Senior Researcher, Climate Justice team, Centre for Research on Multinational Corporations (SOMO)

Alejandro González is a senior researcher and advocate in SOMO's Climate Justice team, focusing on critical minerals, the energy transition, and corporate accountability. He has broad experience investigating supply chains across industries, such as mining, batteries, automobiles, consumer electronics, and renewables.

Mr. González is a human rights lawyer with experience working in Mexico, the Netherlands, Tanzania, Argentina, and Colombia. His background includes roles in non-profit organizations, law and accounting firms, and as a human rights protection officer in high-risk countries. He holds an LL.M. in International and Comparative Private Law from the University of Groningen and a law degree from the University of Monterrey.

Mr. Papa Daouda Diene, Senior Economic Analyst for Francophone Africa, Natural Resource Governance Institute

Papa Daouda Diene is a senior economic analyst at the Natural Resource Government Institute, based in Dakar. He supports NRGI's research and analytical work in francophone Africa as well as the implementation of NRGI's Africa regional strategy. He has worked on topics including revenue management, energy transition, tax and financial modeling and licensing. He is part of NRGI's sub -Saharan Africa and legal and economic teams.

Previously, Mr. Diene worked for the Institutional Support Project for Resource Mobilization and Investment Attractiveness of the Africa Development Bank. He also held roles at the Research Institute for Development and the Senegalese Department of Taxes and Domains. As a consultant, he supported the strategic planning for several organizations in Senegal.

He holds an M.Sc. in economics and statistics from ENSAE-Senegal with a specialization in public policy impact assessment.

Ms. Vovia Witni, Community Development, CSR and Artisanal Small-scale Gold Mining Specialist, Levin Sources
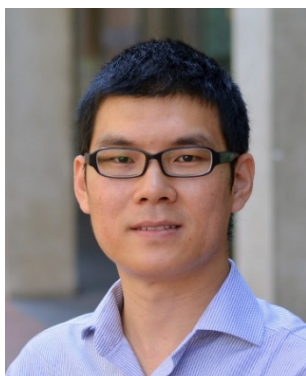
Vovia Witni is currently pursuing a Master of Public Administration degree and has 19 years of professional work experience in the fields of community empowerment, responsible mining and social mapping. For the past 9 years, Witni has also been actively conducting gender mapping as well as researching and writing publications on artisanal small-scale gold mining and critical mineral mining in various regions in Indonesia.

Currently, Witni is leading the Community Development Team at a mining company in West Nusa Tenggara Province. For the past year, Witni has also been an associate for Indonesia at the Levin Source.

Tuesday, 13 May

10 a.m.–1 p.m.   **Session 2: Use phase: data centres and artificial intelligence**

Mr. Shaolei Ren, Associate Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering, University of California, Riverside

Shaolei Ren is an Associate Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering at the University of California, Riverside. His research broadly focuses on AI, energy, and public health. His work has generated societal impacts, shaping AI policies adopted by international organizations such as UNESCO and WHO. Additionally, his research has driven industry innovations, including the development of the first real-time water footprint reporting tool for computing. He is a recipient of the NSF CAREER Award (2015) and several paper awards, including at ACM e-Energy (2024, 2016) and IEEE ICC (2016). He received his Ph.D. from the University of California, Los Angeles.

Mr. Sebastian Lehuedé, Assistant Professor in Ethics, AI & Society, King's College London

Mr. Lehuedé's research focuses on the governance of digital technologies from a global social justice perspective. His current project, AI's Nature, explores the connection between artificial intelligence and environmental justice, with fieldwork involving urban, peasant and Indigenous communities in Chile and Colombia on issues such as a data centre project, lithium extraction and AI-centred conservationist initiatives.

Mr. Lehuedé is a member of the International Panel on the Information Environment and has been a fellow at the University of Cambridge and Harvard University. He received the 2022 Dissertation Award from the Association of Internet Researchers for his research on the governance of astronomy data in Chile.

Mr. Marco Zennaro, Coordinator, Science, Technology and Innovation Unit, Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP) and TinyML4D Chair and Academic Network Co-Chair

Marco Zennaro coordinates the Science, Technology and Innovation Unit at the Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP) in Italy. His research focuses on ICT for Development (ICT4D), with a specific focus on IoT, wireless sensor networks, and their applications in developing countries.

He has organized workshops in over 30 countries and has been the Focal Point for the ITU Centre of Excellence in IoT, Big Data, and Statistics. He has been a Staff Associate of the African Centre of Excellence in Internet of Things at the University of Rwanda since its inception, he was nominated Sensemaking Senior Research Fellow of the MIT International Development Initiative and has been a member of the UNESCO Chair in ICT4D. He holds a PhD from KTH - the Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm, Sweden, and is a Visiting Professor at Kobe Institute of Computing (KIC) in Kobe, Japan.

Ms. Angela Müller, Executive Director of AlgorithmWatch CH in Zurich and Executive Board Member of AlgorithmWatch in Berlin

Angela Müller is Executive Director of AlgorithmWatch CH and Executive Board Member of AlgorithmWatch in Berlin. She previously led the organization's policy team and has testified as an expert before the Council of Europe, the German Bundestag and the Swiss Parliament. Recognized as one of "100 Women in AI Ethics" worldwide in 2024, Ms. Müller is a member of expert working groups of the Swiss Federal Administration and serves on the Federal Media Commission. Previously, she was a visiting researcher at Columbia University, New York, and Hebrew University, Jerusalem, and held positions at different universities, for an innovation platform, a civil society think tank on foreign policy, and Swiss Foreign Ministry. She holds a PhD in Law from the University of Zurich, where her research focused on the cross-border applicability of human rights law in the context of globalization and new technologies.

3–6 p.m.	**Session 3: End of life? Digitalization-related waste and circular digital economy**

Ms. Vanessa Forti, Associate Programme Officer, UNITAR – Sustainable Cycles (SCYCLE) Programme

Vanessa Forti is an environmental engineer and Associate Programme Officer at UNITAR-SCYCLE. She has several years of international experience in waste quantification at global level, waste management, resource efficiency and assessing environmental impacts associated to hazardous chemicals. She is the author of various publications on quantifying e-waste amounts and environmental impacts, such as the 2020 and the 2024 edition of the Global E-waste Monitor, and the globally recognized E-waste Statistics Guidelines on classification, reporting and indicators. Ms. Forti has an in-depth expertise in developing methodologies, surveying, modelling, and reporting on waste statistics (e-waste, mercury, and battery waste). She is active in capacity-building workshops on e-waste statistics, legislations and e-waste

management for governments and has managed several projects for various European Institutions. Her work supports international harmonization of e-waste data and policies, including management tools used globally.

Mr. Syed Iftikhar H. Shah, Director of Digital Research, Digital Cooperation Organization

Syed Iftikhar H. Shah leads digital research and innovation initiatives, collaborating with diverse partners to propel the sustainable growth of the digital economy. With over two decades of expertise in digital research, policy formulation – covering emerging technologies (e.g. AI), government big data, sustainability, e-waste, and digital transformation initiatives – he has traversed both public and private sectors. Mr. Syed's repertoire includes pioneering work in government big data, AI, generative AI, development of ICT sustainability toolkits, co-designing e-waste management frameworks, crafting data policies, guidelines, and strategies on emerging digital economies areas, including AI, sustainability, online misinformation, generating comprehensive digital trend reports, and executing transformative digital projects. His academic journey, culminating in a Ph.D., focused on the government big data ecosystem from the esteemed European institution 'IHU', has been marked by numerous scientific publications on emerging technological domains, including digital government and misinformation. Additionally, he has served as Director of IT, Executive Director of the PK – Digital Government Directorate, and Managing Director of the Pakistan Software Export Board (PSEB) within the Ministry of Information Technology, Pakistan.

Mr. Xavier Vence, Professor, University of Santiago de Compostela

Xavier Vence is Professor of Applied Economics at the University of Santiago de Compostela and coordinator of the ICEDE Research Group and the USC Master's Degree in Economic Development and Innovation. His research focuses on circular economy, economic change, innovations systems and their territorial dimension, and strategic innovation policies. During the last decade, he has focused on the circular economy (eco-innovation, servicing, circular business models) and policies for circular economy and sustainability. He participated in many European research projects, including Horizon2020. Mr. Vence has advised the Galician Government, the Spanish Ministry of Industry and the European Commission's DG Regio.

Wednesday, 14 May

10 a.m.–1 p.m.

Session 5: Towards a holistic, international policy approach for making digitalization work for inclusive and sustainable development

Ms. Pilar Fajarnés-Garcés, Economic Affairs Officer, UNCTAD

Pilar Fajarnes is Economic Affairs Officer in the Digital Economy Policy Research Section at the E-commerce and Digital Economy Branch of the Division on Technology and Logistics (DTL) at the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). She is also the lead author of the UNCTAD Digital Economy Report.
Previously, she worked at the Division on Globalization and Development Strategies, as one of the main authors of the UNCTAD Trade and Development Report, between 2003 and 2016, and at the Commodities Branch, Division of Trade, between 2000 and 2003.
Before joining UNCTAD, Ms. Fajarnés worked as a trade analyst in the Spanish public and private sectors and held a research post at the University of Zaragoza. She holds an MA in Development Economics from the University of Kent.

Mr. David Jensen, Regional Coordinator for Europe and North America, Digital Transformation subrogramme, United Nations Environment Programme

David Jensen is the regional coordinator of Digital Transformations programme at the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) covering Europe and North America. In this capacity, he is responsible for co-implementing the new digital transformation strategy and for scaling up the use of digital technologies to accelerate action in addressing climate action, nature protection and pollution prevention.

Mr. Steffen Lange, Senior Researcher, Pluralist Economics, University of Siegen

Steffen Lange is senior researcher and coordinator of the Master Pluralist Economics at the University of Siegen. He is also research fellow at the German Institute for Interdisciplinary Social Policy Research, affiliated scholar of the Resource Economics Group at the Humboldt University Berlin, board member of the NGO 'Common Future' and represents Germany at the European Society for Ecological Economics. Previously he was a researcher at the Technical University Berlin, the University of Münster and the Institute for Ecological Economy Research. He holds a PhD from the University of Hamburg.
He investigates the characteristics of socially and environmentally sustainable economies and how transitions to new, sustainable economies can be organized, including research on green growth, degrowth and growth independence, digital transformation and plural economics for a deep sustainability transformation. He is a frequent public speaker and collaborates closely with policy and civil society to not only investigate sustainable economies but put them into being.