



Opening green windows: Technological opportunities for a low-carbon world

The role of green industrial policies

05 June 2023 (1:30 p. m. – 3 p. m. BST, 2:30 p. m. – 4 p. m. CEST)

Concept note

Objective

This webinar co-organized by UNCTAD and SOAS University of London will present UNCTAD's Technology and Innovation Report 2023, followed by a panel discussion by experts. The discussion will focus on the economic development potential related to green technologies and the role of green industrial policies to foster their growth and cover the gap between developed and developing economies. The event will serve as a platform for peer learning and awareness raising of policy options to harness the frontier technologies to achieve the dual goal of economic growth and environmental sustainability.

Background

The world is facing pressing social and economic challenges of unprecedented nature. The COVID-19 pandemic coupled with the war in Ukraine has triggered social and economic crises by disrupting supply chains, trade flows, and food and energy security. Hovering over this conjuncture is the climate crisis. As of 2023, carbon emissions are at a record high, reflecting historical growth patterns sourced by fossil fuels and a lack of political will to transition towards renewable energies. Governments are facing complex trade-offs between promoting inclusive economic growth and mitigating climate change.

Green technologies offer transformative solutions to achieve this dual goal. They are usually associated with renewable energy technologies but also include the strategic use of traditional and new digital technologies like blockchain, artificial intelligence, and the Internet of Things. They enable cleaner and more efficient production, thus creating a synergy between economic development and climate change mitigation.

Green transformation and related frontier technologies offer a route for developing countries to upgrade their productive capabilities and advance their catching-up process. However, in order to achieve that, countries need to implement strong governmental efforts targeting green the development of green industries.

Technology and Innovation Report 2023

UNCTAD's [Technology and Innovation Report 2023 "Opening green windows: Technological opportunities for a low-carbon world"](#) analyses the opportunities presented by the green transition and the technologies linked to it. By unleashing green innovations, countries can have access to 'green windows of opportunity' for not only building resilience and climate change mitigation mechanisms but also for spurring economic

growth and technological development. These opportunities can particularly support developing countries to “leap” out of the cascade of crises and move forward.

The Report has three key messages. Firstly, developing countries must strategically position themselves to catch the green technological revolution early. Secondly, the international community needs to step up in gathering enough resources and building the required know-how to support developing countries to take advantage of the green windows of opportunity. Lastly, agency and urgency are pivotal in the fight against climate change and inequalities – if we all share the same problem, then we must also share the same tools to solve it.

Format

The UNCTAD-SOAS webinar is part of a set of events conducted to disseminate the findings of the Technology and Innovation Report 2023 to a broader audience comprised of policymakers, international organisations, academia, and other stakeholders. It is an open event, that will be disseminated by UNCTAD and SOAS University of London.

The event will be comprised of a brief introduction of the Technology and Innovation Report 2023 followed by a moderated panel discussion by experts analysing both the potential economic gains that countries might reap from developing green industries and the role of industrial policies to foster the growth of the desired sectors. After discussion, the floor will be opened to questions and contributions from the audience (via chat function). The event will be conducted in English (without translation) on Zoom.

Guiding questions for discussion

- How can green technologies contribute to the economic development of developing countries?
- What is the role of green industrial policy in spurring the growth of green technologies?
- What are the challenges that governments face to promote green technology and innovation?