

**United Nations Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD)
Twenty-sixth Annual Session**

**High-level panel on
“Technology and innovation for cleaner and more productive and
competitive production”**

**28 March 2023, 15.00-17.15 (Geneva time)
Geneva and online**

Concept note

Background

Digital and green transformation, coinciding with the increasing adoption of technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), Internet of Things (IoT) and renewable energy are transforming business and productive sectors. When guided by a development compass, technological change can help the global community recover post-COVID-19 and bring about the transformations needed to achieve the sustainable development goals (SDGs), reduce poverty, tackle climate change and put the world on a sustainable path. They also offer a window of opportunity for developing countries to catch up technologically and narrow global divides.

Critical areas for innovation in this new technological revolution are renewable energy technologies and frontier technologies for sustainable production and consumption. Innovation in these areas could help diversify economies, create higher-wage jobs, and catalyze economic growth and structural transformation while addressing the existential threat of climate change. National policies are crucial to creating these green opportunities.

The technologies required for a sustainable transformation of economies and societies, for the most part, already exist. But political will is needed to facilitate their deployment in developing countries. At the same time, firms and governments must be ready to respond and take advantage of them. However, many countries have low technical and financial resources for designing and implementing the required sector-specific strategies. Therefore, international cooperation has a critical role in providing this technical and financial support to developing countries to benefit from these green windows of opportunities.

Objective

The high-level panel will discuss national strategies and policies related to green technology and green innovation. It will explore the role of international cooperation in supporting developing countries to benefit from windows of opportunity for developing, using, adopting and adapting

these frontier technologies in production processes for catching up economically and technologically.

Guiding questions for discussion

- What are the challenges that governments have faced or may face in promoting green technology and innovation to contribute to national development priorities and accelerate the progress towards the SDGs?
- What should governments, the private sector, organized civil society, and other stakeholders do so that developing countries can benefit from these technologies?
- How could the international community support developing countries in this regard?

Format of the high-level panel

The panel, in hybrid format, will begin with the introduction of the Report of the Secretary-General by the CSTD secretariat. This will be followed by presentations from panellists (maximum 15 minutes each). After presentations, an interactive discussion between panellists and the participants will commence, including those participating remotely. Priority will be given to intervention from participants in the meeting room (maximum 10 minutes each) and to high-level participants intervening remotely (7 minutes each). Online intervention with interpretation is subject to a 30-minute accumulative limit per session.

Supporting documents

- Report of the Secretary-General: Technology and innovation for cleaner and more productive and competitive production (E/CN.16/2023/2), available at https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/ecn162023d2_en.pdf
- Issues Paper on Technology and innovation for cleaner and more productive and competitive production, available at https://unctad.org/system/files/information-document/CSTD2022-2023_Issues01_cleanerproduction_en.pdf
- Other documents available on the website of the CSTD: <https://unctad.org/meeting/commission-science-and-technology-development-twentysixth-session>