

UN Virtual Forum on Responsible Business and Human Rights

Session: Moving the needle on climate change – business actions for a 1.5°C future

10 June 2020, at 10:00 – 11:30 hrs Bangkok time (GMT +7) (online)

About Responsible Business and Human Rights Forum

Since 2016, representatives from governments, NHRIs, CSOs, and business have convened as part of an annual regional forum on Business and Human Rights in Asia. This annual regional platform has proven instrumental in building momentum in Asia and fostering a race-to-the-top for the implementation of the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) and other international standards such as the ILO Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy (MNE Declaration). As a vital platform for the sharing of best practices from within Asian countries and beyond, the platform has enabled meaningful South-South exchange, and facilitated constructive dialogue and peer-learning among international organisations, ministerial-level officials, corporate executives, and civil society actors. In 2019, the regional forum was expanded to a Responsible Business and Human Rights (RBHR) Forum, broadening the scope to the wider responsible business agenda.

Against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 Virtual United Nations Responsible Business and Human Rights Forum will convene stakeholders in the Asia-Pacific region to take stock of progress and discuss challenges and opportunities for advancing responsible business practices and human rights in the region. It will explore how existing vulnerabilities have been amplified and exposed by the crisis and discuss the need to use the crisis as an opportunity to drive change and build back better.

Session Objectives & Description

Setting greenhouse gas emission reduction targets in line with climate science can help business take a lead on climate change and future-proof the business. As so often stated, you cannot manage what you cannot measure. Climate impact assessment, reporting and target setting will thus be critical to move business action.

Various initiatives such as the Taskforce on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD), and the Science Based Targets (SBT) initiatives have been set up to improve reporting and advance the climate action. Businesses are also expected to integrate climate considerations as part of human rights due diligence under the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

Globally, companies have started coming forward to set climate-based targets as ambitious as net-zero carbon emissions by 2050 or before. Corporate leadership on Climate Change is also growing in the Asia-Pacific region. Currently, 25% of the 800+ signatories to the science-based targets initiative are from the region, about half of which had developed climate action targets by early 2020.

In this context, this session will share experiences of companies in the Asia-Pacific region who are taking ambitious action on climate, through climate impact assessment, reporting, target setting and action, to share good practices and lessons learned, to inspire action by others and discuss how to further advance climate related target setting and action among companies in the region. It will also discuss the role of states and investors in providing incentives to speed up climate action, and the impact of covid-19 on delivering on commitments made by states and businesses.

Guiding Questions for Speakers:

- How has climate impact assessment, reporting and target setting helped advance ambitious action in your company? What has been most critical in terms of impacting change?
- To which degree has this change impacted your supply chains / inspired actions among suppliers?
- What are your key lessons learned, challenges faced, and what are your suggestions for other companies that are considering taking action?
- Has COVID-19 affected / will it affect the climate action in your company?
- What government policies and investor actions would be needed to push broad-based action on climate in your industry?
- How could companies collaborate to advance action?

Session Format:

The session will be conducted in a virtual roundtable format.

10:00 – 10:02	Welcome and introduction of moderator (Marit Nilses, ESCAP)
10:03 – 10:06	Video: https://vimeo.com/321738112
10:06 – 10:10	Introduction by the moderator: Ms. Brynn O’Brien, Executive Director, Australian Centre for Corporate Responsibility
10:11 – 10:17	<i>Scene setting:</i> Ms. Paola Delgado, Corporate Engagement Manager, Science Based Targets initiative and WWF Q1: How can climate reporting and target setting help drive company ambition and action to reduce emissions? What different tools exist and how useful are they for moving action? What role does SBTi play in this regard?
10:18 - 10:24	Ms. Esther An, Chief Sustainability Officer, City Developments Limited, Singapore Q1: What are some of your challenges and lessons learned as regards climate reporting, target setting and how it can drive action? With rising middle-classes and increased urbanization comes increased demand for cooling in tropical countries, how real estate and construction companies continue to reduce emissions in light of that?
10:25 – 10:31	Mr. Anirban Ghosh, Head of Sustainability, Mahindra & Mahindra, India Q1: What are some of your lessons learned on how climate target setting and reporting can drive action, and how important is setting an internal price on carbon for moving action? As a car and tractor company, many of your products use fossil fuels, and a lot of materials in their production. What path will you take to reduce emissions going forward?
10:32 – 10:36	Mr. Hiromitsu Hatano, Sustainability Management Division, RICOH, Japan Q1: What lessons has your company gained in doing so, and what are the most important ways electronics companies can diminish their carbon footprint? What role does management of e-waste and reducing plastics in value chains play in this regard?
10:37 – 10:44	Short Q&A by moderator

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How will COVID-19 affect climate action in your company? - What in your view is needed to get broader action in line with climate goals among companies in the Asia-Pacific region?
10:45 – 10:50	<p>Ms. Jana Žilková, Head of Mission, Caritas Czech Republic in Mongolia</p> <p>Q1: You oversee a project that supports SMEs in the construction sector in Mongolia to green their business. What challenges do you see for SMEs in the construction sector for greening their operation, and how important is it for larger companies to have ambitious targets in terms of enabling and driving action of SMEs in their supply chain?</p>
10:51 – 10:56	<p>Mr. Giuseppe Busini, Deputy Head of Mission, European Union to the Kingdom of Thailand</p> <p>Q1: In December 2019 the EU Commission adopted the “European Green Deal”, a roadmap for making the EU’s economy sustainable, aiming to be the first climate-neutral continent while making the transition just and inclusive for all. What changes will it bring in practice, and what impact will that have on companies in Asia supply European markets? To which degree do you expect it can help drive greening of companies in the Asia-Pacific region?</p>
10:57 – 11:02	<p>Mr. Surya Deva, UN Working Group on business and Human Rights</p> <p>Q1: The human rights and climate debates have often been held separately, in spite of being strongly linked. How can the UN Guiding Principles help businesses meet their science-based emission targets? What role should states play in this regard?</p>
11:03 – 11:07	<p>Mr. Roberto Cadiz, Philippines Human Rights Commission</p> <p>Q1: You were part of the Carbon Major Inquiry which looked at the responsibility of Carbon Majors on people affected by climate change. What were the main findings and recommendations of the Inquiry? What impact may these findings have going forward?</p>
11:08 – 11:23	Moderated Q&A / interactive discussion with audience
11:24 – 11:27	Closing remarks (Luz Fernandez, SWITCH-Asia RPAC)

To join the session:

Register at the event website: <https://rbhr2020.heysummit.com/talks/moving-the-needle-on-climate-change-business-actions-for-a-15c-future/#>

You will receive automatically the link to join the session twice: i) 60 min before session starts, ii) 10 min before session starts.