SPECA Innovation Strategy for Sustainable Development

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European Alliance for Innovation

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The Rationale for a SPECA Innovation Strategy for Sustainable Development
Where are the SPECA countries vis-à-vis the SDGs?

• In 2015, UN member states (incl. SPECA countries) adopted a set of goals to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity: Sustainable Development Agenda 2030

• SPECA countries face significant challenges in achieving the SDGs; in many cases, there is a large distance to the desired targets

• SPECA countries still lag considerably behind more developed regions such as Europe

• But at the same time, over 2000-2018 CA countries have made considerable progress in most SDG indicators, reducing existing lags
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sustainable development goals</th>
<th>Afghanistan</th>
<th>Azerbaijan</th>
<th>Kazakhstan</th>
<th>Kyrgyzstan</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>1. End poverty</td>
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<td>2. Food security, sustainable agriculture</td>
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<td>3. Healthy lives and wellbeing</td>
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<td>4. Inclusive education, lifelong learning</td>
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<td>5. Gender equality, women empowerment</td>
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<td>6. Sustainable water and sanitation</td>
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<td>7. Sustainable and modern energy</td>
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<td>8. Inclusive and sustainable growth, full employment</td>
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<td>9. Sustainable infrastructure and industrialisation, innovation</td>
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<td>11. Smart and sustainable cities</td>
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<td>12. Sustainable consumption and production</td>
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<td>13. Combat climate change and its impacts</td>
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<td>14. Sustainable use of oceans, seas and marine resources</td>
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<td>15. Sustainable use of ecosystems and forests</td>
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<td>16. Peaceful, inclusive societies for sustainable development</td>
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<td>17. Global partnership for sustainable development</td>
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Legend:
- **sufficient**
- **compatible**
- **insufficient**
- **highly insufficient**
- **n.a.** not applicable or data not available
Selected SDG scores for the SPECA countries, 2018 (100=optimum)

Overall rank

- Afghanistan: Overall rank 151
- Azerbaijan: Overall rank 45
- Kazakhstan: Overall rank 65
- Kyrgyzstan: Overall rank 51
- Tajikistan: Overall rank 73
- Turkmenistan: Overall rank 110
- Uzbekistan: Overall rank 52
- China: Overall rank 54
- Korea, Rep.: Overall rank 19
- Russian Federation: Overall rank 63

SDGs:
- SDG1 End poverty
- SDG8 Inclusive and sustainable growth, full employment
- SDG9 Sustainable infrastructure and industrialisation, innovation
- SDG10 Reduce inequality within and among countries
- SDG12 Sustainable consumption and production
- Overall SDG rank
Innovation for sustainable development in the SPECA region: general aspects

- Innovation can be a powerful engine for development as it can contribute to both technological progress and rising prosperity.

- Existing technology gaps offer opportunities for catch-up and productivity growth via knowledge and technology transfer.

- Innovation can also be an engine for structural transformation of SPECA countries helping them to accelerate their regional integration and their integration into the world economy.

- One specific need is the creation and strengthening of linkages at all levels: local, regional and linkages to global value chains.

- SPECA countries need to put a greater emphasis on innovation based on absorption and adaptation and develop the necessary private sector absorptive capacities.

- They also need to build a tangible critical mass of productive capabilities and related institutions and infrastructure.
Following the Conclusions and Recommendations of the 2017 SPECA Economic Forum on “Innovation for the SDGs in the SPECA region”, the Twelfth Session of the SPECA Governing Council (Dushanbe, 6 December 2017) underscored the importance of elaborating an innovation strategy for the SPECA region to support the governments’ efforts towards the SDGs.

This Strategy should draw on the Conclusions and Recommendations of the 2017 SPECA Economic Forum and should identify possible innovation policies to realize regional synergies and economies of scale.

The strategy should help policy makers in the design and implementation of such policies and in strengthening their cooperation in addressing SD issues of common concern.
Innovation Strategy for Sustainable Development: The Process

- A draft outline of the SPECA Innovation Strategy for Sustainable Development was discussed at the Regional Workshop on “Innovation Strategy, Technology Applications and Infrastructure for the SDGs” in conjunction with the Tenth Session of the SPECA WG KBD (Baku, Azerbaijan, 5 July 2018).

- The WG welcomed the draft outline of the innovation strategy to promote sustainable development in the SPECA region and emphasized that its implementation would require significant political commitment from SPECA countries as well as financial and human resources.

- The thirteenth session of the SPECA Governing Council (Almaty, Kazakhstan, 21 September 2018) welcomed the work done so far and endorsed a Roadmap for finalizing the SPECA Innovation Strategy for Sustainable Development.
Roadmap for elaborating a SPECA Innovation Strategy for Sustainable Development: main issues

- Governments of the SPECA countries nominate national Focal Points (institutions and individuals) for the elaboration and implementation of the SPECA Innovation Strategy for Sustainable Development
- The national Focal Points consult with relevant national stakeholders regarding the vision, mission, guiding principles, objectives, policy priority areas and governance of the Strategy
- The inputs by SPECA countries are discussed at the annual session of the SPECA Working Group on Knowledge-based Development.
- A final draft of the SPECA Innovation Strategy for Sustainable Development is submitted for consideration and adoption by the SPECA Governing Council at its annual session
- An Action Plan for implementation of the SPECA Innovation Strategy is developed and adopted by the SPECA countries.
Draft Outline of the SPECA Innovation Strategy for Sustainable Development
SPECA Innovation Strategy for Sustainable Development: The Vision

- SPECA countries aspire to meet the expectations of their societies in ensuring sustainable development in the region.
- Many SD challenges (water, energy, environment and transport, etc.) are of transboundary nature so SPECA countries need to pursue of cooperative solutions to the benefit of all countries.
- Recognizing the role of innovation, SPECA countries will seek to develop their capabilities to design and implement innovation policies for sustainable development.
- SPECA countries will also strengthen regional cooperation in implementing innovation policies for sustainable development.
- The Innovation Strategy for Sustainable Development is a policy document of the SPECA countries, jointly agreed by their Governments, to guide their cooperative efforts.
- It targets objectives and activities of common interest and will be implemented with the joint efforts of the SPECA countries.
SPECA Innovation Strategy for Sustainable Development: Objectives

- **Overall objective**: to achieve a sustained improvement in the capabilities of the SPECA countries to formulate and implement innovation policies for sustainable development and to raise the level and quality of regional cooperation in their implementation.

- **Specific objectives**:
  - Upgrade the knowledge and skills base of key stakeholders;
  - Strengthen the regional policy dialogue with participation of leading international expertise;
  - Work together in identifying SD challenges of common interest;
  - Enhance regional cooperation in implementing SD innovation;
  - Facilitate technology transfer addressing SD challenges in the region;
  - Strengthen cooperation with existing platforms for international collaboration;
  - Improve SPECA countries performance in the degree of SDG achievement;
  - Awareness raising in the SPECA countries.
SPECA Innovation Strategy for Sustainable Development: Proposed Activities

- Six groups of interrelated collaborative activities aimed at the Strategy objectives:
  A. Capacity development;
  B. Policy development and dialogue;
  C. Regional networking and cooperation;
  D. Technology transfer and support to innovative entrepreneurs;
  E. Global cooperation;
  F. Awareness raising

- Some of the Strategy activities outlined above delineate thematic areas whereas other activities define the approaches and means to pursue the Strategy objectives
## Implementation matrix of the SPECA Innovation Strategy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thematic areas</th>
<th>Means and approaches</th>
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<tbody>
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<td></td>
<td>Capacity-building seminars</td>
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<tr>
<td>Identify weaknesses in the NIS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Identify obstacles to regional cooperation in innovation policies</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Periodic reporting on progress against relevant SDGs</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sub-regional innovation policy index</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Regional regulatory coordination and harmonization</td>
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<tr>
<td>Identify common SD challenges that call for regional cooperation</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Policies supporting international linkages and regional supply chains</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joint regional innovation activities for sustainable development</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Strategy is not a substitute for the national SD programmes but should complement them with regional initiatives where cooperation would generate synergies and add value.

Implementation will require the allocation of adequate resources by the SPECA countries as the owners of the Strategy.

The main resource input expected from the SPECA countries will be human resources in terms of expertise and effort.

The National Focal Point and his/her team will be responsible for implementation at the national level.

Additional resources could be mobilized from international donors and development partners, which may also be invited to join and assist the implementation of the Strategy.

UNECE and ESCAP will consider their support to the Strategy within their available budgetary and extrabudgetary resources.
Oversight will rely on existing intergovernmental structures such as the SPECA Governing Council and the SPECA Working Groups (in the first instance the SPECA WG on KBD/Innovation and Technology for Sustainable Development)

Periodic Monitoring and Evaluation Reports will be submitted to and reviewed by the SPECA Governing Council

The National Focal Points and their teams prepare inputs for these reports with support from the SPECA WG on KBD/ITSD

UNECE and ESCAP will jointly support the implementation of the SPECA Innovation Strategy for Sustainable Development

The SPECA WG on KBD/ITSD will provide a platform for regular intergovernmental and expert consultations on the implementation of the Strategy
Next steps in the elaboration of the SPECA Innovation Strategy

- Finalize the nomination of national Focal Points (institutions and individuals) and the consultations on the Strategy content (ASAP!)
- Submit final inputs to UNECE and ESCAP secretariats (ASAP!)
- Finalizing the content of the SPECA Innovation Strategy for Sustainable Development to be submitted for consideration and adoption by the SPECA Governing Council at the 2019 annual session in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, 20 - 21 November 2019
- Consultations with SPECA countries governments and potential donors on their resource commitments for the implementation of the SPECA Innovation Strategy for Sustainable Development
- Developing a draft Action Plan for implementation of the SPECA Innovation Strategy for Sustainable Development in consultations with SPECA countries governments
Thank you!

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