SDG Business Dialogue

19 March 1.15-2.45 p.m.
International Conference Centre Geneva (Rue de Varembé 17, 1211, Geneva)
Hosted by UN Global Compact and UNECE

Taking place for the first time at the Regional Forum on Sustainable Development for the UNECE Region, the SDG Business Dialogue Europe will be a unique multi-stakeholder conversation on business action and partnerships to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Participants will explore how partnerships, alliances and business innovation can accelerate sustainable development in the region. The dialogue will feature the following sessions:

Session I. Breakthrough Innovation for the SDGs

The world is not yet on track to meet the SDGs. The 2019 SDG Progress Report finds that while progress has been made on a number of Goals, overall the world is “not yet advancing at the speed or scale required”. Recognizing the need to dramatically accelerate progress, the first session of the SDG Business Dialogue will focus on scaling business innovation to achieve the Global Goals in Europe. Exploring how business can contribute to achieving the SDGs through new market opportunities and innovation, the session will address the following questions:

1. What is Breakthrough Innovation?
2. What does business need to do to achieve breakthrough for the SDGs?
3. What are some business models and technologies that can lead to breakthrough innovation for the SDGs?
4. How can businesses and small- and medium-sized enterprises work with governments and other stakeholders to drive innovation and technology for the SDGs?
Session II. Scaling finance and ambition for the SDGs

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) reports that the SDGs have very significant resource implications worldwide. At the global level, total investment needs are in the order of $5 to $7 trillion per year. Public and private investments are far from reaching this goal.

The urgency of addressing the climate crisis and efforts to close the financial gap to achieve the SDGS require an unprecedented transformation of the financial system. Focusing on the unique opportunities, needs and challenges in European markets, this session will explore how to increase private investment in SDG priority areas.

The session will address the following questions:

1. What steps can companies take to integrate the SDGs into their financing, operational processes and internal decision-making?
2. What incentives are needed for investors and companies to expand their investments in emerging and frontier markets?
3. How can governments and investors support a shift towards SDG-aligned business models?

Preliminary agenda

1:15 – 1:25 Opening Remarks
   - Ms. Olga Algayerova, Executive Secretary UNECE (tbc)
   Masters of Ceremonies:
   Crispin Conroy, International Chamber of Commerce
   Angus Rennie, UN Global Compact

1:25 – 2:00 Focus 1: Breakthrough Innovation for the SDGs
   Moderated interactive discussion on how to harness and maximize innovation to meet the Global Goals.

2:00 – 2:35 Focus 2: Scaling private finance and ambition
   Moderated interactive discussion on the role of the private sector on financing Agenda 2030 and increasing corporate ambition

2:35 – 2:45 Closing Remarks

Registration
Kindly register via this link for the SDG Business Dialogue.