

**UNITED NATIONS SPECIAL PROGRAMME  
FOR THE ECONOMIES OF CENTRAL ASIA (SPECA)**

**Subregional SPECA Workshop on Innovation and Technology  
for Sustainable Development**

and

**Fourth Session of the SPECA Working Group  
on Innovation and Technology for Sustainable Development**

**Tashkent, Uzbekistan  
18-19 October 2023**

*Draft programme*

In-person event

*Ministry of Innovative Development of the Republic of Uzbekistan*

*Organized in co-operation with the  
Ministry of Innovative Development of the  
Republic of Uzbekistan*



**Ministry of Innovative  
Development  
of the Republic of Uzbekistan**

## **Background**

The SPECA Working Group on Innovation and Technology for Sustainable Development (WG on ITSD) is a subsidiary body under the UN Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA), comprising senior policymakers, researchers, decision-makers and other stakeholders in the area of innovation and technology from the seven participating SPECA countries, namely Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

The SPECA WG on ITSD provides a platform to discuss and forge cooperation around, especially from the perspective of policy and the role of governance, solutions that innovation and technology have to offer to benefit from the opportunities of knowledge-based development. Especially relevant are SDGs directly related to the development of innovation and technology (in particular, SDGs 8, 9, 13 and 17).

The SPECA WG on ITSD looks, inter alia, at:

- ICT for development;
- Promotion of innovation and innovative technology applications;
- Promotion of transfer and commercialization of innovative technologies; and
- Development of effective infrastructure for innovation support and financing, including through PPPs<sup>1</sup>.

## **Objectives**

This session of the SPECA WG on ITSD serves to assess progress in the implementation of the [Action Plan](#) of the [SPECA Innovation Strategy for Sustainable Development](#) as approved by the 16<sup>th</sup> session of the SPECA Governing Council in Tashkent on 19 November 2021.

A questionnaire will be presented to SPECA focal points and nominated participants prior to the session and implementation progress will be discussed at the preceding subregional workshop.

The Action Plan guides policies and initiatives in the SPECA countries to put the objective of the Strategy into practice: a sustained improvement in the national capacity and capabilities of the SPECA countries to formulate and implement innovation policies for sustainable development and a higher level and quality of regional cooperation in the implementation of innovations that target and support sustainable development.

Furthermore, the session is an opportunity for SPECA countries to comment on and contribute to the activities of UNECE and ESCAP in support of the Innovation Strategy and the Action Plan and implementation of the APIS action plan 2022-2026.

## **Delegates and participants**

The participants of the WG on ITSD are nominated by Governments of the SPECA countries, representing senior public officials involved in the formulation and implementation of national innovation policies and policies and programmes related to digital connectivity and technology

<sup>1</sup> Based on the updated Terms of Reference

[https://unece.org/DAM/SPECA/documents/gc/session14/IX.ToR\\_SPECA\\_WG\\_on\\_ITSD\\_English.pdf](https://unece.org/DAM/SPECA/documents/gc/session14/IX.ToR_SPECA_WG_on_ITSD_English.pdf)

development. The participants of the subregional workshop preceding the WG session include policymakers, representatives of academia, and public and private sector institutions, involved in policies and initiatives in innovation and technology.

*Please note that the times indicated below are based on the GMT+5 time zone (Tashkent).*

DAY 1 / Wednesday, 18 October 2023	
Subregional Workshop on Innovation and Digital Transformation in the SPECA subregion	
To register, please <a href="#">use this link</a>	
13:00 - 13:30	<p><b>Session 1: Opening Session</b> Moderator: Mr. Christopher Athey, Economic Affairs Officer, Innovative Policies Development Section (IPDS), UNECE</p> <hr/> <p><i>Welcoming statements by</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Representative of the Ministry of Innovative Development</b> of Uzbekistan (TBC)</li> <li>• <b>Mr. Askar Zhambakin, Vice Minister of MDDIAL, RK</b> (TBC)</li> <li>• <b>Mr. Christopher Athey</b>, Secretary to the SPECA WG on ITSD, UNECE</li> <li>• <b>Mr. Tae Hyung Kim</b>, Chief, Information and Communications Technology (ICT) &amp; Development Section (IDS), IDD, ESCAP</li> </ul>
13:30 - 14:30	<p><b>Session 2: Overview of the Workshop</b> Moderator: Ms. Aida Karazhanova, Economic Affairs Officer, Information and Communications Technology (ICT) &amp; Development Section (IDS), ESCAP</p> <hr/> <p><i>Introduction of participants and key objectives and structure of the event</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mr. Christopher Athey</b>, Economic Affairs Officer, Innovative Policies Development Section (IPDS), UNECE</li> </ul> <p><i>Action Plan 2022-2026 of the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway (APIS) initiative</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mr. Tae Hyung Kim</b>, Chief, Information and Communications Technology (ICT) &amp; Development Section (IDS), IDD, ESCAP</li> </ul> <p><i>Status of regional cooperation among SPECA countries</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mr. Mario Apostolov</b>, Regional Adviser, Economic Cooperation and Trade Division, UNECE</li> </ul> <p><i>Progress update on the SPECA Network of Business Incubators and Accelerators for Sustainable Development</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ms. Anastasia Pankova</b>, Consultant, UNECE</li> </ul>



<p><b>14:30 – 16:45</b></p>	<p><b>Session 3: Policy Discussion: Progress update on Action Plan of the SPECA Strategy on Innovation for Sustainable Development</b> Moderator: Mr. Christopher Athey, Economic Affairs Officer, Innovative Policies Development Section (IPDS), UNECE</p>
	<p><i>Presentation of the Action Plan and its implementation to date</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mr. Rumen Dobrinsky</b>, Director for Strategy, European Alliance for Innovation</li> <li>• <b>Ms. Lyudmyla Tautiyeva</b>, Consultant, Innovative Policies Development Section, UNECE</li> </ul> <p><i>Update on measures taken under the Action Plan of the SPECA Innovation Strategy for Sustainable Development and recent policy actions on innovation and technology for sustainable development:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Representative of Azerbaijan</b></li> <li>• <b>Representative of Kazakhstan</b></li> <li>• <b>Representative of Kyrgyzstan</b></li> <li>• <b>Representative of Tajikistan</b></li> <li>• <b>Representative of Turkmenistan</b></li> <li>• <b>Representative of Uzbekistan</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Representative of ESCAP</b>, to be confirmed</p> <p><i>Comments by other participants</i></p>
<p><b>16:45– 17:00</b></p>	<p><b>Wrap-up</b> Mr. Rumen Dobrinsky, Director for Strategy, European Alliance for Innovation Mr. Christopher Athey, Economic Affairs Officer, Innovative Policies Development Section (IPDS), UNECE</p>



**DAY 2 / Thursday, 19 October 2023**

**Subregional Workshop on Innovation and Digital Transformation in the SPECA subregion  
(continued)**

**To register, please use this [link](#)**

<p><b>09:30 - 10:30</b></p>	<p><b>Session 4: Asia Pacific Digital Transformation Landscape</b> Moderator: Mr. Tae Hyung Kim, Chief, Information and Communications Technology (ICT) &amp; Development Section (IDS), ESCAP</p> <p><i>ESCAP Connectivity Tools and the E-resilience Monitoring Dashboard for Digital Foresight Planning</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Mr Vadym Kaptur, Consultant, IDS, IDD, ESCAP</u></li> <li>• <b>Ms. Aida Karazhanova</b>, Economic Affairs Officer consultant, Information and Communications Technology (ICT) &amp; Development Section (IDS), IDD, ESCAP</li> </ul> <p><i>Good practices of Digital-based Micro Financing Model</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>To be confirmed</b></li> </ul> <p><i>Digital transformation and digital technology for Environment and Climate Change <u>Action</u></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>To be confirmed</b></li> </ul> <p><i>Discussions</i></p> <p><i>Comments by other participants</i></p>
<p><b>10:30 - 11:30</b></p>	<p><i>Consultations on the creation of a UN Digital Solutions Centre for Sustainable Development</i> <b>Presenter: Mr Askar Zhambakin, Vice Minister of MDDIAI RK</b> <b>Moderator: Ms. Aida Karazhanova</b>, Economic Affairs Officer, Information and Communications Technology (ICT) &amp; Development Section (IDS), ESCAP</p> <p><b>Representation of Kazakhstan (TBC)</b></p> <p><i>Discussions</i></p>
<p><b>11:30 - 12:00</b></p>	<p><b>Wrap-up by Moderator</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr. Tae Hyung Kim, Chief, Information and Communications Technology (ICT) &amp; Development Section (IDS), IDD, ESCAP</li> </ul>
<p><b>12:00 - 14:00</b></p>	<p><i>Break</i></p>

**Fourth Session of the SPECA Working Group on Innovation and Technology  
for Sustainable Development (WG on ITSD)**

**To register, please use this [link](#)**

14:30 - 14:45	<p><b>Session 1: Opening of the Session, adoption of the agenda and election of officers</b> Moderator: Mr. Christopher Athey, Economic Affairs Officer, Innovative Policies Development Section (IPDS), UNECE</p>
14:30 - 14:45	<p><i>Welcoming statement by</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Representative of Ministry of Innovation Development of Uzbekistan (TBC)</li> <li>• Chair of Session (Uzbekistan TBC)</li> <li>• Representative of the Ministry of Innovative Development of Uzbekistan</li> </ul>
14:45 - 16:15	<p><b>Session 2: Review of activities since the last session and Work Plan 2024-2025 of the SPECA WG on ITSD</b></p> <p><i>Briefing on activities of the SPECA WG on ITSD 2022-2023 and Work Plan 2024-2025</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ms. Aida Karazhanova</b>, Economic Affairs Officer, Information and Communications Technology (ICT) &amp; Development Section (IDS), ESCAP</li> <li>• <b>Mr. Christopher Athey</b>, Economic Affairs Officer, Innovative Policies Development Section (IPDS), UNECE</li> </ul> <p><i>Presentation on key findings of the UNECE handbook on “Business Incubators for Sustainable Development in the SPECA Subregion” and the upcoming UNECE work on “Supporting Innovative High-Growth Enterprises in the SPECA subregion”</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mr. Christopher Athey</b>, UNECE</li> </ul>
16:15 - 16:45	<p><b>Session 3: Adoption of the Work Plan 2024-2025</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposals by representatives of SPECA countries on the planned activities in the Programme of Work of the SPECA WG on ITSD for 2024-2025.</li> <li>• Adoption of the UNECE and ESCAP Work Plan 2024-2025 by representatives of SPECA countries.</li> </ul>
16:45 - 16:50	<p><b>Session 4: Other Matters</b></p> <p>Date and venue for the next session of the SPECA WG on ITSD.</p>
16:50 - 17:00	<p><b>Session 5: Closing of the Session</b></p> <p>Representative of the Ministry of Innovative Development of Uzbekistan (TBC).</p>