

This event is hosted in partnership with the Viet Nam Ministry of Planning and Investment.



# Asia-Europe Sustainable Development Goals and Financing: No Longer Business as Usual

6-7 September 2017 | Hanoi, Viet Nam

## CONCEPT NOTE

### ABSTRACT

The Asia-Europe Environment Forum (ENVforum) conference “Asia-Europe Sustainable Development Goals and Financing – No Longer Business as Usual” is a 2-day international conference which aims at exploring financing options and the role that the private sector can play towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The annual conference will take place in September 2017 in Hanoi, Viet Nam and will have the following objectives:

- Discuss emerging challenges to the achievement and financing of the SDGs;
- Examine the potential involvement of the private sector and its impact on the achievement of the SDGs;
- Act as a forum among the involved actors to share experiences and best practices;
- Contribute to the Asia-Europe dialogue on the Agenda 2030 process;
- Encourage knowledge exchange between Asian and European business representatives and policymakers as well as other relevant stakeholders on questions of sustainable finance, and explore new possible joint ventures.

### BACKGROUND

The adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) outlined in “*Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*”<sup>1</sup> presents multiple challenges for countries to implement SDGs.

Today, almost two years after the introduction of the SDGs, many stakeholders are ready to share their efforts to meet the 17 objectives and the challenges they have faced.

For most of the actors, financing has emerged as a key issue on the way to attaining their national and, ultimately, the common global objectives. Given the lack of policy space for many emerging economies and increasing efforts to streamline funding with the aim of attaining higher impact and effectiveness in government spending, there is a strong need to consider innovative financing. In this context, corporate actors and businesses have emerged as key players in governments’ plans to achieve the SDGs.

The **Asia-Europe Environment Forum (ENVforum)** is contributing to this process by providing a platform to strengthen knowledge exchange among officials, professionals and experts from Asia and Europe under the framework of the 2030 Agenda.

Established in 2003, the ENVforum is a partnership of the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF), Hanns Seidel Foundation (HSF), ASEM SMEs Eco-Innovation Center (ASEIC), Government of Sweden through the Regional Asia Environment Conference Support Programme administered by Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI), and the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES). Since its inception 14 years ago, the ENVforum has organised over 50 high-level international meetings, roundtables, conferences and workshops, bringing together over 1,200

<sup>1</sup> *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* can be found at <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>

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selected participants from governments, academia, international organisations, NGOs, civil society and the private sector. The ENVForum has produced a series of 8 prominent publications addressing essential issues related to sustainable development.

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## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This international conference is a 2-day event taking place in Hanoi, Viet Nam. It will gather key representatives of governments, civil society and the private sector. The conference is hosted by the ENVforum consortium in partnership with the Ministry of Planning and Investment of Viet Nam.

It will provide a forum for experts to exchange experiences on innovative financing for sustainable development, mobilising national resources and successful involvement of the private sector in the national planning process towards the 2030 Agenda. It is also designed to promote exchange between regional and international levels and highlight different approaches to Public-Private-Partnerships in Asia and Europe.

The conference will build on contributions from experts in the field of private sector engagement. It will consist of several interactive sessions allowing for the exchange of presentations showcasing national achievements by representatives from ASEM partners as well as plenary discussions on several aspects of SDG implementation and financing.

The conference will be organised by ASEF, which will provide:

- Knowledge on financing of the 2030 Agenda based on its expertise and research;
- An Asian-European dimension by showcasing viewpoints from both regions.

The conference will be a platform to enable discussion between representatives from the public and the private sector as well as from civil society. The aim is to explore possibilities for equitable and sustainable development with the involvement of business stakeholders.

The participants will benefit from the expertise of regional and international experts, for a better understanding of current sustainable development challenges in Asia and Europe. All attendees will be strongly encouraged to interact with one another to test their ideas and develop a common dialogue.

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## OBJECTIVES

- To contribute to a better understanding of the potential funding sources for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda
  - To enhance exchange between private sector and public sector representatives on the topic of sustainable development
  - To support multi-stakeholder, regional and international dialogue on Public-Private-Partnerships and Sustainable Businesses from the ASEM region
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## SPEAKERS & PARTICIPANTS

This conference will gather approximately 100 participants and speakers, including:

- Country's representatives from relevant ministries working on SDGs' implementation in the ASEM region
  - International experts, civil society, academia and business representatives working on SDGs' implementation
  - Sustainable development finance experts and practitioners based in Viet Nam
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## TANGIBLE OUTCOMES

- A regional conference enabling stakeholders to exchange ideas about SDG funding, financial innovation, Public-Private-Partnerships
  - A report detailing conference proceedings and summarising expert presentations
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## INTANGIBLE OUTCOMES

The event will:

- Contribute to Asia-Europe dialogue on SDG funding strategies
- Encourage discussions on climate finance about the role of the private sector
- Facilitate exchange between Asian and European experts on climate SDGs and private sector potential for funding SDGs

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## ABOUT THE PARTNER ORGANISATIONS



The **Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF)** promotes understanding, strengthens relationships and facilitates cooperation among the people, institutions and organisations of Asia and Europe. ASEF enhances dialogue, enables exchanges and encourages collaboration across the thematic areas of culture, education, governance, sustainable development, economy and public health.

ASEF is an intergovernmental not-for-profit organisation located in Singapore. Founded in 1997, it is the only institution of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM).

ASEF runs more than 25 projects a year, consisting of around 100 activities, mainly conferences, seminars, workshops, lectures, publications, and online platforms, together with about 125 partner organisations. Each year over 3,000 Asians and Europeans participate in ASEF's activities, and much wider audiences are reached through its various events, networks and web-portals.

For more information, please visit [www.ASEF.org](http://www.ASEF.org)



The **Hanns Seidel Foundation (HSF)** is an official German Political Foundation. It is entrusted by the German Parliament with a mandate, which lies at the core of the task of promoting democratic and sustainable structures worldwide. This mandate involves the strengthening of the relevant institutions and persons, procedures and norms and the requisite attitudes enabling such development to take place.

For more information, please visit [www.hss.de](http://www.hss.de) or [www.hss.de/southeastasia](http://www.hss.de/southeastasia)



**ASEM SMEs Eco-Innovation Center (ASEIC)** was established in 2011 with the principal mandate of promoting Asia-Europe cooperation to create and enhance eco-innovation of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in both regions.

For more information, please visit [www.aseic.org/main.do](http://www.aseic.org/main.do)



Established in 1998, the **Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES)** is an independent, not-for-profit think tank, based in Japan. It goes beyond research to provide practical ways to protect the earth's environment and to realise greater sustainability and equity in the global community.

For more information, please visit [www.iges.or.jp](http://www.iges.or.jp)

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With support from the Government of Sweden, **Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI)** funds events focused on environmentally sustainable development, gender equality, and poverty reduction under the umbrella of the Regional Asia Environment Conference Support Programme. The programme aims to promote informed dialogue where different groups and stakeholders can share knowledge in regional forums and other strategic events with the goal of helping to shape public policy to advance environmentally sustainable development.

The programme is an initiative under the Sida-SEI Strategic Fund managed by SEI's Asia Centre based in Thailand.



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