



RIO+20
United Nations Conference
on Sustainable Development

ITU Contribution and written input to the UN Secretary General's report on paragraph 273 of "The Future We Want"

Background

The document "[The Future We Want](#)" (outcome of the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development -Rio+20) contains a dedicated section VI.B on technology (paragraphs 269-276). The secretariat of the conference has requested interested agencies to provide specific inputs and follow up to paragraph 273, which requests relevant UN agencies to identify options for a technology facilitation mechanism and requests the UN secretary General to make recommendation to the 67th session of the UNGA in this regard.

*Para 273. We request relevant United Nations agencies to identify options for a facilitation mechanism that promotes the development, transfer and dissemination of clean and environmentally sound technologies by, **inter alia**, assessing the technology needs of developing countries, options to address those needs and capacity-building. We request the Secretary-General, on the basis of the options identified and taking into account existing models, to make recommendations regarding the facilitation mechanism to the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly.*

The following document contains ITU's contribution to this request for input, including elements on three areas requested:(1) *the potential functions, format and working methods of a technology facilitation mechanism;* (2) *the potential contributions of your organization;* and (3) *a list of partner organizations that you consider essential to be involved.*

Overview

The outcome document of Rio+20 recognizes the contribution of information and communication technologies (ICTs) to promote knowledge exchange, technical cooperation and capacity building for sustainable development, highlighting the need to work towards improved access to ICT, in particular to broadband network and services. Paragraphs 44, 65, 114, 182, 230, 240 and 272 include references to this role. ITU welcomes this outcome. ICTs can be an opportunity for a sustainable and inclusive future by revolutionizing business models, promoting changes in consumption and production patterns, advancing towards a more efficient use of natural resources (in particular energy resources) and improving several processes, sectors and public services.

Therefore ITU would like to emphasize the importance of the Technology Facilitation Mechanisms to cover a wide range of technologies, including ICTs clean and environmentally sound technologies.

1. The Potential Functions, Format and Working Methods of a Technology Facilitation Mechanism

The Technology Facilitation Mechanism should build upon the experience and results of existing mechanisms such as the "Technology Mechanism", established as an outcome of the 16th Conference of Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) or the Science and Technology and Innovation supporting mechanisms dedicated to LDCs, established by the Istanbul Plan of Action.

Duplication of efforts with existing mechanisms should be avoided.

The Technology Facilitation mechanism should also take due consideration of the activities undertaken by existing UN agencies in the field of technologies.

FUNCTION

The Technology Facilitation Mechanism should:

- Showcase existing clean and environmentally sound technologies as well as relevant standards, policies and regulations;
- Identify the gaps in access and development of clean and environmentally sound technologies and technology applications as well as capacity building needs;
- Facilitate the sharing of information between stakeholders;
- Promote collaboration and facilitate the creation of partnerships to implement clean and environmentally sound technology oriented projects;
- Provide policy guidance to the Commission on Sustainable Development and High-Level Political Forum with the view to advancing clean and environmentally sound technologies, improving access to these technologies, leveraging resources, promoting investment and building capacity.

FORMAT

The role of private sector and research communities in technology development and transfer is widely recognized. The Technology Mechanisms should engage with the private sector and research communities at many different levels.

- A Multistakeholder Steering Committee from all, including equal representation of Members States, Private sectors; Research Communities, International Organizations
- An inter-agency secretariat to support the Multistakeholder Steering Committee.

WORKING METHODS

- The Multistakeholder Steering Committee should maximize the use of electronic working method
- The Committee should work through clusters, dealing with specific clean and environmentally sound technologies but also cross technologies themes such as (intellectual Property, regulation, and standardization) could be proposed
- The technology facilitation mechanism could engage with other stakeholders (the private sector, research communities, major groups, NGOs) through
 - a. An **online knowledge sharing tool** upon which all stakeholders, could register relevant technologies and projects as a means to share information, create partnerships and identify existing gaps;
 - b. An **annual information sharing event** to be held in parallel to the annual meetings of the Commission for Sustainable Development or the High Level Policy Forum. This event could be a platform to showcase new technologies, create partnerships, share information and advise the board of experts on future work to be conducted by the mechanism;
 - c. A **toolkit of recommendations and/or policy elements** to be offered to Member States to encourage the importance of regulatory reform as a key factor in technology transfer, as this is an essential element to ensure the optimal functioning of public/private partnerships and is particularly relevant to the transfer of information and communication technologies (ICTs).

These elements could be implemented separately or as a group, taking into account the coordination with other related mechanism.

2. ITU's contribution to the mechanism

As the leading United Nations Specialized Agency for telecommunications and ICTs, ITU, the International Telecommunication Union, plays a leading role in developing an integrated approach to the

significant role of ICTs. In this regard, ITU could make the following contributions to the proposed technology facilitation mechanism:

- ITU will
 - Bring its expertise and capacities as standardization body for relevant ICT-related technologies for sustainable development including its advance knowledge in bridging the standardization gap and encouraging representation of developing countries in standard-making platforms;
 - Sharing lessons learned within ITU in the development, transfer and dissemination of technologies through public policies and regulations;
 - Mobilize the involvement of relevant technological experts and ITU Sector members, which includes relevant private sector companies from the ICT sector, in the activities to be conducted within the technology facilitation mechanism, in particular showcasing relevant applications;
 - Organize and support multi-stakeholder platforms and events to develop specific solutions and identify best practices in policies and regulations for technology development, transfer and dissemination, such as (but not limited to) the ITU/UNESCO Broadband Commission for Digital Development.
 - Annex I includes relevant ITU resolutions that would justify ITU's involvement in this activity.
- ITU would be ready to participate as a UN specialized agency in the multistakeholder steering committee created for the technology facilitation mechanism.
- ITU would contribute to any knowledge sharing platform established and can provide inputs on lessons learned through the development of its existing online information sharing platform for ICTs, such as the WSIS Stocktaking Platform¹ or the Broadband Commission Sharehouse².

3. Partner organizations that you consider essential to be involved.

ITU would encourage the involvement of private sector companies and technology developers in any activities to be conducted in this area. This action could be implemented through the involvement of industry associations and relevant organizations with which ITU interacts, and which have ITU Sector membership.

ITU's partners include 193 member states, 700 ICT Sector members (regulatory and standards bodies, private and public enterprise and industry associations) and 40 academic institutions. The involvement of ITU in the technology facilitation mechanism would provide input from a diverse group of science and technology stakeholders into the activities of the mechanism.

ITU would also engage the involvement of the ITU/UNESCO Broadband Commission for Digital Development, the leading high level global advocacy group on broadband technology.

¹Further information available at <http://www.wsis.org/stocktaking>

²Further information available at <http://www.broadbandcommission.org/Sharehouse/Search.aspx>

Annex - Further information

Relevant ITU resolutions

- Resolution 139 (Rev. Guadalajara, 2010): Telecommunications/information and communication technologies to bridge the digital divide and build an inclusive information society.
- Resolution 140 (Rev. Guadalajara, 2010): ITU's role in implementing the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society.
- Resolution 172 (Guadalajara, 2010): Overall review of implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society.
- Resolution 182 (Guadalajara, 2010): The role of telecommunications/information and communication technologies in regard to climate change and the protection of the environment.

Relevant online resources

- ITU (www.itu.int)
- ITU profile at the UNCSD 2012 website ([link](#))
- ITU's inputs to the Rio+20 process (www.itu.int/rioplus20)
- ITU activities on climate change and environmental protection (www.itu.int/climate)
- World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) process (www.wsis.org)
- Broadband Commission for Digital Development (<http://www.broadbandcommission.org/>)