



ESCAP Ministerial and Energy Forum

18 October

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ENERGY



Just Transition and a new concept for coal

Policy Dialogue on the Phase Down of Coal in the APAC region



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Just transition is an integrated approach to sustainable development that brings together **social progress, workers' protection, environmental consciousness, and economic success** into a framework of **democratic governance and institutional support**.

"Leave no-one behind"

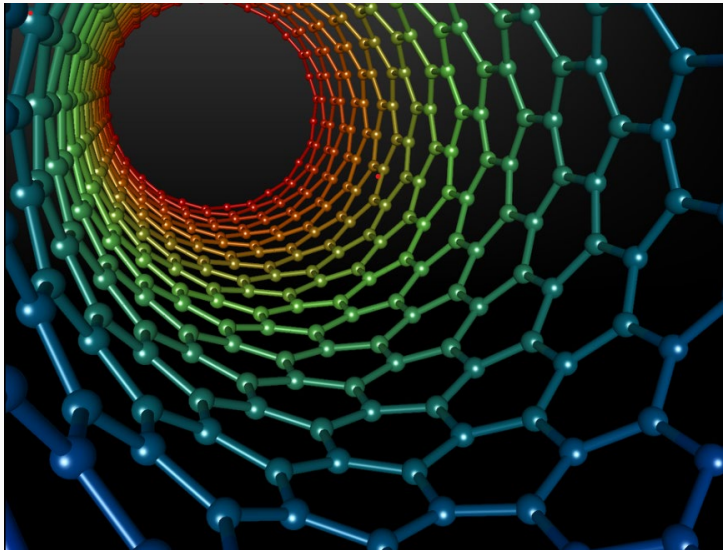
- A **comprehensive system-wide strategy** encompassing all aspects (economic, technological, environmental, social and cultural), based on inter- and cross-regional dialogue allowing for an exchange of experience and lessons learnt.
 - Without such approach, projects will be developed in **silos** and will not form a coordinated strategy to allow the change of economic profile of coal mining areas.
 - Only with a comprehensive, reliable, data-driven strategy the coal mining areas will be able to precisely **identify** their **needs** and thus request appropriate support.

- Decarbonization creates new opportunities, but it also entails **disruptive effects**, which fall disproportionately on localities that are economically reliant on energy-intensive industries.

- **Social justice** must be prioritized during the transition process.
 - It is the duty of **governments**, but also of the organizations such as the **United Nations** to make sure that no one is left behind and the transition is just for all.
 - Effective “just transition” strategies require local, **bottom-up engagement** of all affected stakeholders and commitment by the governments to guarantee their buy-in and provide planning security.
 - The concept of “just transition” is an essential component of energy transformation, ensuring that the latter is delivered in a socially sensitive manner, which is a **condition for the sustainability** of its results.

- Helps member States to plan and **implement transition** of their coal mining regions.
 - **Develops tools to facilitate an effective transition** to low-carbon energy and green economy.
 - Works on **identifying elements necessary to enable** start and progress of **just transition**.
 - Plans to **map just transition efforts** worldwide.
 - Offers a **new approach to coal**.

- **Coal should not be treated as a fuel** for energy production.
- Its true value lies in its **potential to be refined and utilized for high value resources**, such as graphene, carbon nanotubes, lithium, rare earths, cobalt, manganese, as well as other materials.



Mstroeck (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timeline_of_carbon_nanotubes#/media/File:FlyingThroughNanotube.png)



Alchemist-hp (<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/User:Alchemist-hp>)



Peggy Greb (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rare-earth_element#/media/File:Rareearthoxides.jpg)



Tomihahndorf (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lithium#/media/File:Lithium_paraffin.jpg)

- New opportunities by **re-orienting coal mining ecosystems towards innovative hi-tech industries** organized in clusters around existing but redesigned coal mining enterprises supplying valuable feedstock.
- In case of closure of mines, **post-mining areas can serve as good locations for development of renewable energy generation, hydrogen production, or energy storage sites** (good infrastructure, skilled workforce).
- This can **preserve many existing jobs and create new ones** in green industries.

- It offers **new options for financing** the transition.
- By **mitigating risk of stranded assets**, financial institutions can free resources for investments in infrastructure projects that make the business case for coal mines continued existence as element of the green economy.
- Proposal for creating a ***Failsafe Assurance & Security Trust***
 - “Failsafe insurance” via a social contract with workers.
 - Independent enterprise, separate from countries and vested interests.
 - Funding from coal enterprises, governments, unions, and/or workers, as well as other sources.

- To sum up: the proposed new approach to coal will **facilitate the transition** of the coal mining regions toward the green economy by:
 - Providing **new opportunities for economic use of coal** and coal-mining areas,
 - **Liberating funds** necessary for effective implementation of the transition process in a just and environmentally conscious manner, and
 - **Mitigating** the exposure of communities and regions in transition to **economic, social, and cultural shocks** resulting from otherwise necessary coal phase out.

UNECE welcomes opportunity to explore potential for cooperation on matters related to Just Transition with ESCAP and its member States.



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THANK YOU

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