2022 Daejeon UCLG World Congress

Effective Governance and Digital Transformation for Climate Action and Sustainable Development

Co-organized by
United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)
Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG)
United Nations Project Office on Governance (UNPOG)

In collaboration with
Daejeon UCLG World Congress

13 October 2022

14:30 PM – 16:00 PM Seoul (GMT+9)

Venue:
107-108 (1F), Daejeon Convention Centre (DCC), Republic of Korea

I. Background

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development embraces effective governance and digital transformation through the usage of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). Digital technologies have great potential to accelerate human progress contribute to climate action and build resilient societies. Effective governance and digital government transformation can help contribute to the development of responsive, efficient, inclusive, and accountable institutions to support policy making and equitable delivery of public service, build public trust, and ensure transparency in the development process.

Climate change, environmental degradation, natural disasters, and other public health emergencies such as the COVID-19 pandemic are among the biggest challenges the world faces today. This is evidenced by the increased intensity and frequency of extreme weather events, damage to ecosystems, and the displacement of livelihoods and people. The call to action to address these challenges by pooling all available resources including innovative technologies, is increasingly becoming recognized as a solution for tackling climate change, building climate and disaster resilience, and enhancing environmental sustainability. [1] While the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated digital transformation, rapid digitalization presents the opportunity for societies to

[1] ADB (2021). Digital Technologies for Climate Action, Disaster Resilience, and Environmental Sustainability. https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/700396/digital-technologies-climate-action.pdf

rethink how we can avail this transformation to make informed, inclusive, and accountable decisions for sustainability. Hence, promoting effective governance and digital transformation is ever more important, as we are left with less than a decade to deliver on the promises of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The UN Secretary-General's Report, "Our Common Agenda" stressed that we risk crossing irreversible thresholds and accelerating the crises that could take centuries or even millenniums to reverse. The Report calls for all Member States to declare a climate emergency, to accelerate action on an emergency footing, by addressing new issues quickly and evolving with science. It also emphasizes the importance of digital inclusivity to ensure no one is left behind and highlights the universal access to the Internet as a basic human right. Further investment in innovation and digital transformation will reshape the way of working, helping to reach more people in need and better serve them.[2] Similarly, the 11 Principles of Effective Governance for Sustainable Development, developed by the UN Committee of Experts on Public Administration (CEPA) and endorsed by the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in 2018, provides practical and expert guidance to countries on a broad range of governance challenges associated with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Fully acknowledging the importance of governance could contribute to effective decision-making for promoting climate action and in ultimately achieving the SDGs.

In 2018, the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development issued a Ministerial Declaration which acknowledged that digitalization and emerging technologies, in particular ICTs could play a critical role in achieving the SDGs and could act as powerful tools to realize the 2030 Agenda.[3] Data as the new driver for innovation is also regarded as an asset to realizing the SDGs. Moreover, SDG target 17.18 in particular calls for the increase in the availability of high-quality, timely, and reliable data disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts.[4] While governments around the world are leveraging digital technologies to innovate the way they operate, share information, make informed decisions, and deliver public services, many countries remain ill-equipped to effectively leverage digital technologies and provide accessible, reliable, secure, and inclusive services that empower people through open and participatory mechanisms.[5] Accelerating innovative governance and digital transformation therefore requires enhancing and promoting digital capacity-building, particularly enhancing the digital skills of the whole society. It is necessary to promote public-private-people-partnership (PPPP) as well as digital cooperation among countries to close the digital divide and ensure digital inclusion.

This Session will take place on 13 October 2022 during the 2022 UCLG World Congress in Daejeon, Republic of Korea. It will explore effective governance approaches and methods to leverage digital transformation and digital data governance for climate action and sustainable development. Presenters and discussants will be expected to share experiences based on concrete country cases focusing on the factors that either promote or hinder efforts for the topic.

[2] United Nations (2021). The Report of Secretary-General "Our Common Agenda". https://www.un.org/en/un75/common-agenda
[3] UN DESA. High-Level Political Forum 2018. https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf/2018
[4] UN DESA. https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal17
[5] UN DESA (2020). UN e-Government 2020 Survey Report. https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/en-us/Reports/UN-E-Government-Survey-2020

II. Objectives

I. Examine effective, inclusive, and accountable public governance approaches, strategies, and experiences to promote governance for climate action;
II. Exchange solutions and suggest recommendations in fostering innovative public governance and engaging the private sector in addressing the climate crisis; and
III. Provide policy recommendations in accelerating digital data governance and leveraging digital transformation for climate action.

III. Thematic Focus

I. Effective, Inclusive, and Accountable Public Governance for Climate Action

Effective, inclusive, and accountable public governance is critical in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and in implementing climate action. Addressing climate change is the task of multiple stakeholders which includes national and local governments, private sectors, non-governmental organizations, civil society, and individuals. Both national and local governments have crucial roles to play in responding to climate change. However, the real challenge is to clarify the appropriate roles and responsibilities among institutional actors – both vertically (i.e., national, regional, or district government bodies) and horizontally (i.e., different actors across each level), and how these responsibilities should be supported through collaboration, breaking down the silos, leaving no one behind.

This Section aims to discuss the effective, inclusive, and accountable governance strategies to enhance coordination among different levels of government for climate action. It will converse on how policy coherence through institutional coordination and inclusive participatory governance can successfully contribute to addressing the challenges of climate change and efforts for climate action.

Guiding Questions:

1. What are the current effective, inclusive, and accountable public governance initiatives for climate action? Which ones have worked and what obstacles or barriers have been experienced and encountered?
2. How can these actions be scaled up? What further actions need to be taken to deliver concrete results, making them one of the most innovative, inclusive, and cross-sectoral collaboration to protect the planet for current and future generations?
3. What are the gaps and challenges to achieving carbon neutrality from the public governance perspective (e.g., institutional arrangement, policy coherence, coordination and collaboration between national and local governments, transparency, and ensuring inclusion of vulnerable groups)?

II. Fostering Digital Transformation for Climate Resilience

The use of climate data and digital technology tools can mitigate climate change and contribute to building more sustainable and resilient communities. Digital government tools, particularly open and big data analytics can enable governments to effectively anticipate, prepare, and respond to climate-related risks and disasters. Specifically, big data, both historical and real-time, can help address climate change by locating harmful emissions, identifying pressure points in the environment, and assisting countries to pinpoint the areas that will contribute to the country's climate targets.

Innovative technologies have become increasingly significant in building forward together, especially for those countries in special situations. However, integrating digital data to obtain real-time data and ensure climate resilience still remains a challenge for climate-vulnerable countries such as Small Island Development States (SIDS) and Least Developed Countries (LDCs). While developed nations have rapidly moved to digital platforms during the COVID-19 pandemic, numerous developing countries and LDCs could not afford to do so at a similar scale, thus producing less positive climate contributions. Reliable and comparable climate-related data is crucial for governments to assess climate risks, manage its challenges, and set up plans, policies, and actions for climate resilience.[6]

The objective of this Section is to examine how fostering digital transformation and leveraging digital data governance at the national and local levels will contribute to a resilient, sustainable, and inclusive climate action. Specifically, the Section will address diverse approaches, strategies, and experiences for: i) people (how digital technologies transform the roles of different stakeholders and the governance paradigm for climate resilience), ii) process (the legislative frameworks to engage the private sector by fostering innovative partnerships with youth, women, and CSOs), and iii) technology (upgrading the skills and knowledge of local government officials in leveraging digital technologies such as AI, data analytics, and GIS to improve data access, storage, and usage patterns for climate resilience).

Guiding Questions:

1. What are the national and local government-led initiatives and actions to foster digital transformation and leverage digital data governance for climate action?
2. How can governments harness the potential of digital transformation and digital data governance to effectively anticipate, prepare, and respond to climate crisis and harness climate resilience?
3. What are the challenges and gaps related to the collection, management, and use of data and information for climate action? How is this data effectively communicated with the public and relevant climate-related stakeholders?
4. What are the transformative skills required for digital transformation and digital data governance for climate action especially in LDCs and SIDS?

III. Engaging the Private Sector in Addressing Climate Crisis

Since the adoption of the Paris Agreement in 2015, there has been a dramatic increase in the private sector's interest and action related to climate change with companies committing to net-zero by 2050.[7] To win the race to address climate crisis, we need to take a whole-of-society approach that involves the public and private sectors in the related preparation, response, and recovery efforts. Collaborative partnerships between the public and private sectors can foster innovative and cost-effective approaches that will contribute to more resilient societies and ensure that the response to climate crisis is both sustainable and localized.[8]

[6] ITU (2019). Turning digital technology innovation into climate action. https://www.uncclearn.org/wp-content/uploads/library/19-00405e-turning-digital-technology-innovation.pdf
[7] GET (2020). Engaging with the private sector for greater impact. https://www.thegef.org/newsroom/blog/engaging-private-sector-greater-impact
[8] Reliefweb (2021). World Humanitarian Day 2021: Engaging the Private Sector to Tackle the Climate Crisis. https://reliefweb.int/report/world/world-humanitarian-day-2021-engaging-private-sector-tackle-climate-crisis

Engaging the private sector is essential for multiple reasons. The private sector can leverage government efforts by mobilizing their financial resources and technical capabilities, engage the civil society, and develop innovative climate mitigation and adaptation technologies.[9] Being one of the largest victims of natural disasters, corporations are also in the position to spread climate awareness, as one of their advantages is that they are already situated within the communities. Moreover, companies and investors can play an instrumental role in meeting climate action priorities by greening their supply chains, investing in climate resilient goods and services, and financing climate action.

This Section aims to discuss the approaches and experiences in engaging the private sector in addressing climate crisis. It will discuss various methods to mobilize the private sectors' financial resources and technical capabilities for climate crisis, approaches to further the role of multinational companies, and ways to increase cooperation between the public and private sectors in addressing climate crisis.

Guiding Questions:

1. How is the private sector currently engaged in addressing climate crisis (e.g., through innovative technologies, designing of resilient infrastructure, and the development and implementation of improved information systems)? What obstacles or barriers have been experienced and encountered?
2. What kind of appropriate and cost-effective incentives should be offered to private sectors to change the perception of climate action being the public sector's responsibility?
3. How can multinational companies be engaged in addressing climate crisis with LDCs and SIDS?
4. What is the role of ESG (Environmental, Social, Governance) in encouraging private sector engagement in climate crisis?

IV. Structure and Methodology

The Session will feature three thematic presentations, a Q&A and interactive discussion, and a panel discussion. The Session will also provide the opportunity to introduce UN DESA/DPIDG's Curriculum on Governance for the SDGs, present key findings from DPIDG/UNPOG's analytical work, and share the outcomes and policy recommendations from other recent capacity development activities, including webinars, reports, and workshops.

The Session will be conducted on site – at the Daejeon Convention Centre (DCC), Republic of Korea. The Session will be convened for 90 minutes. It will be conducted in English with simultaneous English-Korean translation.

The recording, presentations, and the final report will be made available after the Session on the UNPOG website at http://www.unpog.org/.

V. Target Audience

This Session will bring together participants from the UCLG member cities. Participants will be composed of central and local government officials, policymakers, public governance experts,

[9] World Bank Blogs (2014). Why We Must Engage the Private Sector in Climate Change Adaptation Efforts. https://blogs.worldbank.org/climatechange/why-we-must-engage-private-sector-climate-change-adaptation-efforts

practitioners, private sectors, civil society organizations, and the academia. At the end of this Session, they will benefit from a more innovative, sustainable, and resilient approaches to climate action, together with the importance of leveraging digital transformation for a sustainable and resilient approach to climate action.

VI. Draft Agenda

Time (KST, GMT+9)	13 October 2022 (Thursday)
14:30-14:35 (5 mins)	**Facilitator: Ms. Hye Yong (Hailey) Kim**, Associate Research & Policy Analysis Expert, UNPOG/DPIDG/UN DESA **Opening Remarks** • **Mr. Kyu Chang Ko,** Head of UN Project Office on Governance (UNPOG), DPIDG/UN DESA **Group Photo**
14:35-15:15 (40 mins)	**Moderator: Mr. Samuel Danaa**, Associate Capacity Development Expert, UNPOG/DPIDG/UN DESA (4 mins) **Effective, Inclusive, and Accountable Public Governance for Climate Action** • **Ms. Hyun Jung Park,** Alternate Member, UNFCCC CDM Executive Board (12 mins) **Fostering Digital Transformation for Climate Resilience** • **Mr. Sean Sharidz Doral**, Programme Officer, ITU Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (12 mins) **Engaging the Private Sector in Addressing Climate Crisis** • **Mr. Nam-soo Choi**, Professor, Seojeong University; Managing Director, SK Securities (12 mins)
15:15-15:30 (15 mins)	**Moderator: Mr. Samuel Danaa**, Associate Capacity Development Expert, UNPOG/DPIDG/UN DESA **Panel Discussion** • **Dr. M Aslam Alam**, Chairman & Executive Director, Bangladesh Institute for Information Literacy and Sustainable Development (BIILSD) (5 mins) - *Effective, Inclusive, and Accountable Public Governance for Climate Action* • **Mr. Keping Yao,** Senior Governance and Public Administration Expert, UNPOG/DPIDG/UN DESA (5 mins) - *Fostering Digital Transformation for Climate Resilience* • **Mr. Joseph Intsiful,** Senior Climate Information and Early Warning Systems Specialist, Green Climate Fund (GCF) (5 mins) - *Engaging the Private Sector in Addressing Climate Crisis*

15:30-15:50 (20 mins)	**Q&A and Interactive Discussion**
15:50-15:55 (5 mins)	**Summary & Wrap-up by Moderator** • **Mr. Samuel Danaa**, Associate Capacity Development Expert, UNPOG/DPIDG/UN DESA
15:55-16:00 (5 mins)	**Closing Remarks** • **Mr. Kyu Chang Ko,** Head of UN Project Office on Governance (UNPOG), DPIDG/UN DESA

VII. Contact Information

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