

# Sustainable Innovation Expo at the UN Environment Assembly 11-15 March 2019



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## Background: the 2019 Sustainable Innovation Expo

The UN Environment Assembly, the world's highest-level decision-making body on the environment, is scheduled to take place 11-15 March 2019 in Nairobi, Kenya. It will focus on the theme *Innovative Solutions for Environmental Challenges and Sustainable Consumption and Production*. It is a theme that is close to all our interests – businesses, governments, civil society and every citizen of the world. Our planet has provided us with an abundance of natural resources, but the way societies use, manage and protect them fundamentally impacts our global well-being.

To find out how we can live within ecological limits under the impacts of our business-as-usual economic activities and create shared values, we will be inviting thought leaders from governments, private sector and civil society to present and discuss the solutions to address these most pressing challenges as we seek to improve our resource efficiency through a circular economy.

This will be done primarily through the *Sustainable Innovation Expo*. Now in its third edition, the *Expo* is the UN Environment's premier solutions-oriented platform that supports the Environment Assembly's mission as the highest-level decision-making body on the environment in the United Nations and which provides leadership on global environmental policies and sets the international environmental agenda.

The 2019 Expo will focus on pressing environmental issues and will be aimed at tackling some of our planet's greatest environmental challenges. Championed by UN Environment, *eco-innovation* is a business approach which promotes sustainability throughout the entire life cycle of a product, while also boosting the performance and competitiveness of businesses.

The *Expo* will comprise:

- **Exhibition space** for showcasing the latest cutting-edge industry and innovative solutions to our environmental challenges. Interested exhibitors can apply for a booth through the 2019 UN Environment Assembly website and will be selected based on the following criteria:
  - The proposed solution must be innovative and address one of the themes and incorporate life-cycle thinking;
  - Adequate regional and gender representation.

(\*To apply for an exhibition slot at the Expo, please visit the application portal <https://papersmart.unon.org/resolution/sie-application> on or before 21 December 2018.)

- **Panel Discussions** in which participants to the Assembly and Expo will share experiences and challenges on solutions to life-cycle challenges. The Life-Cycle sub-themes to be addressed are: resources, energy, chemicals and waste management.
- **Solution Roundtables** that catalyze discussions on thematic solutions;
- **Pop-up Chats** that participants can organize on relevant issues;
- **Networking Space** for creating partnerships.

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## PROGRAMME OF PANEL SESSIONS

*\* Disclaimer: these panels and their timings are tentative*

### Monday, 11 March

#### **10.30-12.00: Panel Session I: Innovative Life-Cycle Approaches for Feeding our World**

The panel of experts will explore energy, water, chemicals, land, and ecosystem-based avenues for integrating or scaling up sustainability in the value chains of key agro-processing, agro-allied production and distribution chains, as well as food outlets across the world. (**Lead:** Economy Division)

### Monday, 11 March

#### **15.00 - 16.30: Panel Session II: Accelerating Actions for Sustainable Textile Value Chains**

Panel will identify opportunities to mainstream eco-innovative approaches in the global fashion, textiles and apparel industry, in ways which minimize energy and resource wastage; limit air quality deterioration; and prevent the pollution of our oceans. (**Leads:** Economy and Communication Divisions)

### Monday, 11 March

#### **16.30 - 17.30: Launch of the UN Alliance on Sustainable Fashion (Media Event)**

The clothing and textiles industry contribute significantly to global pollution through its intensive energy, water and natural resource footprint. However, there is very little momentum globally in mainstreaming environmental sustainability within the global fashion value chain. It is estimated that this unaddressed unsustainable production and consumption of clothing and textiles comes at a cost of over US\$500 billion annually to the global environmental system.

The UN Alliance on Sustainable Fashion will bring together leading actors in the industry. Through the Alliance, the UN commits to changing the path of fashion, reducing its negative social, economic and environmental impact; and turning fashion into a driver of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

### Tuesday, 12 March

#### **10.00 - 11.30: Panel Session III: Working Together to Beat Plastics Pollution**

The panel of leading experts will deconstruct the unsustainable lifestyle patterns of our modern-day consumer society, while identifying solutions to over-consumption, poor consumer choices, wastage, indiscriminate disposal and low-product recovery. (**Leads:** Ecosystems and Economy Divisions)

### Tuesday, 12 March

#### **14.30 - 16.00: Panel Session IV: Mobilizing Sustainable Finance for Eco-Innovation and the Circular Economy**

Panelists will discuss opportunities for investors and financial institutions to mobilize finance to accelerate the development of new innovative ideas on sustainable consumption and production in diverse industrial sectors. (**Leads:** Economy Division [UNEP FI])

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**Wednesday, 13 March**

**10.00 - 11.30: Panel Session V: Harnessing Big Data on the Environment for Sustainable Development**

The Panel will engage formidable corporate and technological players, including start-ups in the information, telecommunications, and digital technology space to identify avenues for using big data and artificial intelligence to drive eco-innovative changes in various local and global supply chains. (Lead: Science Division)

**Wednesday, 13 March**

**14.30 - 16.00: Panel Session VI: Faith and the Earth: Faith-Based Initiatives for Addressing Environmental Challenges**

The Panel will explore the significant role that faith-based organizations and groups can play in encouraging environmentally-friendly and sustainable lifestyles and production. (Lead: Policy and Programme Division)

**Thursday, 14 March**

**10.00 - 11.30: Panel Session VII: Legal Empowerment in Environmental Decision-Making for Sustainable Consumption and Production**

From the standpoints of justice, fairness and equity, the Panel will find ways in which the law can be used to integrate the concerns of less-privileged and under-represented groups into the search for sustainable alternatives to the world's environmental decision-making on production and consumption systems. (Lead: Law Division)

**Thursday, 14 March**

**14.30 - 16.00: Panel Session VIII: Achieving Environmental Sustainability through Education and Sports**

With sports being a unifying tool globally, this session will be aimed at finding ways to use sports, gaming, youth and education to achieve enlightenment for pro-environmental behavioral change that targets both consumers and producers. (Lead: Ecosystems Division)

**Friday, 15 March**

**10.00 - 11.30: Panel Session IX: Leveraging Sustainable Procurement to Transform the Tourism Sector**

At its core, this panel will engage public and private stakeholders to identify untapped opportunities to mainstream eco-innovation, life-cycle thinking and circular economy solutions into public procurement systems in the tourism sector. (Leads: Economy and Ecosystems Divisions)

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