



## SDG Pavilion at COP27

### Side-event Concept Note

**Co-convenors:** United Nations University – Institute for Natural Resources in Africa ([UNU-INRA](#)) and United Nations Economic Commission for Africa ([UN-ECA](#))

**Event Title:** The Informal Sector and the JUSTIS Digital Entrepreneurial Ecosystem: Driving Innovation to Accelerate a Just Energy Transition

**Date:** Wednesday, 9 November 2022

**Time:** 19:30–20:45 (75 minutes)

**Format:** Hybrid

**Stage:** Main Stage (48 in person participants – 6 chairs for speakers on the podium)

#### Objectives and goals of the side-event

The side-event will examine the issue of **just transitions** in Africa as well as the implications and opportunities associated with access, industrialization, job creation, and social inclusion of the **informal sector**, one of the continent's largest productive sectors accounting for [80% of urban employment](#). Africa's green transition prospects will be discussed in depth, with an emphasis on **innovation, green entrepreneurship**, and the role of Africa's oil and gas in a managed transition. This will go a long way towards understanding how to build resilience in the post-covid era and improve inclusive sustainable development in order to expedite the attainment of the SDGs.

#### Summary

The global push toward net-zero emissions requires a swift transition to clean energy systems. Without specific efforts to ensure an equitable transition, including the need to manage the use of Africa's fossil fuel resources as an integral part of the transition, existing inequalities in current energy systems will worsen, resulting in winners and losers. This is especially true for the informal sector, where women constitute the majority.

Africa remains, with the right policies and support, the continent with the greatest potential for growth in clean energy and green transitions, as well as critical minerals for global green and digital transitions. However, Africa still suffers from an energy deficit, with dire consequences for growth, wellbeing and security in all its forms.



Accelerating the transition to green energy necessitates innovative energy solutions, entrepreneurship, and increased investment facilitated by policies. To accelerate green growth and green transitions, the JUSTIS digital portal aims to bridge the gap between green entrepreneurs, policymakers, and investors.

This side event will examine the issue of just transitions in Africa, its implications and opportunities for driving access, climate action, industrialization, job creation, and social inclusion of the informal sector, which accounts for 80% of urban employment on the African continent. The event will discuss how to drive innovation to accelerate energy transitions in a way that includes marginalized groups in order to improve inclusive sustainable development towards accelerated achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Agenda 2063.

The JUSTIS portal will be launched, a digital platform which hosts a community of policymakers, green entrepreneurs, civil society actors and investors to engage and connect in an online marketplace where green entrepreneurs can gain greater visibility, market access and mentorship, investors can engage with green innovators, and policy makers can gain evidence to support inclusive green energy policy decisions.

## Objectives

- Examine transitions that are just within the context of Africa's development priorities.
- Identify opportunities for promoting a green transition inclusive of the informal sector and women in Africa.
- Sensitize African ministers and policymakers to the importance of including the informal sector in Africa's green transition in order to ensure inclusive and just transitions.
- Identify the market opportunities for greening the informal sector and how green entrepreneurs can be encouraged and supported to drive this.
- Discuss methods for accelerating green entrepreneurship and technological innovation.
- Launch the JUSTIS digital portal to promote green business in Africa.

## Agenda

19:30-19:35: Introduction/Opening Remarks UNU-INRA/UNECA)

19:35-20:15: Panel Discussion

- **In the context of Africa's development priorities and energy security, frame just transitions.**
  - The debate in Africa regarding what constitutes a just and compelling green energy transition. (UNU-INRA – Fatima Denton)
  - The role of oil and gas in accelerating Africa's transition to clean energy using the continent's abundant variable renewable energy resources, such as wind and solar. (UNU-ECA – Jean-Paul Adam)



- **Analyzing the informal sector and ways to promote its participation in energy transitions.**
  - Opportunities for greening the informal sector and how green entrepreneurs can be incentivized and supported to drive this transformation. (UNU-INRA)
  - Possibilities for creating green jobs for African women and the gendered dynamics of the informal sector. (Vanessa Ushie, AfDB)
- **Accelerating innovation and green entrepreneurship.**
  - Technology and innovation's role in supporting the green transition. (UN-ECA – Mactar Seck)
  - The role Africa's private sector can play in addressing the continent's investment challenges. (African Energy Chamber – NJ Ayuk)
  - Accelerating clean energy development in Africa and the prospects for green hydrogen. (Namibia – James Mnyupe)

20:15-20:30: Q&A

20:30 – 20:40: Launch of the JUSTIS Portal

20:40-20:45: Closing Remarks (UNU-INRA / UNECA)

\* Remarks on time:

Discussion – 4 minutes per question

Q&A – 1 question per panelist, 3 minutes per question

## Speakers

- Dr. Fatima Denton (UNU-INRA)
- Dr. Jean-Paul Adam (UN-ECA)
- Dr. Vanessa Ushie (AfDB)
- Dr. Mactar Seck (UN-ECA)
- NJ Ayuk (African Energy Chamber)
- James Mnyupe (Namibia Office of The President)

Moderator: Dr. Linus Mofor (ACPC, UN-ECA)

## Resources

The JUSTIS portal: <https://greenafricaportal.net/home>