This session will discuss how the least developed countries can benefit from global and regional energy initiatives, including financing mechanisms, and how to activate climate finance for energy access in order to contribute towards reaching the ambitious targets of SDG 7 and Paris Climate Change Agreement. Deliberations will include enhanced regional collaboration in the sustainable energy sector; partnering with private sector; support provided by international and regional finance institutions and leveraging ODA to effectively advance sustainable energy goals.

The acute energy gap faced by the least developed countries (LDCs) is a binding constraint on their structural transformation. Reliable and affordable access to energy is a key development multiplier with great transformative power. Reliable access to energy is essential for private sector development, productive capacity building and expansion of trade and it also has strong linkages to climate action, health, education, water and food security. Considering the potential that sustainable energy has for the development of the least developed countries, accelerated action is needed in LDCs if Sustainable Development Goal 7 is to be reached by 2030 globally.

The global economy is undergoing marked changes, concerning new technologies, energy consumption patterns and fuel mix. It is important to ensure that LDCs will be able to join this rapid development. As LDCs are still in the initial stage of industrialization, there is a great opportunity to help them leapfrog over traditional fossil-fuel centred paths and move towards a low carbon economy centred on renewable energy and energy efficiency. LDCs face numerous challenges associated with extreme poverty, and therefore “last mile access” to energy has to be prioritized due to its immense impact on poverty and development.

For LDCs, energy and climate are inextricably linked. LDCs contribute the least to climate change, yet disproportionately suffer from its ever-increasing impacts. It is critical to look at the energy climate nexus therefore, with a view to exploring integrated approaches to policy development across relevant sectors.
The majority of LDCs are endowed with ample renewable energy resources, however wider access and adoption is still limited. In addition to the positive climate impacts from a shift to renewable energy generation, there are also considerable socio-economic benefits, including infrastructure development, job creation, health improvements, and education opportunities for women and men.

The session will discuss and analyse how different global and regional energy initiatives can support LDCs to ensure access to climate and energy finance and modern technologies, preventing countries from being locked into unsustainable paths of development.

**KEY QUESTIONS TO BE ADDRESSED IN THIS SESSION**

- What is the scope for regional projects that will accelerate the achievement of SDG 7?
- What are available global and regional funding mechanisms that are best suited to LDCs? What is working well and what will it take to scale them up?
- What are the main challenges LDCs face in accessing and absorbing international climate finance (e.g. GEF and GCF)? How can these be overcome?
- How can ODA be used to better leverage both public and private funding to effectively advance sustainable energy goals in least developed countries?
- How can LDCs gain better access to the latest technologies and innovation in the energy sector?

Partnering with private sector has the potential to spur innovation and investment in local entrepreneurs. What do global and regional energy initiatives need to do to expand the engagement of the private sector in LDCs?

![Link to event](https://bit.ly/2V7ysgl) #EnergyForLDCs