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MCDF BRIEF

News and Reports on Infrastructure Connectivity, Quality, and Partnership

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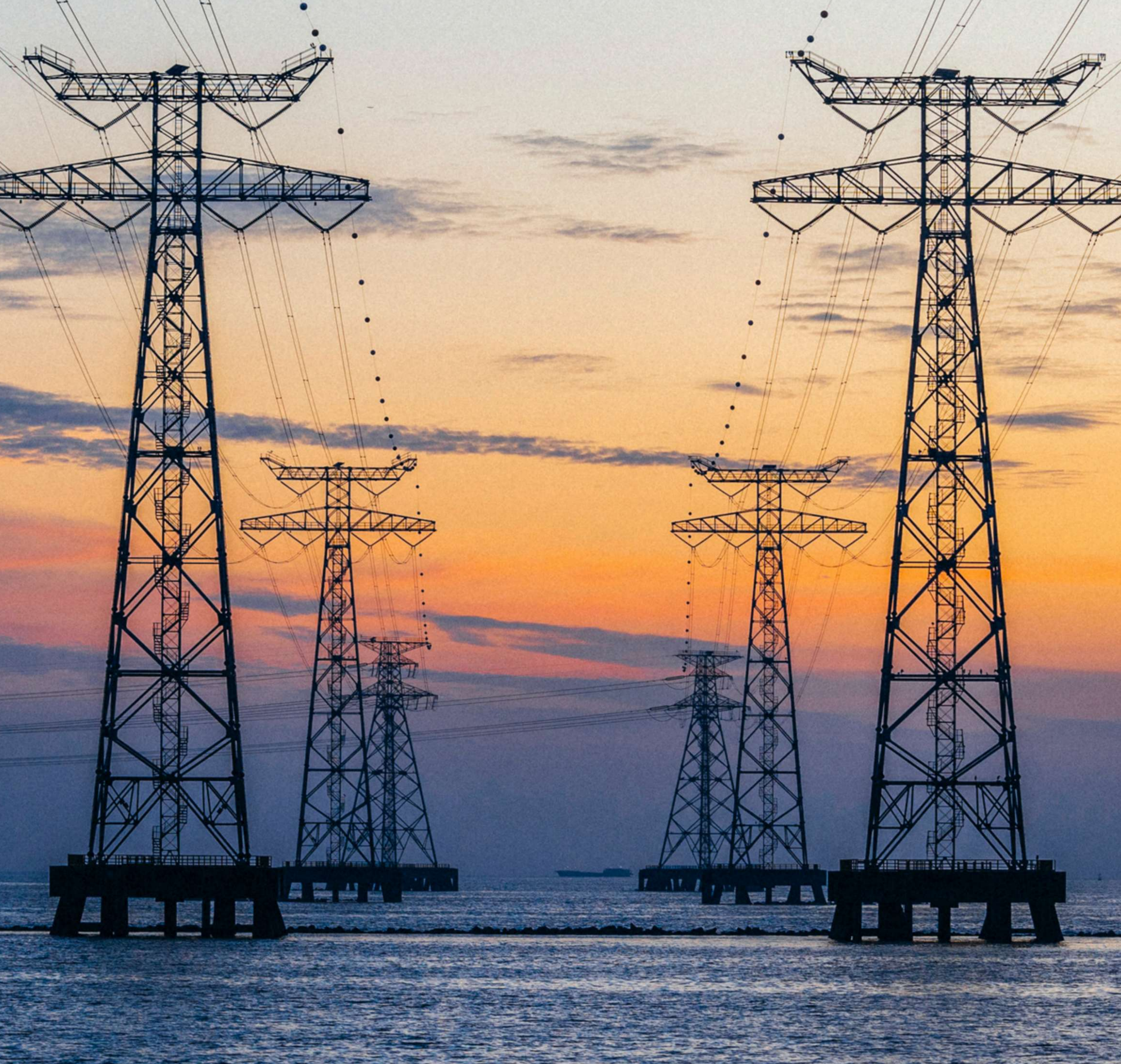

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CONTENTS

CONNECTIVITY[1]

TRANSPORT

Railway: Chile advances rail-port logistics strategy through intermodal freight corridor and San Antonio terminal

Chile's State Railways (EFE) has launched an intermodal freight service linking the Santiago metropolitan region with the Biobío region as part of broader efforts to strengthen rail-based logistics and port connectivity.

A key component of the strategy is the new Barrancas intermodal terminal under development adjacent to the Port of San Antonio, Chile's largest container port. Scheduled to enter service later in 2026, the facility is expected to increase annual container transfers from approximately 50,000 TEU to 250,000 TEU and strengthen integration between port and inland logistics networks. Source: IRJ

Railway: Uzbekistan completes airport rail link connecting Urganch and Khiva

Uzbekistan has completed an 11 km railway linking Urganch International Airport with the national rail network, improving access to the city of Khiva. The project includes a new two-track terminal station at the airport, a bridge, road crossings and associated infrastructure, and is designed to accommodate approximately 650,000 passengers annually.

The new connection is expected to reduce travel times between the airport and Khiva to around 40 minutes and strengthen transport connectivity in one of Uzbekistan's principal tourism regions. The project forms part of broader efforts to improve rail accessibility and support tourism and regional development. Source: Railway Gazette International

Port: Da Nang approves USD 237 million for shared infrastructure supporting Lien Chieu Port in Vietnam

Vietnam's Da Nang People's Council has approved a USD 237 million (VND 6.2 trillion) investment program to develop shared infrastructure for Lien Chieu Port, supporting its role as a regional gateway and easing cargo pressure on Tien Sa Port. Financed by municipal and central government budgets, the project will be implemented during 2026-2030, with project preparation planned for 2026-2027 and construction scheduled for 2027-2030.

The project includes site clearance and land acquisition for relocation of petroleum facilities and development of a dedicated railway connection to the port, construction of a 920-meter breakwater,

[1] 'Connectivity' infrastructure for MCDF refers to the linkage of communities, economies and nations through transport, communications, energy and water networks across countries.

development of three liquid cargo berths across two terminals, and a 5.73-kilometer transport network with supporting infrastructure. The investment is expected to strengthen port operations, logistics services and regional connectivity in central Vietnam and neighboring provinces. Source: Vietnam.vn

Port: JICA provides USD 111 million loan for Sihanoukville container terminal expansion in Cambodia

The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has signed an official development assistance (ODA) loan agreement of up to USD 111 million (JPY 17.776 billion) with Cambodia to support the Sihanoukville Port New Container Terminal Development Project (II). The financing will help expand container-handling capacity at Cambodia's largest international port and strengthen the country's trade and logistics connectivity.

The project includes construction of a new container terminal, dredging of navigation channels and berths, development of a customs inspection yard, procurement of cargo-handling equipment and consulting services for detailed design and construction supervision. The Port Authority of Sihanoukville will serve as the executing agency. Source: Khmer Times

Port: AfDB advances USD 170 million financing package for Luanda Port modernization in Angola

The African Development Bank (AfDB) is advancing a USD 170 million senior debt package for the modernization and expansion of the Noatum Ports Luanda Terminal in Angola, including a proposed AfDB commitment of up to USD 80 million. The project will upgrade the existing multipurpose terminal at the Port of Luanda under a 20-year concession held by AD Ports Group, with total capital expenditure estimated at USD 261 million.

Structured through a limited-recourse financing framework, the project is intended to strengthen Angola's principal maritime gateway, improve trade logistics and support regional economic development. Construction works are expected to be completed in the first quarter of 2027. Source: AfDB

Airport: Contractor selection advances for Ethiopia’s USD 12.5 billion Bishoftu International Airport

Ethiopian Airlines has completed the prequalification stage for major construction packages of the proposed Bishoftu International Airport, a USD 12.5 billion project intended to become Africa's largest aviation hub. The procurement process attracted bids from companies across Asia, Europe, the Middle East and Africa, with contractor appointments now expected in early 2027.

The new airport, located south of Addis Ababa, is being developed to relieve capacity constraints at Bole International Airport and support the continued expansion of Ethiopian Airlines. Project financing remains under development. Ethiopian Airlines plans to finance approximately 30 percent of project costs internally, with the remainder expected to be raised from external lenders. Source: Voice of Africa

Forbes Analysis: *Airport expansion alone will not deliver seamless African air connectivity*

A Forbes article examines Africa's ongoing wave of airport investment and argues that infrastructure expansion must be accompanied by aviation market liberalization to improve regional connectivity. Despite representing nearly 18 percent of the world's population, Africa accounts for only about 2.2 percent of global air traffic, while only 19 percent of potential intra-African country pairs are connected by direct weekly flights.

According to the article, improved market access, lower travel costs and stronger airline networks will be essential to realizing the benefits of aviation infrastructure investments and supporting regional integration, trade and tourism growth across Africa. Source: Forbes Africa

ENERGY

Hydropower: CDP commits USD 92 million to Vietnam's Bac Ai pumped-storage hydropower project

The Italian Climate Fund, managed by Cassa Depositi e Prestiti (CDP), has committed USD 92 million (EUR 80 million) to support development of the 1.2 GW Bac Ai pumped-storage hydropower project in Vietnam. The financing will be provided to Vietnam Electricity (EVN) for construction of the country's first pumped-storage hydropower facility.

Located in Khanh Hoa Province, the facility will comprise four generating units and forms part of Vietnam's Power Development Plan 8. It is also supported under the Just Energy Transition Partnership (JETP) and recognized as a flagship project under the European Union's Global Gateway initiative. The first generating unit is expected to be completed in 2029, with full project completion planned for 2031. Source: CDP

Hydrogen: USTDA backs engineering studies for green ammonia project in Morocco

ORNX Green Hydrogen has selected U.S. engineering company KBR and a consortium including GE Vernova, Electric Hydrogen and Terabase to conduct preliminary engineering and design studies for a proposed green ammonia facility in Laâyoune, Morocco. The studies are being supported through a grant from the U.S. Trade and Development Agency (USTDA) and represent a key step toward a future investment decision for the project.

The proposed facility is expected to produce up to 560,000 tonnes of green ammonia annually and would require approximately 900 MW of electrolyser capacity integrated with renewable energy infrastructure. The pre-FEED study will assess electricity supply options, electrolyser configuration, equipment requirements, commercial viability and financing implications. The project forms part of Morocco's broader green hydrogen strategy, under which six green hydrogen projects with announced investments of USD 34.55 billion (MAD 319 billion) were selected in 2025. Source: ASM

Hydrogen: Saudi Arabia grants ACWA Power mandate for green hydrogen and renewable electricity exports

Saudi Arabia has granted ACWA Power exclusive rights to export green hydrogen and its derivatives, including green ammonia, green methanol and green fuels, to international markets. The company has also been tasked with developing projects for the production, transmission and export of renewable electricity to European and Arab markets as part of the Kingdom's efforts to expand clean energy exports and support economic diversification.

The mandate supports Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 objectives and is intended to position the country as a major supplier of low-carbon energy solutions. According to ACWA Power, the initiative builds on its existing renewable energy and green hydrogen portfolio, including the NEOM Green Hydrogen project. The framework is expected to facilitate the development of integrated renewable energy, hydrogen production and export infrastructure linking Saudi Arabia with international energy markets. Source: ACWA

World Bank report: *Toward a Secure, Affordable, and Resilient Energy Future: Roadmaps for the Pacific Islands*

This World Bank report examines energy transition challenges and financing needs in Fiji, the Federated States of Micronesia, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and Tonga. It finds that Pacific Island Countries remain heavily dependent on imported fossil fuels, resulting in high electricity costs, exposure to fuel-price volatility and vulnerability to climate-related disruptions. While countries have adopted ambitious renewable energy and electrification targets, progress is constrained by weak utility finances, limited institutional capacity, insufficient grid infrastructure and challenges in attracting private investment.

The report estimates that approximately USD 2 billion in investment will be needed by 2030 to expand renewable energy generation, strengthen electricity networks and improve energy access across the five countries. It recommends strengthening utility performance, improving regulatory frameworks, expanding renewable energy and storage deployment, and using concessional finance and risk-sharing instruments to mobilize greater private sector investment in the region's energy transition. Source: World Bank and report

IRENA article: *Three Ways Renewable Energy is Critical for the Industries of Tomorrow*

The International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) has highlighted the role of renewable energy in improving industrial resilience amid continued volatility in fossil fuel markets. According to the agency, advances in electrification technologies, including electric boilers and heat pumps, are expanding opportunities for industrial sectors such as steel, chemicals and cement to replace fossil fuel consumption with renewable electricity.

IRENA also notes that renewable fuels, including bioenergy and green hydrogen, can support decarbonisation of hard-to-abate sectors by providing alternatives to fossil fuel-based feedstocks and energy sources. The agency further identifies growing demand from artificial intelligence and data centres as a potential driver of future renewable energy deployment, suggesting that dedicated renewable generation and microgrids could provide reliable and sustainable power for digital infrastructure. According to IRENA, expanding renewable energy supply can enhance energy security, support industrial development and reduce exposure to future fossil fuel market shocks. Source: IRENA

WATER

TWD Article: *Rethinking Transboundary Water Management*

An article published by the Water Diplomat (TWD), a monthly news and intelligence magazine resource initiated by Geneva Water Hub, argues that existing transboundary water treaties are increasingly ill-suited to contemporary demographic, economic and climate realities. According to the authors, many international river basin agreements were developed decades ago under significantly different conditions and have not been adequately adapted to address rising water demand, climate-driven hydrological variability and changing development priorities.

The article highlights how population growth, economic expansion and worsening droughts and floods are placing increasing pressure on shared water resources worldwide. The authors contend that most transboundary agreements continue to focus on allocating available water supplies while giving insufficient attention to demand management and changing basin conditions. They call for more flexible governance frameworks, periodic treaty reviews, stronger adaptation mechanisms and greater emphasis on water-use efficiency to improve the management of transboundary river basins under future climate and development scenarios. Source: TWD

Al Jazeera Analysis: *Where water conflicts pose the biggest threat in 2026*

An Al Jazeera analysis highlights the growing risks associated with water insecurity and water-related conflicts worldwide. Drawing on data from the Pacific Institute's Water Conflict Chronology, the article notes that 420 water-related conflict incidents were recorded in 2024, a record high and a significant increase compared with previous years. The majority of incidents involved damage to water infrastructure, disputes over access to water resources, or the use of water systems as instruments of conflict.

The article identifies several regions facing acute water-security challenges, where conflict, climate pressures, infrastructure damage and water scarcity have disrupted access to safe water and sanitation services. It also highlights the vulnerability of critical water infrastructure, including reservoirs, desalination facilities, water-treatment systems and distribution networks.

According to the analysis, rising water demand, climate-related water stress, and the increasing exposure of water infrastructure to conflict are creating new challenges for water-resource management and resilience. The article underscores the importance of strengthening water infrastructure, improving water governance and enhancing long-term water security planning in vulnerable regions. Source: Al Jazeera

DIGITAL

Data center: STT GDC secures USD 1.37 billion green financing for data center campus in Malaysia

ST Telemedia Global Data Centres (STT GDC) has secured a USD 1.37 billion green financing package to support the development of the STT Johor data center campus in Malaysia. The project aims to provide scalable and resilient digital infrastructure while supporting growing regional demand for data processing and connectivity services.

Located within the Johor-Singapore Special Economic Zone (JS-SEZ), the facility is expected to strengthen cross-border economic cooperation and reinforce Johor's position as a regional digital infrastructure hub. The project is supported by green financing intended to promote energy-efficient and sustainable digital infrastructure development. Source: ET Data Centers

Cable: Google announces new subsea cable systems linking Latin America, the Caribbean and the United States

Google has announced three new subsea cable systems, Alisios, Canoa and OlaLuz, together with a new branch of the Firmina cable, as part of its Americas Connect program to strengthen digital connectivity across the Americas. The investment will expand links between Chile, Panama, the Dominican Republic, Bermuda and the United States, while improving connections to Google Cloud infrastructure in North America, Europe and Latin America.

The Dominican Republic will serve as a key hub for the new network, hosting landings for all three cable systems and the Firmina branch. Alisios will connect Chile, Panama and the Dominican Republic, while Canoa will link the Dominican Republic with Bermuda and existing regional cable networks. OlaLuz will provide a direct connection between the Dominican Republic and Florida. Google said the new infrastructure is intended to enhance the capacity, resilience and reliability of digital communications across the region while supporting future growth in data traffic and cloud services. Source: Google Cloud

Cable: UNIFI, STE and CYTA sign agreement for Cyprus-Syria submarine cable

UNIFI Communications, the Syrian Telecommunications Establishment (STE) and the Cyprus Telecommunications Authority (CYTA) have signed a construction and maintenance agreement for the UGARIT 2 submarine cable, a 240-kilometer fiber-optic system linking Syria and Cyprus.

The project will replace the existing UGARIT cable, which has been in operation since 1995, and is expected to enter service in early 2028. Prysmian will supply the submarine cable, Elettra TLC will undertake marine installation, and Nokia will provide optical transmission equipment for the first phase. The new system is intended to strengthen Syria's international digital connectivity by providing a direct link to Cyprus and onward access to European and global communications networks. Source: Submarine Networks

IFC note: *Risks and Opportunities in Data Center and AI Investment in Emerging Markets*

A new World Bank Group analysis examines the rapid expansion of data center and artificial intelligence (AI) infrastructure across emerging markets and developing economies (EMDEs). The report finds that EMDEs are becoming increasingly important destinations for data center investment as global cloud providers and AI firms expand digital infrastructure to support growing demand for AI services. Since 2000, nearly 3,000 data centers have been built across EMDEs, with investment rising from around USD 6 billion in 2015 to more than USD 25 billion in 2026. Asia has emerged as the leading destination, while countries such as Malaysia, India, Brazil, South Africa, Kenya and the United Arab Emirates are attracting significant new investments.

The report highlights both opportunities and challenges associated with AI-driven infrastructure expansion. It notes that data centers can support productivity growth, digital transformation, employment creation and broader technology ecosystems, but also place growing pressure on electricity systems. Global data center electricity demand is projected to more than double by 2030, and without parallel investments in power generation, transmission networks and renewable energy, AI-related growth could increase energy costs, strain electricity systems and complicate climate objectives in many developing economies.

The report concludes that AI infrastructure can become a significant driver of economic development, provided that digital expansion is accompanied by investments in energy, connectivity, skills development and supportive regulatory frameworks. It emphasizes that coordinated policies linking digital infrastructure development with power-sector planning and grid modernization will be critical for enabling countries to capture the benefits of AI while managing associated energy and environmental risks. Source: IFC and note

UNCTAD article: *Ensuring AI benefits everyone is key to development in the global South*

This UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD) article examines the opportunities and risks that artificial intelligence (AI) presents for developing economies. It notes that the global AI market could reach USD 4.8 trillion by 2033, with applications already supporting healthcare delivery, education and climate-risk management. However, AI capabilities remain concentrated among a small number of countries and firms, while many developing economies face limited access to digital infrastructure, computing capacity, data and technical skills.

The article highlights that fewer than one-third of developing countries have national AI strategies, and that many countries remain underrepresented in global AI governance discussions. It argues that expanding access to electricity, broadband connectivity, data resources and workforce skills will be essential for enabling developing economies to benefit from AI. The article also highlights the importance of open-source innovation, international cooperation and capacity-building initiatives to support more inclusive and equitable AI adoption. Source: UNCTAD

TRADE AND REGIONAL INTEGRATION

China-ASEAN trade expands as regional connectivity and supply-chain integration deepen

Trade between China and ASEAN continued to expand in 2026, supported by growing regional supply-chain integration and improvements in cross-border transport connectivity. China's trade with ASEAN reached USD 645 billion (RMB 4.34 trillion) in the first half of 2026, an increase of 18.2 percent year-on-year, while trade in intermediate goods rose 24.5 percent to RMB 2.86 trillion, accounting for nearly two-thirds of total bilateral trade.

The article highlights the role of regional initiatives such as the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) and the China-ASEAN Free Trade Area in facilitating cross-border production networks and reducing trade costs. Transport infrastructure is also contributing to deeper integration. Freight services between Guangxi and Vietnam have increased in frequency, while the China-Laos Railway handled USD 2 billion (RMB 17.17 billion) in imports and exports during the first half of 2026, up 33.8 percent year-on-year. In addition, the Pinglu Canal, a key component of the New International Land-Sea Trade Corridor, is approaching operational readiness and is expected to strengthen connectivity between southwest China and ASEAN markets. Source: Global Times

ASEAN advances digital trade and supply-chain integration initiatives

Senior economic officials from ASEAN member states concluded preparatory meetings in Manila ahead of the ASEAN Economic Ministers' Meetings, advancing several initiatives aimed at strengthening regional supply chains, economic resilience and digital trade integration. Discussions focused on the proposed ASEAN Semiconductor Roadmap, measures to support micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), and the ASEAN Economic Security Framework, which seeks to strengthen resilience against trade disruptions and supply-chain shocks.

Officials also reviewed preparations for the ASEAN Digital Economy Framework Agreement (DEFA), which is expected to be signed at the 49th ASEAN Summit later this year. The agreement is intended to establish region-wide rules covering areas such as digital trade, e-commerce, digital payments and cybersecurity. Participants further discussed trade and economic cooperation with external partners and the integration of Timor-Leste into ASEAN economic frameworks. Source: Philippine Information Agency

QUALITY

ENVIRONMENT, SOCIAL AND GOVERNANCE

Tajikistan launches Central Asia's first sovereign sustainable finance framework

The Government of Tajikistan has launched Central Asia's first Sovereign Sustainable Finance Framework, enabling the future issuance of green, social and sustainability bonds and loans aligned with international standards. The framework, developed by the Ministry of Finance with support from the World Bank Group's Sustainable Finance Advisory Program, received an independent second-party opinion and the highest "Excellent" rating from the AIFC Green Finance Centre.

The Eurasian Development Bank (EDB) financed the second-party opinion through its Technical Assistance Fund, which supports project preparation and investment readiness across member countries. The framework is intended to support financing for renewable energy, clean transportation, water management, ecosystem protection and social infrastructure projects. It also establishes the foundation for Tajikistan's inaugural sovereign green bond issuance, aimed at attracting sustainable investment and strengthening climate and social financing in the country and the wider Central Asian region. Source: EABR

CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT

CDB and GCF provide USD 27.1 million to strengthen climate early warning systems in Belize and Trinidad and Tobago

The Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), through its partnership with the Green Climate Fund (GCF), is supporting a USD 27.1 million program to strengthen hydrometeorological services and multi-hazard early warning systems in Belize and Trinidad and Tobago. The financing includes a USD 24.1 million GCF grant, USD 1.2 million from CDB and USD 1.88 million in counterpart funding from the two governments.

Implemented by the Caribbean Meteorological Organisation in partnership with national agencies, the project will improve the capacity to monitor, forecast and communicate weather, water and climate-related hazards. The investment aims to enhance resilience to hurricanes, floods, droughts, heatwaves and sea-level rise while reducing climate-related losses and supporting sustainable development objectives. Source: CDB

Africa Circular Economy Facility expands support for circular economy roadmaps across Africa

The Africa Circular Economy Facility (ACEF), a multi-donor trust fund administered by the African Development Bank Group, is expanding its National Roadmaps for the Circular Economy program to additional African countries. Under the program's second phase, Angola, Liberia, Madagascar and Senegal will develop national circular economy roadmaps, while Benin, Chad, Ethiopia and Mauritius will advance to implementation of previously developed strategies.

The initiative aims to help countries identify priority sectors, strengthen institutional coordination and create policy frameworks that can support investment and economic transformation. Priority sectors identified through existing roadmaps include construction, agriculture, manufacturing, forestry, textiles, energy, water management and plastics.

According to the African Development Bank, the roadmaps are intended to strengthen domestic value creation, support industrial development and generate investment opportunities while advancing climate and green-growth objectives. Through ACEF and the African Circular Economy Alliance, the Bank provides technical assistance to establish enabling policy, regulatory and institutional environments for circular economy development across the continent. Source: AfDB

UNDCO Article: *From Risk to Opportunity: De-risking Namibia's Green Transition*

A United Nations article highlights Namibia's efforts to leverage its renewable energy resources to support green industrialization, job creation and sustainable development through investments in green hydrogen and biomass value chains. According to the article, eight large-scale green hydrogen projects are currently under development in Namibia, representing an estimated USD 24.34 billion (NAD 390 billion) in investment potential. Namibia is also among the countries eligible for concessional financing through the Climate Investment Funds' Industry Decarbonisation Programme.

The article examines developments at the Dâures Green Hydrogen Village and the Hyphen Hydrogen Energy project, which aim to combine renewable energy production with economic diversification, skills development and local participation. At Dâures, local communities hold an ownership stake in the project and benefit from employment, training and small-business opportunities, while the Hyphen project is expected to support large-scale green ammonia production and employment creation. The article notes that workforce development, institutional capacity, community participation and access to finance will be critical to translating green hydrogen investments into long-term economic and social benefits.

The article further highlights the role of United Nations agencies in supporting skills development, job creation, social protection and policy frameworks aimed at promoting a just transition and ensuring that emerging green industries contribute to inclusive and resilient economic growth. Source: Joint SDG Fund and UNDCO

ECONOMIC RECOVERY

World Bank report: *Small Governments, Big Ambitions: Fiscal Policy in East Asia and Pacific*

A new World Bank report argues that East Asia and Pacific economies have historically pursued a "growth-enabling" fiscal model characterized by relatively low taxes, restrained public spending and strong investment in infrastructure. While this approach supported rapid growth, macroeconomic stability and poverty reduction, it also contributed to underinvestment in education, health, social protection and climate adaptation, which may constrain the region's transition to high-income status.

The report finds that economic growth in the region has become increasingly dependent on capital accumulation, while productivity gains have slowed. It highlights growing challenges from population aging, climate risks and persistent inequality, and notes that many economies face gaps in human capital and fiscal capacity. Although public investment levels remain relatively high, spending on education and health generally lags that of peer economies.

The report calls for a new "growth-enhancing" fiscal compact centered on higher-quality public spending, particularly for human capital development, infrastructure upgrading, climate adaptation and social protection. It recommends strengthening domestic revenue mobilization through broader consumption, property, carbon and health taxes, while improving public investment management, tax administration and fiscal institutions to increase efficiency, support resilience and sustain long-term growth. Source: World Bank and report

PROCUREMENT, ANTI-CORRUPTION, TRANSPARENCY AND DISCLOSURE

U4 Anti-Corruption Resource Centre report: *Understanding corruption risks in devolved climate finance: Implementation vulnerabilities in the 'Financing Locally-Led Climate Action' programme in Kenya*

A new report from the U4 Anti-Corruption Resource Centre examines governance and corruption risks associated with Kenya's devolved climate finance model, focusing on the World Bank-supported Financing Locally-Led Climate Action (FLLoCA) programme. The study finds that while devolved climate finance can strengthen community participation and locally led adaptation, climate funds remain vulnerable to elite capture, political interference, procurement irregularities and weak oversight mechanisms.

According to the report, corruption risks emerge throughout the project cycle, including project selection, procurement, budget execution, inspection and payment processes. The report notes that corruption can weaken adaptation outcomes by contributing to poor-quality infrastructure, incomplete projects, inequitable benefit distribution and reduced resilience among vulnerable communities. To strengthen accountability, the report recommends stronger disclosure of project and expenditure information, enhanced coordination with oversight institutions, improved protection of climate finance allocations, and greater support for civil society and community monitoring of climate investments. Source: U4 Anti-Corruption Resource Centre and report

PARTNERSHIP

MCDF NEWS AND ACTIVITIES

Kenya Principal Secretary for Foreign Affairs Visits MCDF CEO at its Secretariat to Strengthen Partnership

MCDF Chief Executive Officer Zhongjing Wang met with Kenya's Principal Secretary for Foreign Affairs, H.E. Dr. Abraham Korir Sing'oei, in Beijing on 31 July to discuss strengthening cooperation on high-quality connectivity infrastructure investment in Kenya, East Africa and across the region.

The discussions reviewed ongoing collaboration between Kenya and MCDF, including Kenya's participation in MCDF workshops on digital infrastructure and public-private partnerships, engagement in the MCDF Finance Facility replenishment process, and implementation of the USD 3.15 million MCDF Finance Facility project preparation grant supporting the Mau Summit-Malaba Road PPP Project. The project aims to improve trade and transport connectivity along the Northern Corridor linking the Port of Mombasa with Kenya's hinterland and neighboring countries.

Participants highlighted the importance of project preparation, innovative financing and institutional capacity building to develop bankable connectivity infrastructure projects aligned with international standards and good practices. They also discussed opportunities for deeper collaboration on digital infrastructure development and regional knowledge sharing.

MCDF welcomed Kenya's agreement to host the MCDF Connectivity Investment Conference on Africa Digital Infrastructure in Nairobi on 3-4 December 2026, which will be co-organized with the African Development Bank and other international financial institutions. The meeting also explored the potential establishment of an MCDF Regional Learning Center in Nairobi to support capacity building on project preparation, infrastructure finance and public-private partnerships across Africa. Source: MCDF

XNAI Delegation and MCDF CEO Discuss Strengthening Knowledge Collaboration

Senior representatives from the Xiamen National Accounting Institute (XNAI) met with MCDF Chief Executive Officer Zhongjing Wang in Beijing on 12 August to discuss strengthening cooperation on knowledge sharing and capacity building to support high-quality connectivity infrastructure investment in developing countries.

The discussions focused on opportunities to expand collaboration in areas including environmental, social and governance (ESG) standards, procurement, integrity, compliance and infrastructure-related training. Participants highlighted the importance of applying international financial institution (IFI) standards and good practices in the preparation and implementation of connectivity infrastructure projects.

The meeting also reviewed ongoing cooperation between MCDF and XNAI, including their collaboration on the annual Asia-Pacific Integrity and Compliance Forum. The fourth forum is scheduled to be held in Beijing on 8-10 September 2026. Discussions further covered the forthcoming launch of the MCDF Learning Center at XNAI, development of a potential knowledge-sharing network, and longer-term capacity-building programs for developing countries.

CEO Wang noted that anticorruption, antifraud, integrity and compliance are important foundations for high-quality connectivity infrastructure investment and emphasized the value of strengthening cooperation on procurement and ESG standards. Source: MCDF

MCDF participates in EDB Academy workshop on multilateral development bank cooperation

The Eurasian Development Bank (EDB) Academy convened a regional workshop on multilateral development banks (MDBs), bringing together representatives of government agencies, development institutions and financial organisations from seven Eurasian countries to discuss project preparation, financing instruments, technical assistance and cooperation among development institutions.

MCDF participated in the workshop through Ayumi Konishi, Senior Advisor to the Chief Executive Officer, who joined an international expert session on cooperation among MDBs. Discussions focused on co-financing opportunities, harmonisation of standards and procedures, knowledge sharing, and strengthening coordination among development institutions operating in the region.

Mr. Konishi highlighted the importance of collaboration and complementarity among MDBs and noted the potential for stronger cooperation between MCDF and the EDB. He also highlighted the forthcoming MCDF Central Asia Fund, which is expected to support high-quality connectivity infrastructure project preparation and capacity building across Central Asia. Source: EDB

INFRASTRUCTURE FACILITIES, FUNDS AND INITIATIVES

Canada and AfDB deepen partnership to mobilize capital for African infrastructure and development

The African Development Bank Group (AfDB) and Canada are strengthening cooperation through a more integrated investment framework that seeks to align development finance, climate finance, export finance and private-sector engagement to support infrastructure and economic development across Africa. The approach aims to enhance project preparation, capital mobilization and private investment through closer coordination between AfDB platforms and Canadian financing institutions.

Recent commitments supporting the partnership include Canada's USD 180.41 million (CAD 250.3 million) contribution to the seventeenth replenishment of the African Development Fund, USD 72.07 million (CAD 100 million) for the Agri-SME Catalytic Financing Mechanism and a USD 7.21 million (CAD 10 million) equity investment in the African Guarantee Fund. Canada has also expanded support through the Canada-African Development Bank Climate Fund, including an additional USD 100.89

million (CAD 140 million) commitment under its second phase. The partners expect the enhanced framework to support resilient infrastructure, climate projects, agribusiness development and private-sector investment across African countries. Source: AfDB

AfDB and CDP back RMBV North Africa Fund III with USD 35 million

The African Development Bank Group has approved a USD 15 million equity investment in RMBV North Africa Fund III, a private equity vehicle targeting mid-market growth companies across North Africa. The investment is expected to support businesses in sectors including consumer goods and services, healthcare, education and financial services, while promoting private-sector growth, job creation and improved access to essential services.

The investment was jointly considered with Italy's development finance institution, Cassa Depositi e Prestiti (CDP), which has approved a USD 20 million equity commitment through the Growth and Resilience Platform for Africa (GRAf). Promoted by Italy and the African Development Bank Group, the platform seeks to strengthen investment partnerships and mobilize capital to support economic development across Africa. In addition to providing capital, the fund will support portfolio companies through managerial and operational expertise to help accelerate growth and business expansion. Source: AfDB

IFIS TOGETHER

CDB contributes USD 1 million to CAF fund supporting Venezuela's recovery and reconstruction

The Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) has approved a USD 1 million contribution to CAF – Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean's Fund for the Recovery and Reconstruction of Venezuela. The fund was established following the June 2026 earthquakes in Venezuela to support emergency response, rehabilitation, recovery and reconstruction priorities identified by the government.

The contribution will support the restoration of essential services and critical infrastructure, as well as longer-term resilience-building activities. The initiative provides a mechanism for governments, development institutions and other partners to coordinate assistance and mobilize resources for recovery efforts. CDB stated that the contribution reflects regional solidarity and demonstrates how multilateral institutions can work together to support countries affected by major disasters. Source: CDB

IFIS AND DEVELOPING COUNTRY FINANCIERS

EBRD provides USD 75 million trade finance facility to Al Mansour Bank in Iraq, supporting import and export transactions

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) is providing a trade finance limit of up to USD 75 million (EUR 65 million) to Al Mansour Bank for Investment (MBI) under its Trade Facilitation Programme. The facility will provide guarantees and cash advances to support import and export transactions by covering political and commercial payment risks associated with cross-border trade.

The facility is expected to expand the availability of trade finance in Iraq, strengthen MBI's correspondent banking network and improve access to international markets for Iraqi businesses, including micro, small and medium-sized enterprises. The support will facilitate trade across sectors including agriculture, construction, manufacturing and consumer goods. The investment will also be accompanied by technical assistance and training on compliance, fraud prevention, risk management and trade finance operations. Source: EBRD

AfDB adds Mauritius Commercial Bank to trade finance guarantee programme

The African Development Bank (AfDB) has approved Mauritius Commercial Bank (MCB) as a confirming bank under its Trade Finance Transaction Guarantee Instrument. The arrangement will enable AfDB to provide transaction-by-transaction guarantees covering up to 100 percent of the non-payment risk assumed by MCB on eligible trade finance transactions originated by approved African issuing banks.

The partnership is intended to support cross-border trade across Africa by expanding access to trade finance, particularly in markets where correspondent banking relationships and credit lines remain limited. According to AfDB, the initiative will help address Africa's trade-finance gap and improve access to trade-finance solutions for small and medium-sized enterprises. The facility is expected to support both intra-African trade and trade between African economies and international markets. Source: AfDB

OTHER NEWS AND ANALYSES ABOUT PARTNER IFIS

AIIB approves first loan to South Africa: a USD 500 million loan to support municipal services reform

The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) has signed a USD 500 million sovereign-backed loan with South Africa to support the South Africa Metro Trading Services Program, marking AIIB's first investment in the country. The program aims to improve the financial sustainability, accountability and operational performance of metropolitan municipal services, including water supply and sanitation, electricity and solid waste management.

Co-financed by the World Bank as part of a broader USD 3 billion government-led program, the initiative uses a performance-based financing approach to support reforms in governance, financial management and service delivery while encouraging climate-smart investments. The program is expected to strengthen institutional capacity, reduce non-revenue water from 41 percent to 28 percent and lower electricity losses from 22 percent to 12 percent by 2031, benefiting South Africa's eight metropolitan municipalities, which generate about 85 percent of the country's economic output. Source: AIIB

HARNESSING PRIVATE FINANCE

NDB and India discuss mobilising private capital for infrastructure and sustainable development

The New Development Bank (NDB) and the Government of India convened a seminar on mobilising private capital for infrastructure and sustainable development on the sidelines of the first BRICS Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors meeting under India's 2026 chairship. The event brought together government officials, financial institutions, private-sector representatives and development finance experts to explore practical approaches for scaling private investment in infrastructure across BRICS member countries.

Discussions focused on strengthening project bankability, improving risk-mitigation mechanisms, expanding local-currency financing solutions and fostering partnerships capable of attracting private capital into infrastructure and sustainable development projects. Participants highlighted the role of multilateral development banks in improving investment conditions, building investor confidence and supporting the development of bankable project pipelines. The seminar also examined innovative financing approaches and technologies to help mobilise long-term capital for resilient and sustainable infrastructure. Source: NDB

UPCOMING EVENTS

MCDF

4th Asia-Pacific Integrity and Compliance Forum

Time: 8-10 September 2026 09:00–17:15 (GMT+8)
Place: AIIB Headquarters in Beijing, China and online via Zoom
Organizer: MCDF, ADB, AIIB, XNAI, CHINCA

Objective: Now in its fourth year, the forum brings stakeholders together to discuss integrity opportunities and challenges, international integrity standards, and practical ways to strengthen business integrity. It is designed to help infrastructure contractors and consultants better understand and apply integrity and compliance good practices that support successful participation in projects financed by International Financial Institutions (IFIs). The forum consists of the following four parts:

High-Level Forum (8 September)
Speeches and panel discussions featuring government officials, representatives of IFIs and businesses, and academics in the Asia-Pacific and beyond which will examine emerging trends, standards, and broader insights on strengthening integrity in international business.

Capacity Building Workshops (8-10 September)
In-depth technical workshops focused on sharing knowledge on practical aspects of integrity compliance to drive procurement success.

Business Opportunities Fair (10 September)
Panel session in which participating IFIs will share procurement opportunities and strategies.

Law Firm Session (10 September)
New session bringing together legal practitioners and IFI integrity representatives to discuss developments in the international and Chinese integrity landscape, including regulatory and policy trends.

Participants in the forum will have the opportunity to:

- Learn from, and collaborate with, integrity experts from leading IFIs, who will share their insights on the central role of business integrity in today's business and development environment
- Join hands-on workshops that equip participants with practical tools required to strengthen integrity risk management within their own organizations and manage these risks consistently
- Engage with other practitioners and build stronger professional networks
- Request further support through the feedback survey at the end of the forum

The event is a three-day hybrid event, to be held at Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) headquarters in Beijing, China and online via Zoom.

Speaker presentations will be in English and Chinese, with simultaneous translation provided in both languages. All presentation slides will be in English. Presentations and related knowledge products will be uploaded on the MCDF website. Participants will engage through small group discussions, question-and-answer sessions at the end of each panel discussion, and a bilateral meeting service on request.

If you would like to learn more about the forum, or get in touch with the IFI co-organizers, please contact XNAI's Zhouyun Wu (rbrf@xnai.edu.cn) and MCDF's Lulu Meng Gu (meng.gu@themcdf.org).

Target participants: The forum is tailored for senior management and legal and compliance professionals from companies in the Asia-Pacific who participate in, or are interested in participating in, IFI-financed projects; government bodies and international institutions involved in the development, promotion, and dissemination of anticorruption and integrity compliance standards for infrastructure projects; and scholars and other experts.
Registration: Here
Source: MCDF

OTHERS

Public Debt Management Conference 2026

Time: 10 -11 September 2026
Place: Paris, France
Organizer: OECD, Italian Treasury, World Bank

Objective: The Public Debt Management Network, an initiative jointly fostered by the OECD, the Italian Treasury, and the World Bank, is organizing the 4th Public Debt Management Conference at the OECD Headquarters, Paris, France, on September 10-11, 2026. The event is aimed at promoting the sharing and advancement of knowledge on public debt management among practitioners, institutions and academics.

The 4th edition of the Conference will focus on key topics including fiscal policy and debt sustainability in a context of macroeconomic uncertainty, sovereign debt restructuring, sustainable debt instruments. Furthermore, new findings on primary and secondary market functioning and investor dynamics, as well as transparency and governance in debt management strategies, will be presented and discussed.

The Conference will feature a keynote address by Sir Robert Stheeman, non-executive Director, Morgan Stanley, and former CEO of the UK Debt Management Office.

The Conference will be held in-person. If you are interested in participating, please complete the registration form. The deadline for the registration is July 23, 2026. A confirmation message regarding participation will be communicated by 31 July 2026. Please note that, due to limited capacity at the venue, participation is subject to confirmation.

Participants are expected to cover their own travel, accommodation, and related expenses. Practical information, including directions to the OECD and nearby hotels, is available on the OECD Conference Centre page.

The visa application process may take up to four weeks. Participants are therefore encouraged to apply well in advance via the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs website. Please note that the OECD is not in a position to assist with visa arrangements. European Union citizens do not require a visa to enter France. For any questions regarding the Conference organisation, please contact publicdebt@oecd.org.

Registration: Here
Source: PDM Network

CASI Sustainability Forum in Hong Kong Green Week: *Shaping Inclusive Transitions in Asia: Enhancing SMEs' Resilience and Adaptation to Climate Change*

Time: 11 September 2026
Place: Hong Kong, China and online
Organizer: CASI, IFFO, UNDP, HKU, CFA Institute

Objective: As climate change, social inequality, and economic transformation converge, economies worldwide face the challenge of delivering low-carbon transitions that are both just and inclusive, particularly for SMEs. In Asia, this requires coordinated policies, innovative finance, and practical local solutions.

During the third Hong Kong Green Week in September 2026, the Capacity-building Alliance of Sustainable Investment (CASI), together with the HKMA Infrastructure Financing Facilitation Office (IFFO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the University of Hong Kong (HKU), and the CFA Institute, with support from Sprinkles (HK) Charity Foundation and the Asian Development Bank (ADB), will convene a one-day forum bringing together policymakers, financial institutions, development finance institutions, and market practitioners. The forum will feature keynote speeches and three thematic panel discussions on inclusive transition finance for SMEs, climate adaptation, and practical approaches to strengthening resilience, while reinforcing Hong Kong's role as a regional and international sustainable finance hub.

Target participants: Senior decision-makers from governments, MDBs, financial institutions, corporates, academia, and international organizations.
Registration: Here
Source: CASI

OECD Interim Economic Outlook 2026

Date: 23 September 2026
Organizer: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

Objective: The OECD will present its latest *Interim Economic Outlook*, providing updated projections for GDP growth and inflation across G20 economies, the OECD area, the euro area and global aggregates. The event will feature presentations by OECD Secretary-General Mathias Cormann and OECD Chief Economist Stefano Scarpetta, followed by discussion of recent economic developments and outlook trends.

Target participants: Policymakers, international financial institutions, development practitioners, researchers, private sector representatives and media.
Format: In-person and webcast.
Source: OECD

8th World Bank/ ODI Global / IFS Public Finance Conference

Time: 24 - 25 September 2026
Place: Washington DC, USA and streamlined
Organizer: World Bank, ODI, IFS

Objective: We are pleased to announce the 8th World Bank/ODI Global/Institute for Fiscal Studies Public Finance Conference, taking place in Washington, DC on September 24-25, 2026, hosted by the Development Economics Vice Presidency and the Fiscal Policy Unit of the World Bank. This annual conference brings together researchers, policymakers, and practitioners to discuss cutting-edge research on public finance of relevance for low- and middle-income countries (L&MICs).

We primarily focus on research related to L&MICs but also welcome relevant studies from high-income contexts. We invite submissions across all areas of public finance, including:

- Tax Policy and Administration
- Subsidies and Compensation/Wage Bill Reforms
- Political Economy of Fiscal Reforms
- Public Financial Management, Public Goods Provision, and Procurement
- Cash Transfers, Social Protection and other Poverty Alleviation, and Inequality Reduction Programs
- Artificial Intelligence in Public Finance

We are pleased to feature Nathaniel Hendren, Professor of Economics at MIT and Founder/Co-Director at Policy Impacts, as our keynote speaker.

The conference will take place in person in Washington DC with streaming available for non-presenting attendees. Presenters are expected to attend in person. The organizers will arrange economy-class travel for invited presenters.

Target participants: Researchers, policy makers.
Registration: No need for the streamlining.
[Source: World Bank]

Global AI and Digital Summit 2026

Time: 19 – 22 October 2026
Place: Seoul, Republic of Korea and online with selected live streams.
Organizer: World Bank and Korea

Objective: The world is changing at extraordinary speed, and AI and digital technologies are reshaping economies, industries, and the future of work. The Global AI & Digital Summit 2026 comes at a pivotal moment, as countries seek not only to keep pace with technological change, but to turn it into more and better jobs, higher productivity, and broader opportunity. With 1.2 billion young people entering the workforce in developing countries over the next 10-15 years, how AI and digital technologies drive growth and expand access to jobs is a defining challenge of our era.

Hosted by the World Bank Group together with the Republic of Korea's Ministry of Science and ICT and Ministry of Finance and Economy, the Summit will bring global leaders to explore how AI and digital transformation can deliver practical development gains. The Summit will also highlight the importance of responsible AI that builds trust to ensure that innovation serves people and development goals.

The Summit will spotlight how digital access, affordability, ecosystems and AI readiness are the foundation for unleashing inclusive digital and AI solutions. And how practical, context-specific AI applications can strengthen businesses, improve public services, and expand access to opportunity, including in low-connectivity environments. Across sectors such as agriculture, health, education, tourism, and government services, the emphasis is on how digital tools and AI can help countries translate innovation into results.

By bringing together governments, development partners, private sector leaders, researchers, civil society, and youth, the Summit aims to help shape a more inclusive AI and digital future in which technology works for people and economies alike.

Target participants: Governments, development partners, private sector leaders, researchers, civil society, and youth.
Registration: By invitation only except for the live-stream sessions.
Source: World Bank

EFSD International Economic Conference: *Towards Balanced Economic Development*

Time: 29 October 2026
Place: Astana, Kazakhstan
Organizer: Eurasian Fund for Stabilization and Development (EFSD)

Objective: The EFSD International Economic Conference will bring together deputy ministers, central bank representatives, officials from international financial institutions, academics and experts to discuss long-term economic development challenges across Eurasia. The conference will feature the launch of an EFSD flagship report examining labor market trends in Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, including the links between demographics, labor productivity, employment and economic growth.

Discussions will also address methodologies for estimating potential GDP and identifying key drivers of sustainable long-term growth. The event aims to promote policy dialogue and the exchange of practical approaches to strengthening economic resilience and supporting balanced economic development across the region.

Target participants: Government officials, central bank representatives, international financial institutions, researchers and economic policy experts.
Registration: Details to be announced.
Source: EFSD

31 Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC (COP 31)

Date: 9-20 November 2026
Location: Antalya EXPO Center, Antalya, Türkiye
Organizer: United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Government of Türkiye

Objective: Türkiye will host the thirty-first session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 31), together with the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP 21) and the eighth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA 8). The conference will bring together governments, international organizations, development finance institutions, private-sector participants and civil society representatives to advance global climate action and implementation of the Paris Agreement.

Topics: Climate finance, adaptation, mitigation, resilience, energy transition, sustainable infrastructure, carbon markets, nature-based solutions, technology deployment and international cooperation.

Participants: Governments, multilateral development banks, international organizations, private-sector representatives, investors, civil society organizations, researchers and development practitioners.

Source: UNFCCC

Africa PPP Infrastructure Finance, Investment & Partnerships Summit (Africa PPP) 2026: *Building Africa's Prosperity: Transformative Infrastructure, Investment and Partnerships to Accelerate Economic Development*

Time: 11 – 13 November 2026
Place: Nairobi, Kenya
Organizer: Kenya, AMETrade

Objective: The 16th Africa PPP Infrastructure Finance, Investment & Partnerships Summit will take place in Nairobi on 11–13 November 2026, focusing on how Africa can convert infrastructure ambitions into bankable projects, investable pipelines and practical public-private delivery partnerships. The event comes as Kenya's PPP Directorate reports 51 PPP projects, including 10 under implementation and 41 at different stages of preparation, and as the country advances a National Infrastructure Fund to mobilize private and institutional capital while reducing reliance on public debt.

At continental level, the summit responds to a shift from capital scarcity toward more effective capital deployment. Africa Finance Corporation's 2026 infrastructure report notes that non-bank domestic capital pools exceed USD 2 trillion and pension and insurance assets exceed USD 1 trillion, underscoring the need for stronger project preparation, risk-sharing tools and integrated infrastructure systems linking energy, transport, industry and digital networks. Against this backdrop, Africa PPP 2026 will convene governments, PPP units, infrastructure agencies, MDBs, DFIs, institutional investors, commercial lenders, developers and advisers to move projects from concept through preparation, procurement, financial close and implementation.

Sessions will examine infrastructure as a driver of regional integration, industrialization and productive growth, including how national development plans can become credible PPP pipelines, how domestic savings can be channeled into infrastructure, and how MDBs, DFIs and regional development banks can help de-risk projects and mobilize private capital. Kenya will provide a practical host-country context as an East African logistics, financial, digital and industrial hub linked to regional priorities including corridors, power transmission, affordable housing, water, special economic zones and EAC and AfCFTA trade flows.

The programme will cover roads, rail and border infrastructure for intra-African trade; bankable energy, transmission and regional power trade; water, health, housing and waste PPPs; ports, maritime logistics and aviation; and infrastructure for agriculture, agro-industrialization and food security. A full-day pre-conference masterclass on 11 November, *From Vision to Investment*, will provide practical guidance on project preparation, pipeline development, procurement strategy, investor due diligence, contract structuring and implementation. Curated meetings, project discussions, networking sessions and technical and investment visits will support focused engagement among project owners, capital providers, advisers and delivery partners.

Target participants: Open to all.
Registration: Here
Source: 16th edition of Africa PPP

World Bank Group Land Conference 2027

Time: 17 – 21 May 2027
Place: Washington DC, USA and streamlined
Organizer: World Bank

Objective: The World Bank Group Land Conference has catalyzed the global land community for over 20 years. The Land Conference is the premier global forum for the land sector, bringing together participants from governments, development partners, civil society, academia, and the private sector to showcase policy-relevant research, discuss technical issues and sector good practice, and inform our dialogue.

The Land Conference also aims to encourage cross-sectoral knowledge exchange and has incubated numerous investments, initiatives, and research projects led by diverse stakeholders, including the Voluntary Guidelines, the Land Governance Assessment Framework, and the Stand for Her Land Campaign. The theme for the 2027 Land Conference will be *Land Markets for Jobs and Growth*. Stay tuned for updates on registration and the call for proposals, expected in October 2026.

Target participants: Open to all.

Registration: No need for the streamlining.
Source: World Bank

MCDF Brief

The bi-weekly Brief is a collection of news, research, analysis, and case studies/best practices, featuring "connectivity", "quality" and "partnership" to facilitate information and knowledge sharing among MCDF partners and potential partners. Topics cover but are not limited to: transport; communications; water; climate and energy; digitalization; debt sustainability; biodiversity; procurement; environmental, social, and governance (ESG) including anti-corruption safeguards; and transparency and information disclosure.

About MCDF

The Multilateral Cooperation Center for Development Finance (MCDF) is an independent multilateral initiative to foster high-quality infrastructure and connectivity investments that adhere to the Accredited International Financial Institutions (IFIs) Standards.

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