



Dear colleagues,

Over the past months, three versions of our GIZ cross-project synthesis paper “Build Forward Better: Integrating Responses to the COVID-19 Pandemic with Transformative Climate and Sustainability Action” have provided you with **insights on what a sustainable, inclusive and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic could look like**. The paper traced the evolution of the “green recovery” discourse, proposed concrete measures for action and – in the annex “Green Recovery Actors Library” – provided an overview of how governments as well as relevant institutions, think tanks and NGOs at the national and international level position themselves on the subject.

Your positive reactions have encouraged us to produce this **biweekly Build Forward Better (BFB) Briefing, compiling the latest “green” stimulus measures and propositions** by governments, international organisations, academia and other actors. It also includes a selection of (virtual) **events and resources** on the topic. As more and more COVID-19 recovery measures emerge, the focus of this briefing series will gradually shift towards their **implementation** and **assessment**. We will take a closer look at IKI partner countries’ efforts to build forward better and focus on specific topics and sectors. To make this most useful and relevant for your work, **your thematic suggestions and inputs are highly appreciated**.

While rhetoric about the need to build forward better has grown louder in the policy space, instruments to assess the scope, scale and quality of concrete “green” measures are only emerging. This first briefing features a **spotlight on monitoring hubs** that have been set up over the past weeks.

We hope you find our BFB Briefing insightful and look forward to your feedback.

Best regards,
CDCPIII, GET, SDG-RI & SPA

#01 Monitoring - 20 July 2020

The biweekly **Build Forward Better Briefing** compiles the latest “green” stimulus packages, measures and ideas by government, multilateral organisations, research institutes and other actors at the national and international level. It shares insights on how a **sustainable, inclusive and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic** could look like.

This briefing is a **collaborative product by several Berlin-based GIZ IKI projects** (Capacity Development for Climate Policy in Southeast & Eastern Europe, South Caucasus and Central Asia, Phase III; Green Economy Transformation in Cooperation with the Partnership for Action on Green Economy (PAGE); Support Project on SDG Review and Implementation Processes; Support Project for the Implementation of the Paris Agreement). The opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily coincide with views of the organisation.

Government

Global

- [The latest report](#) by Vivid Economics and the Finance for Biodiversity Initiative shows that in 14 out of 17 **major economies** potentially damaging flows (\$3.5 trillion) into sectors that have a large and lasting impact on nature outweigh those supporting nature.
- Similarly, [data by Energy Policy Tracker](#) shows a total commitment of at least \$151 billion from **G20** governments in support of fossil fuels. Of them, only 20% make financial support conditional on green requirements, such as setting climate targets or implementing pollution reduction plans. \$89 billion has been committed to clean energy, but 81% of this support is unspecific about environmental safeguards. Fossil fuel producers and high-carbon sectors, such as airlines, are currently receiving 70% more recovery aid than the clean energy sector.
- The **C40 Global Mayors COVID-19 Recovery Task Force** announced an [agenda](#) for a “green and just recovery” from the pandemic. The proposal calls for substantial investments in affordable housing and public transportation, the permanent banning of cars from many city streets, the end of public investment in and subsidies for fossil fuels, and for creating so-called “[15-minute cities](#)”.

Africa

- **54 African heads of state** have published an [ambitious plan](#) to ensure stimulus spending in Africa is used to “build back better” after COVID-19. The recommendations formulated by the Global Center on Adaptation and the African Adaptation Initiative cover three key systems affected by both the pandemic and climate change: food production, water management and infrastructure.
- **Nigeria** is set to unveil a N65 billion [stimulus package](#) to support the Organised Private Sector. 40% of this stimulus will be reserved for women-owned businesses.
- **South Africa** considers selling a [green infrastructure bond](#) worth tens of billions of rand as part of its biggest drive ever to kickstart private investment in energy to water reticulation projects.
- [Fossil fuel subsidies](#) in **Sudan** are reformed under pressure from international donors, with the aim to mitigate the vicious cycle of monetised deficits and currency collapse. As rising prices could further burden the difficult economic situation of many people, authorities plan to offset the increase in the cost of living with a cash support programme.

Asia & Oceania

- Except for South Korea, the **regional** report card on a green recovery from the COVID-19 crisis so far falls short of its potential, according to analysis by [Nikkei Asian Review](#) and [Eco-Business](#).
- **China**, departing from usual practice, did [not announce a target for economic growth](#) this year, raising hopes for a shift from a quantity-based economic development model to a more quality-

based one. However, the country reported its [economy grew by 3.2%](#) in the second quarter of the year, relying on heavy industrial output and traditional infrastructure construction.

- **Indonesia** announced a \$1 billion [solar power project](#) to drive a green economic recovery, dubbed the “Solar Archipelago” (Surya Nusantara) plan. The scheme is expected to generate 22,000 jobs and save the government billions of dollars in electricity subsidies.
- **Malaysia** has turned to [large-scale solar](#) as an engine of its COVID-19 recovery plans, targeting smaller and local ventures with 1 gigawatt worth of tender contracts. The project is estimated to bring around \$1 billion in investment and create 12,000 new jobs. The [stimulus plan](#) also includes \$2.9 billion for rooftop solar panels and LED street lighting.
- **New Zealand** announced a \$3 billion [infrastructure fund](#) that will help create more than 20,000 jobs. The investment package includes about \$210 million for climate resilience and flood protection projects and \$155 million for transformative energy projects.
- **South Korea** outlined a [plan](#) to spend \$94.6 billion on its “Green New Deal”, aiming to move Asia’s fourth-largest economy away from its heavy reliance on fossil fuels and create about 1.9 million jobs through 2025. The plan envisages investment in smart grids, electric vehicles and hydrogen cars, the promotion of remote medical services and work-from-home policies for businesses and schools, and state loans for the installation of renewable energy.

Europe

- EU leaders are reconvening for a fourth day of negotiations (20 July) at a **European Council** summit to discuss the 2021-2027 EU budget (MFF) and the proposed €750 billion COVID-19 recovery package. President Charles Michel’s initial [proposal](#) earmarks 30% of spending for climate-related projects and urges for compliance of the [MFF and Next Generation EU](#) with the EU’s climate goals and Paris Agreement. A [new study](#) by Agora Energiewende and Climate & Company warns, however, that the EU’s long-term budget and recovery fund risk leaving a vast shortfall in green investment.
- **Denmark** put forward a [climate deal](#), paving the way for an increased carbon tax. The deal is aimed at reducing CO₂ emissions by 70% by 2030 and established two “energy islands” to triple the country’s wind power production. Investments will be made in carbon capture and greener fuels.
- **Finland**’s fourth supplementary [spending package](#) (€5.5 billion) places an emphasis on “ecological re-building”. It is dedicated to COVID-19 recovery efforts that invest heavily in well-being programs for young people, climate initiatives, education and affordable housing projects. A significant portion of the stimulus is earmarked for sustainable public transport infrastructure.
- **France** intends to invest €100 billion in an [economic recovery](#) that is “industrial, ecological, local, cultural and educational”. President Emmanuel Macron announced that priority will be on investments to fight climate change, such as increasing freight transport by rail and subsidising energy efficiency improvements.
- **Spain**’s third largest regional economy, Andalucía, set up a [plan](#) to invest €1 billion into water infrastructure, the local economy, climate-related projects and natural spaces. The development is estimated to generate 20,000 jobs in the region.
- The **UK** has outlined the key details of a [£3 billion plan](#) intended to create thousands of “green-collar” jobs, improve energy efficiency and conserve natural resources. Moreover, the country’s energy minister announced the government’s plans to set up a state-backed [Green Investment Bank](#) to facilitate green infrastructure investment to help revive the UK’s struggling economy.

Central & South America

- **Argentina**’s government announced [plans for a “New Deal”](#), with the goal of transforming the country’s economic system into a “nobler capitalism”. Infrastructure works will be carried out in various states, with a focus on public works and [strategic sectors](#), potentially including mining, oil and gas and agribusiness, as well as electromobility.
- **Jamaica** has become the 11th country globally to submit an [updated NDC](#). The COVID-19 crisis has hit the nation hard, particularly its big tourism sector, and has had a ripple effect on rural livelihoods

which rely on the climate-sensitive fisheries and agriculture sectors. The new NDC includes targets for forestry and land use and toughens goals for GHG emissions from energy.

North America

- Presidential candidate **Joe Biden** announced a \$2 trillion [clean energy proposal](#) with a strong focus on the Green New Deal agenda.
- The **US Senate** passed the [Great American Outdoors Bill](#), aiming to generate up to 100,000 jobs through works in national parks and public lands. The legislation, which President Trump has vowed to sign, would direct nearly \$2 billion per year to the restoration of national parks, land conservation to ward off the impacts of climate change and the creation of parks and playgrounds in urban areas.

International Organisations, Partnerships & Alliances

- The **Coalition of Finance Ministers for Climate Action** released a [new paper](#) targeted at Ministries of Finance and Economy, discussing policy options in the field of economic and financial policies.
- A COVID-19 recovery in Africa should address the fundamental causes of vulnerabilities and go beyond fiscal and monetary adjustments whose sole aim is to ensure the survival and perpetuation of the current system of production, consumption and distribution, according to a [new discussion paper](#) published by the United Nations **Economic Commission for Africa** (ECA).
- **GIZ** and the **Partnership for Collaborative Climate Action** published a [discussion paper](#) on how to increase ambition in NDCs through collaborative climate action as part of a green recovery.
- The [World Energy Outlook Special Report](#) by **IEA** and **IMF** sets out a sustainable recovery plan for governments on how to boost economic growth, create millions of jobs and put global greenhouse gas emissions into structural decline.
- The **OECD Policy Brief** “Building a coherent response for a sustainable post-COVID-19 recovery” presents a policy coherence roadmap, which can support governments in ensuring that recovery from the COVID-19 crisis does not come at the expense of their efforts to achieve the SDGs at home and abroad.
- A new study by **UNDP** explores “[Lessons from COVID-19 for a Sustainability Agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean](#)”.
- The **UNEP Policy Brief** “Building Back Better: the Role of Green Fiscal Policies” talks about how and which green fiscal policies can play a key role in countries’ recovery efforts by removing inefficiencies in public expenditures and raising additional fiscal revenues.
- The [New Nature Economy Report](#) by the **WEF** warns that the world cannot return to business-as-usual after COVID-19, as today’s destruction of the natural world threatens over half of global GDP. A nature-led recovery could generate \$10 trillion a year and 400 million jobs.

Research Institutes, NGOs & Media

- **BloombergNEF** in its [paper](#) “Green Stimulus: Life, But Not As We Know It” examines the best opportunities to most effectively drive clean growth and revive floundering economies across the power, transport, buildings and industrial sectors. Similarly, **Bloomberg Green’s** [article](#) “How to Grow Green” discusses 26 ways to launch a clean energy future out of the pandemic recovery.
- The **IASS Policy Brief** “Moving as One: Integrating the Health and Climate Agendas for Planetary Health in a Post-Pandemic World” recommends that health professionals engage strategically with climate planning processes and to use climate finance to unleash health co-benefits.
- The [handbook](#) “Energy transition 2030: Europe’s path to carbon neutrality” by the German National Academy of Sciences **Leopoldina** recommends “no regret” measures, the introduction of a cross-sectoral CO₂ price, including a minimum price, and comprehensive changes to infrastructure.
- The reports in **Rocky Mountain Institute’s** [Green Stimulus and Recovery Series](#) present a framework for planning and evaluating stimulus efforts along with recommendations for green stimulus and recovery investments and actions specific to the United States, China, India, Sub-Saharan Africa and the Caribbean that can help optimize efforts to rebuild in these countries and regions.

- “Harnessing International Climate Governance to Drive Green Post-Pandemic Recovery”: A new [discussion paper](#) by the **Wuppertal Institute** advocates for international cooperation and exchange.

Events & Resources

- The climate change think tank **E3G** sends out an excellent email digest twice a week, summarising the latest policy responses to the COVID-19 crisis. Email Juliet.Phillips@e3g.org to sign up.
- The [Green Growth Knowledge Platform](#) and [Climate Online](#) provide an overview of upcoming webinars on a green recovery from the COVID-19 crisis.
- **WRI** has compiled a comprehensive list of [‘Best Reads on Building Back Better from COVID-19’](#) that allows browsing resources by countries/regions and sectors.
- The **Corona Sustainability Compass** (CSC) is a joint [blog](#) by Umweltbundesamt, Future Earth, the International Science Council (ISC) and Foundation 2°, where scientists, business decision-makers and politicians present their visions of a sustainable future.

Spotlight: Monitoring Hubs

- The [Energy Policy Tracker](#) by IISD, SEI, **Columbia University et al.** provides information about public funding commitments and other government policies related to the production and consumption of energy in the G20 countries since the beginning of the pandemic – with weekly updates.
- In an interactive grid, **Carbon Brief** [tracks the green recovery measures](#) proposed, agreed and implemented by major economies around the world. The tracker is updated regularly and includes stimulus measures that have a direct bearing on climate change or energy. Countries/regions included to date are China, Denmark, EU, Germany, India, South Korea, UK.
- The [Green Stimulus Index](#) by **Vivid Economics** is an assessment of the orientation of COVID-19 stimulus in relation to climate change, biodiversity and other environmental impacts. The overall Greenness Index is an indicator of the total fiscal spending categorised as either a positive (green) or negative (brown) impact on the environment. Among other factors, it considers corporate bailouts, international assistance flows into developing countries and labour market reforms.
- The [IMF Policy Tracker](#) summarizes the key economic responses governments are taking to limit the human and economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The tracker includes 196 economies.
- What are countries doing to contain the spread of the coronavirus? How are countries helping people, small businesses and the economy to weather the crisis and beyond? The **OECD** [Country Policy Tracker](#) helps navigate the global response.
- Although not primarily focused on COVID-19 responses, the **World Bank’s** [COVID-19 data hub](#) provides a vast array of real-time data, statistical indicators, and other types of data relevant to the coronavirus pandemic, e.g. on the economic and social impacts of the pandemic and the World Bank’s efforts to address them.