

Friends of Fossil Fuel Subsidy Reform Network

THE NETWORK FOR ACTION

The Friends of Fossil Fuel Subsidy Reform (FFFSR), Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade from New Zealand and the Global Subsidies Initiative (GSI) of the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) would like to invite you to a series of virtual roundtables to discuss the practical and technical implications and implementation of fossil fuel subsidy reform across a variety of areas.

Why a series of virtual roundtables on FFSR

The objective of the roundtables is to create an international network of government officials to share breakthrough knowledge, experiences and encourage innovative thinking on topics related to FFS and their reform.

Fossil fuel subsidies have direct economic, environmental, social and trade impacts, holding us back from a low carbon future and incentivizing a non-efficient consumption of energy. The reform of FFS is a key element to achieve the Paris Agreement and the SDGs, among others.

[Link: learn more about FFSR](#)

The virtual roundtables will engage participants in discussions about current topics related to fossil fuel subsidy reform. Each roundtable will consist of a presentation by an expert followed by a forum for questions and discussion under the [Chatham House Rule](#). Participants will be able to ask questions and share their views and experiences within this restricted forum.

Who should join

The roundtables are limited to nominated government officials, advisors, regulators and policy makers involved in the process of subsidy reform around the world. Officials of the ministries of finance, energy and environment are particularly welcome.

The participation is on “invite-only” basis and mandatory for at least four of the five virtual roundtables.

In case of not being able to join a specific session, participants can eventually designate other colleagues working in the topic to join that discussions.

Topics and schedule

The five virtual roundtables will cover most pressing fossil fuel subsidy reform related topics, and will be scheduled ahead of major international events to provide additional information and arguments to support relevant negotiations.

Current scheduled roundtables are the following

	Topic	Description	Date
#1	Peer Reviews	G20 and APEC countries have committed to phase out FFS, being voluntary peer reviews of a country's FFS a first step to it, encouraging transparency and discussion. Self- and peer reviews of FFSs are a tool for increasing transparency and accountability for the policies that potentially act against sustainable development. 12 countries around the world have completed or committed to such reviews under the G20 or the APEC processes. This webinar will explain how peer reviews work, what are the advantages, and will answer questions from interested economies.	March 22 nd , 2018 Thursday
#2	Communications	A key step of any reform is the communication to the population and managing the public opinion. Engagement and communications with the general public and civil society stakeholders are crucial to ensure a smooth, inclusive, bottom-up approach to reform. This webinar will share country lessons.	April 26 th , 2018 Thursday
#3	FFS reform to sustainable energy ("SWAPS" and climate impacts)	In addition to having positive climate impacts, the reform of FFS unlocks public finances that can be used to fund other government's sustainable development priorities. This is called a SWAP. The webinar will present the concept, impact, current examples of SWAPS and propose potential cases.	June 14 th , 2018 Thursday
#4	Mitigation measures and cash transfers to the poor	One of the main pillars of an effective reform of subsidies to fossil fuels is to ensure that reforms are implemented in a manner that safeguards the poorest. This webinar will share country experiences.	September 20 th , 2018 Thursday
#5	TBC	Several topics will be proposed to participants to vote. Participants are also invited to propose topics of their interest. Potential options will be: LPG subsidies, electricity subsidies, FFS and trade, FFS and gender, etc	October 25 th , 2018 Thursday

How to join

In order to maintain a frank and ongoing discussion across the year, the participation in the roundtables is an 'invitation-only' basis and the attendance to at least four of the five webinars is mandatory.

The aim is to develop a strong network and organize for a physical meeting in 2019.

Participants are requested to register no later than March 16th, 2018. To register, please fill in and send the enrolment form by email to lsanchez@iisd.org.

Technical requirements

In order to assure an effective participation, participants are required to join from a quiet place and with good internet connection.

The virtual roundtables will be done using the online conference tool [Zoom](#). Participants will be requested to register to the webinar and will receive a link and a call-in phone number to join the virtual roundtable (please note that participants joining by phone call-in will not be able to watch the live presentation nor the live messenger discussion during the presentation). Participants are kindly requested to join the session a few minutes before the session starts to ensure the best possible technical conditions.

Sharing documents

The sessions will be under [Chatham House Rule](#), so that the virtual roundtables will not be recorded. However, we will share the expert's presentations and other related information with the participants via [this shared drive folder](#). The agenda and other logistics documents will be also saved in that folder. Should you encounter any issue accessing the shared folder, please email to lsanchez@iisd.org.

THE FFFSR

Set up in June 2010, the Friends of Fossil Fuel Subsidy Reform is an informal group of non-G20 countries aiming to build political consensus on the importance of fossil fuel subsidy reform. Current members of the Friends group are Costa Rica, Denmark, Ethiopia, Finland, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and Uruguay.

The Friends work internationally within forums such as the G20, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the UN Sustainable Development Agenda to promote the benefits of reform, and to provide information and tools to facilitate reform.

The Friends recognize that there are political, social and economic challenges to face when removing fossil fuel subsidies, and that reform takes time. The Friends also recognize the importance of taking into account vulnerable groups and their developmental needs. Subsidy reform must be carefully designed.

The Friends have a proven track record of organizing timely seminars to promote reform and to share country experiences and best practices in implementing energy reform. Across these events, the Friends have involved high-level speakers from countries such as Angola, Costa Rica, Egypt, Ethiopia, Honduras, Indonesia, Jordan Mexico, Ukraine, as well from international organizations such as the Asian Development Bank (ADB), World Bank, APEC, OECD, International Energy Agency (IEA), International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Global Subsidies Initiative (GSI) of IISD and The Prince of Wales's Corporate Leaders Group.

[Link: learn more about the Friends of FFSR here](#)