



Press Release

New Broadband Commission climate report confirms technology is the key to a low-carbon future

Governments urged to harness the power of information and communication technologies to dramatically cut emissions

Geneva, 2 April 2012 – Broadband can help transition the world towards a low carbon-economy and address the causes and effects of climate change, according to a new report just released by the [Broadband Commission for Digital Development](#).

The Broadband Bridge: Linking ICT with Climate Action is the result of work conducted by the Broadband Commission Working Group on Climate Change, chaired by Hans Vestberg, President and CEO of Ericsson and comprising several members of the Commission, representing industry, international organizations, and NGOs.

The report aims to raise awareness of the pivotal role information and communication technology (ICT), and particularly broadband networks, can play in helping creating a low carbon economy of the future, and highlights the importance of public private partnerships in accelerating change. It is based on interviews, case studies and supporting material from more than 20 leaders and experts in the field.

“Addressing climate change implies completely transforming our way of life, the way we work, the way we travel, shifting our model of development to a fairer, more sustainable model to ensure our survival. We need to put at stake all the resources available to us, and mobilize the political will to turn discussions and negotiations into agreements and actions,” said ITU Secretary-General Dr Hamadoun Touré.

Building on the agreements achieved at the 2011 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP-17), the report emphasizes the kind of transformative solutions that are enabled by broadband. It provides practical examples of how broadband can contribute to reducing greenhouse gasses (GHGs), mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change, and promoting resource efficiency, while at the same time building more prosperous and inclusive societies.

“The understanding of the benefits that broadband can bring is at a global tipping point. Its role in GDP growth, in enabling the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and offsetting the effects of climate change is just now starting to be understood, because finally the deployment is there and the benefits can be realized. In today’s economic climate, societies need to develop, and with a solutions-driven approach to climate change, we can accelerate a new type of green growth while supporting global sustainable development goals,” said Hans Vestberg, President and CEO, Ericsson and Chairman of the Broadband Commission Working Group on Climate Change.

Last year UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon stressed the importance of harnessing ICTs to improve the lives of people worldwide. In a message to the fourth meeting of the Broadband Commission for Digital Development in Geneva in October 2011, he said: “It is clear to me that information and communication technologies are transforming our world. Today, there is no part of modern life that is not affected by ICTs. With well over five billion mobile cellular subscriptions, and more than two billion people online, our challenge is to leverage the enormous power of technology to make the world a better place.”

In the lead-up to the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) in June, the report presents ten recommendations from the Broadband Commission for policymakers and global leaders to hasten and strengthen the power of ICT and broadband to accelerate global progress towards a low-carbon economy:

1. **Lead with vision:** adopt a long-term National Broadband Plan/Strategy based on universal affordability and accessibility, open markets and innovation, and consciously connect this to your climate goals.
2. **Bring convergence:** Bring convergence to ICT policy formulation so that it aligns with other policy areas such as energy, health, education and climate in order to maximize impact.
3. **Ensure regulatory certainty:** Ensure clear regulatory rules and regulations on climate and broadband to create a framework of investment certainty.
4. **Be an example:** drive cross-ministry collaboration and integrated decision-making to align climate and digital goals, and use government procurement to send the right market signals.
5. **Foster flexibility:** identify and remove the regulatory and policy barriers currently hindering research and investment in 21st century ICT-based broadband-enabled infrastructure and low carbon solutions.
6. **Provide incentives:** encourage uptake of low-carbon solutions and support market change by rewarding or incentivizing desired consumer behaviours. Spur innovation among individuals, companies and sectors.
7. **Build the market:** fund and facilitate scalable pilots to demonstrate feasibility and effectiveness of broadband as an enabler of low-carbon solutions and build a strong business case to attract private investment.
8. **Form partnerships:** cultivate connectivity and 'co-creativity' across public, private and non-governmental sectors and industries to help develop a collaborative mindset, shared goals and a common language, and to help break down silos.
9. **Measure and standardize:** develop harmonized metrics and measurements and common standards for calculating both the environmental impacts of ICTs and the positive contribution technology can make to other sectors – from individual products to systems, and from individual households to the city and/or national levels.
10. **Share knowledge and raise awareness:** actively disseminate project findings, share best practice and learn from mistakes to identify success factors and facilitate leapfrogging, especially among less developed markets. Communicate the opportunities and synergies that can be achieved through an integrated, trans-sector approach to digital development infrastructure and low carbon solutions.

The 5th meeting of the Broadband Commission is taking place today, Monday 2 April, in Ohrid, Macedonia, hosted by the Macedonian Ministry of Information Society and Administration.

Download the full version of the new report at:

<http://www.broadbandcommission.org/Documents/Climate/BD-bbcomm-climate.pdf>

Download a 1-page 'highlights' document at:

<http://www.broadbandcommission.org/Documents/Climate/Broadband-bridgefinal-lowresNowm.pdf>

Watch a video interview with Dr Hamadoun Touré and Climate Change Working Group Chairman Hans Vestberg at: <http://bit.ly/HjMe3i>.

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