

## Plenary Panel 3

### Climate Action in the Telecom Sector: A Dual Approach to Net Zero

**Date and time:** 15:30 - 16:30 a.m., November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023

**Venue:** Ballroom 1, Royal Orchid Sheraton Hotel & Towers, Bangkok, Thailand

#### Abstract:

Climate change exerts unprecedented pressure on the planet's ecosystems and human societies. It is a call to action, demanding innovative and swift responses. Telecommunications networks, often seen as mere vehicles for connectivity, now emerge as powerful catalysts in the fight against climate change. Research indicates that digital technologies and telecom networks can curtail greenhouse gas emissions by an impressive 15-20%. And yet, despite this potential, digital climate policies remain conspicuously absent from national climate mitigation agendas.

Telecommunications not only have the potential for internal sustainability but, more importantly, they can be a transformative force, enabling substantial GHGe reductions across various consumer and industrial sectors. The question, therefore, is not just how telecom companies can achieve net zero, but how can they usher a broader swath of society towards this goal?

Our esteemed panel will delve into three critical questions, unraveling the symbiotic relationship between telecom networks, digitization, and climate action:

- ◆ **Beyond Net Zero for Telecoms:** How can telecom networks amplify GHG abatement across both industrial sectors and individual consumers? What opportunities lie at the confluence of connectivity and sustainability?
- ◆ **Digitizing Industries:** In what ways can governments foster a broader digital transformation across industries, thus capitalizing on the inherent energy efficiencies and carbon reduction opportunities?
- ◆ **Regulatory Synergies:** What foundational regulatory considerations and policies can maximize the potential of networks and digital technologies to drive national and global GHG emission reductions?

#### Speakers:

**Stephen Schmidt**, ITS Chair and Vice President, TELUS, Canada

**Seongheol Kim**, Professor, School of Media and Communication, Korea University, Korea

#### Moderator:

**Stanford L. Levin**, Emeritus Professor, Department of Economics and Finance  
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, USA

## Plenary Panel 3: Participants

### Speakers



**Seongheol Kim**, Professor, School of Media and Communication, Korea University, Korea

Dr. Seongcheol Kim is a professor in the School of Media and Communication at Korea University. He is the founder and director of the Center for Media Industry (CMI) and the Center for ICT and Society in Korea. He is also the former president of the Korean Association for Information Society (KAIS) and Korea Media Management Association (KMMA) and a member of the Board of Directors for the International Telecommunications Society (ITS). He is also an associate editor of Telecommunications Policy journal, a member of several governmental commissions in Korea.

He received his BBA and MBA from Seoul National University in Korea and an MA in Telecommunication and PhD in Mass Media from Michigan State University in the U.S. Since 1989, Dr. Kim has worked for not only academia but also business and government. As of May 2020, he has published more than 56 research papers in international journals and 57 research papers in Korean journals. He also has published 22 books with his colleagues. He teaches media management and emerging digital media.



**Stephen Schmidt**, ITS Chair and Vice President, TELUS, Canada

Mr. Stephen Schmidt is Vice-President Telecom Policy & Chief Regulatory Legal Counsel at TELUS Communications. As Vice-President, Telecom Policy & Chief Regulatory Legal Counsel at TELUS, he leads a multi-disciplinary team of regulatory professionals responsible for (i) making policy and legal submissions to the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC), ISED, the Competition Bureau, the Federal Cabinet and other government bodies; (ii) for conducting and directing appellate advocacy before the Federal Courts and the Supreme Court of Canada; and (iii) for advising on compliance with public law frameworks for telecommunications, both in Canada and internationally. In June of 2016, he was elected as Chair of the Board of the International Telecommunications

Society (ITS), an international forum where academic, private sector, and government communities can meet to identify pressing new communications policy problems and issues, share research results, and develop new approaches to address these issues. He has been a Board member of the ITS since 2004.

## Moderator



**Stanford L. Levin**, Emeritus Professor, Department of Economics and Finance, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, USA

Dr. Stanford L. Levin joined the Department of Economics in the School of Business at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville in 1972, became Professor of Economics in 1985, and was Chairman of the Department of Economics from 1986 to 1994. He became Professor Emeritus in 2002. In November, 1984, he was appointed Commissioner of the Illinois Commerce Commission, the state utility regulatory agency, by Governor James R. Thompson, serving until March, 1986, when he returned to the University. From 1996 until 2002, Dr. Levin was Director of the School of Business' International Exchange Programs. In addition, Dr. Levin is President of the Resource Group, Inc., an economic consulting firm, and he has served as a member of Bellcore's Advisory Board. He was a consulting economist to the Chicago Regional Office of the Federal Trade Commission from 1979 to 1983, and he spent a sabbatical leave in 1978 at the Energy Service of Data Resources, Inc., in Washington, D.C.

Dr. Levin has a B.A. in Economics from Grinnell College and a Ph. D. in Economics from the University of Michigan. He has published numerous articles, papers, reports, and monographs, including articles in the *Southern Economic Journal*, *The Review of Economics and Statistics*, *the Review of Industrial Organization*, *the Journal of Energy Law and Policy*, *Telecommunications Policy*, and *the International Review of Economics and Business*. He is also a co-editor of a book on antitrust and a book on telecommunications.