

Green Windows of Opportunity in Latin American Countries

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Abstract : The green transition opens green windows of opportunity - temporary moments in which there are lower barriers and shorter learning periods for developing countries to enter emerging technologies and catch-up. However, taking advantage of these windows requires capabilities in national sectoral systems to adopt and develop technologies linked to green sectors as well as strong responses to build the required knowledge, skills, and infrastructure and foster the growth of targeted sectors. This paper uses UNCTAD's frontier technology readiness index to analyse the current position of Latin America and the Caribbean to use, adopt, and adapt frontier technologies, examining the preconditions in the region to take up windows of opportunity that arise with the green transition. The index highlights the inequality across countries in the region, as well as gaps in capabilities dimensions, especially in terms of R&D. Moving to responses, it highlights industrial policies implemented to foster the growth of green technologies, emphasising the essential role played by the state to build and strengthen capabilities and provide infant industry protection that enables the growth of these sectors. Overall, while there are exceptions, especially in the Brazilian case, countries in Latin America and the Caribbean should focus on strengthening their capabilities to be better positioned, especially in terms of knowledge creation, infrastructure, and financing availability.

Keywords : Green technologies, Industrial policy, Latin America, windows of opportunity

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