An increasing number of studies have analysed the scope for, and the barriers to, transitions toward sustainability in the context of developing countries building on analytical perspectives from the sustainability transitions literature. This paper introduces a special issue on sustainability transitions in developing countries, which takes stock of this emerging field of research and presents new empirical research that contributes to further advancement of our understanding of the conditions in which sustainability transitions are likely to take place in developing countries and what is involved in these transformative processes. This introductory paper presents the five papers contained in the special issue. The first paper comprises a review of the existing literature on the subject, and the other four papers present new empirical research. The key findings of the papers are discussed in relation to previous research in the field specifically related to four crosscutting themes: (i) global-local linkages and external dependencies; (ii) stability and non-stability of regimes; (iii) undemocratic and non-egalitarian nature of regimes; and (iv) nurturing the development of niches versus the execution of individual projects. The introductory paper concludes by presenting a research agenda, which aims to provide promising avenues for future research on sustainability transitions in developing countries.