



Fostering a Green Economy Transformation and Social and Environmental Entrepreneurship in Africa

Background

At the 3rd African Ministerial Conference on Financing for Development in May 2009, in Kigali, Rwanda, African Ministers of Finance, Economic Planning, and Environment recognised the importance of placing the environment at the centre stage of Africa's development process given the challenges it imposes on the continent's achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

Ministers called for the creation of an enabling environment to support the transition towards a green economy and pursuing low carbon growth, as well as facilitating the private sector to play a crucial role in the transfer and adoption of clean technologies.

African Ministers of Environment who met at the 13th Session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, in Bamako, Mali, in June 2010, similarly recognized the need to take advantage of the opportunities provided by a growth and development trajectory that embraces the green economy model.

Africa's valuable natural capital assets are critical to wealth creation, vital for its economies, and essential for poverty reduction and sustainable development. In addition, such resources are of global importance, playing a key role in the conservation and sustainable use of the earth's biological resources, and climate change mitigation and adaptation.

African governments recognise increasingly that investments in green economic sectors, ecosystem restoration and the nurturing of natural capital can be instrumental in halting environmental degradation and also create green jobs, secure sustainable livelihoods and contribute to poverty reduction and green growth.

The project

UNEP, with the generous support of the European Union, is implementing a regional pilot project on Green Economy and Social and Environmental Entrepreneurship Development in Africa. The overall objective of this project is to support African countries in their efforts to refocus policies and investment in green economic sectors, such as renewable energies and energy efficiency, sustainable agriculture, forests, water and waste management, tourism, green construction and transport, and to enhance social and environmental entrepreneurship, strengthen local capacities, create green jobs and help to alleviate poverty.



This project has been designed by UNEP's Green Economy Initiative and the SEED Initiative to combine:

- 1) interventions at the macro-economic level, with a focus on economy-wide assessments, and
- 2) interventions at the micro-level, aimed at supporting the development of social and environmental small, medium and micro enterprises.

Through this project, UNEP seeks to support African countries in the process towards the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development to be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 2012, for which Africa will need to embark on a

regional preparatory process to ensure the continent's readiness and effective participation.

This project will be piloted in seven countries in Africa (Burkina Faso, Kenya, Egypt, Ghana, Rwanda, Senegal, and South Africa) that have requested cooperation and support from UNEP on the Green Economy. They were selected on the basis of start-up activities already initiated by them and, given the strong interest of the EU, through discussions with the EC country focal points. UNEP will seek to expand the project to other countries as additional resources are mobilized.

Project activities

- Macro-economic assessments of the opportunities to promote green investment in high potential sectors that contribute to economic growth and development, decent job creation and environmental improvement;
- Green Economy Scoping Studies and Green Sector Studies that assess the potential for investing in green sectors, define priority areas for policy reforms, and identify linkages with existing strategies, policies and programmes in the countries;
- National and regional training targeting experts and stakeholders in the public and private sectors;
- National and regional platforms for dialogue and consultation on key elements of strategies to promote green economy and social and environmental entrepreneurship;
- Launching of African SEED Awards for social and environmental entrepreneurship and support for business and skills development;
- Replicating the SEED Initiative in South Africa;
- Creating a network of social and environmental entrepreneurs across Africa to promote learning and stimulate replication of ideas;
- Identification of regulatory, policy, financing and institutional barriers to foster green investments and social and environmental entrepreneurship in Africa.

Expected outcomes

- Opportunities and challenges of a green economy transition are assessed within a macro-economic context;
- Key policy reforms and enabling factors to stimulate and support green investments are identified;
- Social and environmental entrepreneurship is stimulated by identifying, rewarding and providing business development support to innovative social and environmental entrepreneurs;
- National strategies on green economy and social and environmental entrepreneurship development are developed.



Project Duration

- June 2010 – September 2012

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