Pathways towards a Green Economy in the Asia-Pacific

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Green Economy and Biodiversity & Ecosystem Services
Regional perspectives
World failing in biodiversity struggle, UN chief warns

- Recent reports have warned that species are disappearing at up to 1,000 times the natural rate of disappearance because of human activity and now climate change.
- UN states have missed an agreed 2010 deadline to achieve "a significant reduction" in the rate of wildlife loss, the UN chief said. "We have all heard of the web of life. The way we live threatens to trap us in a web of death," he commented.

"Too many people still fail to grasp the implications of this destruction," UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon warned as he called for greater international action to protect plants and animals. "I urge all leaders present today to commit to reducing biodiversity loss."

- April 2010
The importance of biodiversity to sustainability

Not an issue for the Asia Pacific region alone:

- It is a global problem which knows no borders.
- The Asia Pacific region must now start to embrace the "green economy".
- Defined by the UNEP as an economy that improves human well-being and social equity while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities.
- Simply put, a green economy is characterised by low carbon emissions, highly efficient use of resources and social inclusiveness.
What is the difference between the concept of a Green Economy and Sustainable Development?

- Sustainable development emphasizes the need of supporting development with the three indispensable pillars of economic, social and environmental sustainability.
- The Green Economy is conceptually different in that it focuses specifically on the sustainability of the economic pillar.
- It does not aim to replace the sustainable development concept but rather complement it by emphasizing the importance of improving the sustainability of the global economy.

Source: IUCN

Implications of a Green Economy for poverty reduction?

- A GE is central to reducing poverty. Improving the quality of the environment of which people's livelihood depend on, especially rural communities in developing countries, will inevitably contribute to poverty reduction.
- A Green Economy has the potential to create jobs in certain sectors, such as in waste management and ecological restoration.
- A stronger recognition of the economic significance of nature will promote new business opportunities. Developing markets for ecosystem goods (e.g. sustainable agriculture, timber, etc.) and services (e.g. carbon sequestration, tourism, water regulation) can be used to better support local livelihoods while improving environmental sustainability.

Source: IUCN
What does the Green Economy imply for biodiversity conservation?

- A GE should be based on a stronger integration of the economic value of biodiversity and natural capital in economic decisions.
- Because of its central role in providing the ecosystem services upon which economic activity depends, biodiversity should be considered as the underpinning foundation of a GE.
- Therefore, conservation should be viewed as an area of economic opportunity, and not as a constraint.
- Biodiversity can generate economic benefits, for instance the development of markets for ecosystem services and goods.
- Ecosystems also play a critical role in mitigating risk, for example when mangroves act as natural forms of protection against storm damage.
- Biodiversity is therefore not only central to income generation; it can also be an important means of saving money.

Source: IUCN

Pathways of biodiversity-based GE

**Ecosystems and biodiversity should be managed to build resilience**

- Healthy ecosystems represent the foundation of a resilient and truly sustainable economy.
- Consequently, there needs to be a stronger appreciation of the role of biodiversity and green infrastructure as means of mitigating and managing economic risks.
- Greater investment in ecosystem management, stewardship, and restoration is essential in the transition towards a GE.

Source: IUCN
Pathways of biodiversity-based GE

Mainstreaming ecosystem values in the economy

- There is a need to change current accounting and planning frameworks to ensure that ecosystem values are reflected in economic decisions and policies.
- Greater investment in natural capital can play a key role in supporting a GE transition by generating income and creating jobs in ‘green’ markets and enterprises such as sustainable tourism, organic agriculture, and the management of ecosystem services (e.g., regulating water, nutrient, and water cycles).

Source: IUCN

Pathways of biodiversity-based GE

Developing an appropriate governance model for a Green Economy

- It is imperative that the green economy transition be based on strong governance principles, namely access to information, public participation and horizontal decision making – all of which are essential for a GE to be equitable and effective.

Source: IUCN
Aichi Biodiversity Targets

- **Strategic Goal A**: Address the underlying causes of biodiversity loss by mainstreaming biodiversity across government and society
- **Strategic Goal B**: Reduce the direct pressures on biodiversity and promote sustainable use
- **Strategic Goal C**: To improve the status of biodiversity by safeguarding ecosystems, species and genetic diversity
- **Strategic Goal D**: Enhance the benefits to all from biodiversity and ecosystem services
- **Strategic Goal E**: Enhance implementation through participatory planning, knowledge management and capacity building

**Strategic Goal A**: Address the underlying causes of biodiversity loss by mainstreaming biodiversity across government and society

**Target 1**
- By 2020, at the latest, people are aware of the values of biodiversity and the steps they can take to conserve and use it sustainably

**Target 2**
- By 2020, at the latest, biodiversity values have been integrated into national and local development and poverty reduction strategies and planning processes and are being incorporated into national accounting, as appropriate, and reporting systems

**Target 3**
- By 2020, at the latest, incentives, including subsidies, harmful to biodiversity are eliminated, phased out or reformed in order to minimize or avoid negative impacts, and positive incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity are developed and applied, consistent and in harmony with the Convention and other relevant international obligations, taking into account national socio economic conditions.

**Target 4**
- By 2020, at the latest, Governments, business and stakeholders at all levels have taken steps to achieve or have implemented plans for sustainable production and consumption and have kept the impacts of use of natural resources well within safe ecological limits.
Utilize IPBES to strengthen linkage between science and policy

Four functions of IPBES
- Identification and prioritization of key scientific information for policy makers
- BES assessments at the global, regional and sub-regional levels; thematic issues
- Identifying policy-relevant tools and methodologies
- Capacity-building to improve the science-policy interface

Thank you

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