

What is a Green Economy?

A green economy can be defined as one that results in improved human well-being and social equity, while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities (UNEP 2011). A green economy is one which is low carbon, resource efficient and socially inclusive.

The concept of green economy focuses primarily on the intersection between environment and economy. It has received significant international attention over the past few years both as a tool to address the 2008 financial crisis as well as one of the two themes for the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20).

The green economy is based on the model of sustainable development and the principles of ecological economics. The concept of a “green economy” does not replace sustainable development, but there is now a growing recognition that achieving sustainability rests almost entirely on getting the economy right.

In a green economy, growth in income and employment is driven by public and private investments that

- a) Reduce carbon emissions and pollution
- b) Enhance energy and resource efficiency
- c) Prevent the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services.

Why the colour green for an economy?

The colour green is symbolic of the environment and emblematic of sustainable development, hence the green economy is an economy of the environment. A Green Economy system holds a Triple Bottom Line approach that emphasizes the interdependency between “**people, planet and profit**”.

The Green economy aims at meeting the dual goals of **high human development** and **low ecological impact**.

What is the link between Green economy and Poverty Eradication?

Green economy and poverty alleviation was one of the running theme in the Rio+20 conference held in Brazil in 2012. A key feature of a green economy is that it seeks to provide diverse opportunities for economic development and poverty alleviation without liquidating or eroding a country's natural assets. This is particularly necessary in low-income countries, where ecosystem goods and services are a large component of the livelihoods of poor rural communities and ecosystems and their services provide a safety net against natural disasters and economic shocks.

Waste management

Sustainable waste management complements the Green Economy concept. Greening the waste sector refers to a shift from less-preferred waste treatment and disposal methods such as incineration (without energy recovery) and different forms of landfilling towards the “**three Rs**”: **Reduce, Reuse and Recycle**. In Zimbabwe there is still an entrepreneurial gap in recycling because there are still few recycling entities.

What are Green Jobs?

Green jobs refer to decent work which contributes directly to reducing the environmental impact of enterprises, economic sectors or the economy as a whole by reducing energy and resource consumption, reducing emissions, waste and pollution and by preserving or restoring ecosystems. Jobs thus help reduce negative environmental impact ultimately leading to environmentally, economically and socially sustainable enterprises and economies.

What is the Importance of Green jobs?

- Improve energy and raw materials efficiency
- Limit greenhouse gas emissions
- Minimize waste and pollution
- Protect and restore ecosystems
- Support adaptation to the effects of climate change

What are the shades of green in green jobs?

The notion of a green job is not absolute since there are various “shades” of green within which there are thresholds defining the degree aimed for environmental improvement. This is a concept in constant evolution as we strive towards a green economy. Originally, only those jobs involved in the protection of biodiversity and the environment were regarded as “**green**”. More recently, this notion has been broadened to include the creation of jobs contributing to resource efficiency.

What major economic opportunities can renewable energy present?

The greening of the energy sector requires substituting investments in carbon-intensive energy sources with investments in clean energy as well as efficiency improvements. Many opportunities for improving energy efficiency pay for themselves, while investments in renewable energy technologies are already growing in today’s market as they are becoming increasingly competitive.

Examples of renewable energy

Solar energy

Wind Energy

Hydropower

Bio-energy /biofuels

The African High Level Conference on Green Economy

The African High Level Conference on Green Economy was held in Oran, Algeria from the 22nd of February to the 23rd of February 2014. The conference was attended by 30 African Ministers, 1000 participants and representatives of international institutions and organizations such as African Union, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Institute of Training and Research (UNITAR), Regions in Action on Climate Change (R20) among others. The conference was organized by the Algerian Ministry of Territorial Planning and Environment.

What was the Meeting Outcome?

The Oran declaration was adopted by the conference participants for submission to the next Summit of the African Union Heads of State and Government. The African delegates reaffirmed “their willingness to work for the setting -up of a socially inclusive and fair model of sustainable development and economic growth, which will protect natural resources and environment and meet the needs of present and future generations, through the promotion of models of sustainable consumption and production. Participants expressed “satisfaction that the ORAN Conference was an important step in strengthening African cooperation and consultation ties in the field of sustainable development” and “renewed their commitment to sustainable development and alleviation of poverty.”

The “green economy” has become an emblem of a more sustainable economy and society that preserves the environment for future generations, and is more equitable and inclusive of all people and all countries. As a result, the advance towards a “green economy” creating “green jobs” and “greening” current industries, production processes and jobs has become a key element for achieving environmentally sustainable economic and social development. In this context, social inclusion, social development and environmental protection should be closely linked to safer and healthier workplaces and decent work for all. **In Zimbabwe the Business Council of Sustainable Development in conjunction with UNIDO, Ministry of Environment, Water, and Climate as well as Ministry of**

Industry is spearheading the Green Growth Initiative among industries.

Green mining contributes to a green economy

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