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***Bridging the Implementation Gap for Rio+20:***

***Decent Jobs, Green Growth and Infrastructure***

One of the decisions from Rio+20 was to develop a set of Sustainable Development Goals for the post-2015 development agenda. There is a strong growing ownership and understanding that we are on the cusp of an important transition. Ownership and engagement includes governments, civil society and private sector. The Sustainable Development Goals will affect even the poorest persons in terms of poverty reduction and health. They address issues of climate change, marine ecosystems, and terrestrial degradation with an ambitious universal integrated inclusive transformation.

Green growth and green economy concepts are interpreted differently across sectoral and national contexts. Common desirable characteristics are increased investment in infrastructure and resource conservation providing decent jobs and long-lasting environmental social and economic benefits. Green economy promotes

* inclusiveness,
* efficiency, and
* decarbonisation.

Green economy as a framework for achievement of the sustainable development goals addresses **inclusiveness** supporting achievement of goals and targets to:

* end poverty in all its forms everywhere, a target is to by 2030 achieve equal access to productive employment and decent work for all,
* provide equal access for all men and women, particularly those most in need, to basic services,
* attain healthy life for all at all ages, with implications for air pollution and sustainable transport,
* end hunger, achieve food security and adequate nutrition for all, and promote sustainable agriculture
* attain gender equality, and
* provide energy access to all.

Green economy also supports **efficiency** goals and targets to:

* **secure water and sanitation for all for a sustainable world** there are targets on water access, water quality, and sanitation
* **double the rate of energy efficiency improvement**
* improve resource efficiency
* improve industrial processes with clean technologies
* reduce urban sprawl and provide more efficient transportation systems
* reduce food waste, and
* reduce waste through reducing, recycling and reusing materials

The thrust of green economy on **decarbonisation** supports goals and targets to:

* implement sustainable and resilient agricultural practices and progressively enhance soil quality
* double the share of clean renewable energy
* address climate change including means of implementation with finance, technology and research and development

Green economy is therefore well placed to be a major contributor to attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals perhaps the most relevant being proposed goal 8 to **promote strong, inclusive and sustainable economic growth and decent work for all** containing many relevant targets to our discussions including sustaining per capita economic growth of at least x% per annum (with x being set at a level appropriate to national circumstances) and to sustain income growth of the bottom 40% of the income distribution of each country of at least y (greater than x)% to reduce income inequalities by 2030.

The strength of a Green Growth and economy approach is that it integrates across multiple goals so as to ensure simultaneous solutions. This means delivering on long-term triple wins across social, environmental, and economic areas, while at the same time addressing trade-offs across sectors and groups, including women and men, and communities living in multi-dimensional poverty.

And of course, we recognized the need for integrated approaches at national and sub-national levels across the water, energy, agriculture, transport nexus with a focus on green jobs and social inclusion, including gender equality, as well as links to sustainable consumption and production. The lock-in effect was noted especially for transport where the form of urban spatial plan results in modal choices and energy costs that are not easily changed. Other sectors are similar.

Green economy approaches to help shift investments in ways that advance sustainable development and the need to make a strong economic case for comprehensive, green economy transitions that integrate and mainstream Green Economy principles into existing national and sectoral policies.

Orders of magnitude more investment in the GE transition will be from the private sector. This means the role of governments is to send clear signals, provide strong enabling environments and incentives, and ensure public investments reduce risks for the private sector.

We highlighted the need to use domestic and international public resources to leverage private sector resources, while also keeping in mind the role of shadow and informal economies.

For some goods and services government can lead the way through commitments to green public procurement.

A common characteristic of the case studies with most effective impact was their economic robustness; their ability to show the costs of inaction, and the economic benefits of new action, including private sector returns and payback periods.

Meaningful stakeholder engagement is critical and the need to consult stakeholders at all stages of the transition, including the planning and implementation.

The means of implementation, including capacity building and the role of financing: including public, private, domestic, and international, large-scale and micro-financing.

And against this context we must find ways to ensure the poorest and economically excluded can be part of the transition, gaining a stake through jobs in new industries, benefit sharing, and social protection.

As much as 50% of youths are underemployed yet green technologies are more labour intensive thus addressing two important issues. Retraining workforces that need to shift to green technologies and systems needs to be supported as well as training youth the enter these new job markets.

We had an invigorating debate about Green Economy concepts, and recognized that there are still a variety of ways in which people, institutions, and countries understand “Green Economy”, some more and some less positive.

There is a need to continue efforts to strengthen UN and broader international coordination around Green Economy and related Green Growth, Sustainable Consumption and Production, and broader Sustainable Development concepts and programming, that all put people at the center of development.

And of course, adapting to country demand and context under strong government leadership is key to these efforts.

We also shared many resources that synthesize country experiences across GE planning, financing, implementation, monitoring and evaluation systems.

The participants expressed appreciation for the workshop’s rich discussion across many green economy issues and felt that they had gained a better appreciation of how to make use of the green economy/ green growth in their work. Participants included over 60 Government officials and civil society involved in planning, sustainable development processes, High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development negotiators energy, transport, agriculture, water and sanitation. Countries represented included Ghana, Ecuador, Gambia, Vietnam, Guatemala, Cote d'Ivoire, Bangladesh, Antigua & Barbuda, Mexico, South Africa, Jordan, Burkina Faso, Trinidad and Tobago, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, St. Lucia, Philippines, and others not recorded. Agencies included ILO, UNDP, UN DESA, UNEP, UNESCO and NGOs Green Economy Best Practices, Green Economy Coalition among others.

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