

STRA CO (2009) 12



COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE



***PAN-EUROPEAN BIOLOGICAL AND LANDSCAPE
DIVERSITY STRATEGY***

Geneva and Strasbourg, 18 September 2009

STRACO (2009) 12

**COUNCIL FOR THE PAN-EUROPEAN
BIOLOGICAL AND LANDSCAPE DIVERSITY STRATEGY**

**FIFTH INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE
*BIODIVERSITY IN EUROPE***

**22-24 September 2009
Liege, Belgium**

GREEN ECONOMY

*Document prepared by
IUCN/Countdown 2010 Initiative*

Towards a Green Economy

‘Green Economy’ is an emerging term describing policies and economic systems that take into explicit account the inter-dependencies between the environment and human well-being.

Green economic policies invest in sustainable alternatives to fossil fuels, improve efforts at soil and water conservation, incorporate ecosystem services including and beyond carbon, encourage biodiversity based business, and sustainable cities, buildings, construction, and transport as the new engines for economic growth in the future.

Green economic policies can be facilitated through:

- economic, trade and investment policies that better integrate biodiversity values;
- companies, industry associations and consumer groups that incorporate ecosystem values into planning and action;
- energy policies and strategies that mitigate the impact of the growing energy demand on biodiversity and incorporate the ecosystem services that underpin sustainable and equitable energy production and consumption.

Examples of green economic policies include:

- REDD (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation) mechanisms that are environmentally sound and recognizes its codependence with effective and equitable forest governance.
- REDD+ mechanisms that incorporate ecosystem service-based adaptation to climate change with specific consideration to the linkages with development, gender, and poverty reduction.
- A Green Development Mechanism (GDM) that better facilitates the transfer of financial resources to biodiversity-rich developing countries potentially including: Tradable Conservation Obligations; Offsets with international support; Biodiversity footprint taxation with structured supply; and/or ‘Greening’ of commodity imports
- An International Payment for Ecosystem Services (IPES) initiative that facilitates the (bilateral) flow of financial resources from developed to developing countries in compensation for stewardship of the flow of ecosystem services from developing to developed countries; and/or
- ‘Offset’ programmes that go beyond forest carbon and extend to other ecosystems, potentially including coastal systems (e.g. mangroves and sea grasses), peatlands, wetlands, soils, agricultural lands, drylands and non-tropical forests, and/or to other valuable ecosystem services, potentially including endangered species or habitats and broader notions of valuable biodiversity rich landscapes.
- Energy policies and practices that address the implications for ecosystems and livelihoods of energy technologies and that are expected to sustainably and significantly reduce carbon emissions.
- Standards for sustainable biofuels production that are available and applied.
- Ecosystems and the services they provide for sustainable energy futures are taken into account in energy policies and investments.
- A policy environment that influences how private sector adapts to rigorous sustainability standards (‘no net negative impact’ or ‘positive net impact’ on biodiversity) in their daily work that will both support their corporate aims and the conservation of biodiversity.
- Policies that enable the link between voluntary standards and binding policy;
- Policies that enabling harmonization of sustainability standards between regions and countries;

Progress toward a green economy (or the Global Green New Deal) can be attained through public and private investment in the adoption of the principles sustainable-ecosystem-management that contribute to a more robust and sustained economic recovery, job creation and poverty reduction than re-investment in business-as-usual strategies that brought us these challenges in the first place.

Further reading and references:

- The UNEP website on Green Economy - <http://www.unep.org/greeneconomy/>
- The Green Economics Institute-<http://greeneconomics.org.uk/>
- Green Recovery -http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2008/09/green_recovery.html
- The International Journal of Green Economics, <http://www.inderscience.com/ijge>
- Eco-Economy Indicators: <http://www.earth-policy.org/Indicators/index.htm>
- EarthTrends World Resources Institute - <http://earthtrends.wri.org/index.php>
- Sustainable Prosperity - <http://sustainableprosperity.ca/>
- World Resources Forum - <http://www.worldresourcesforum.org>
- An ecological economics article about reconciling economics and its supporting ecosystems - <http://www.fs.fed.us/eco/s21pre.htm>
- "Economics in a Full World", by Herman E. Daly - http://sef.umd.edu/files/ScientificAmerican_Daly_05.pdf
- NOAA Economics of Ecosystems Data & Products – <http://www.economics.noaa.gov/?goal=ecosystems>