

GREEN ECONOMY COALITION: EVENT REPORT

Global Meeting Cape Town 2019

Green Economy Coalition

South Africa



The Green Economy Coalition is the world's largest movement for green and fair economies. Our 50+ members represent poor people, workers, environmental organisations, faith groups and small businesses as well as international institutions.

In South Africa, our work is led by Trade & Industrial Policy Strategies and The African Centre for a Green Economy.



TIPS is a not-for-profit economic research institute based in Pretoria, undertaking research and analysis, and facilitating policy development, dialogue and capacity building.



The African Centre is a Cape Town think tank and social innovation hub, providing strategic advice to enable businesses to mitigate climate risk and main-stream entrepreneurs for a new economy.

greeneconomycoalition.org
ben.martin@greeneconomycoalition.org

80-86 Gray's Inn Road, London WC1X 8NH, UK
+44 203 463 7399



This publication has been produced with the assistance of the European Union, DCI-ENV/2016/372-847. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the authors and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union.

Cape Town 2019

The Green Economy Coalition Global Meeting 2019 brought together representatives of business, finance, NGOs and citizen's groups from around the world in order to debate and decide how we can help to make the economies of the future equitable, inclusive, and people-focused.

This year, we asked a question: How can we make sure everyone gets a stake in the green economy?

This report details the answers we found.



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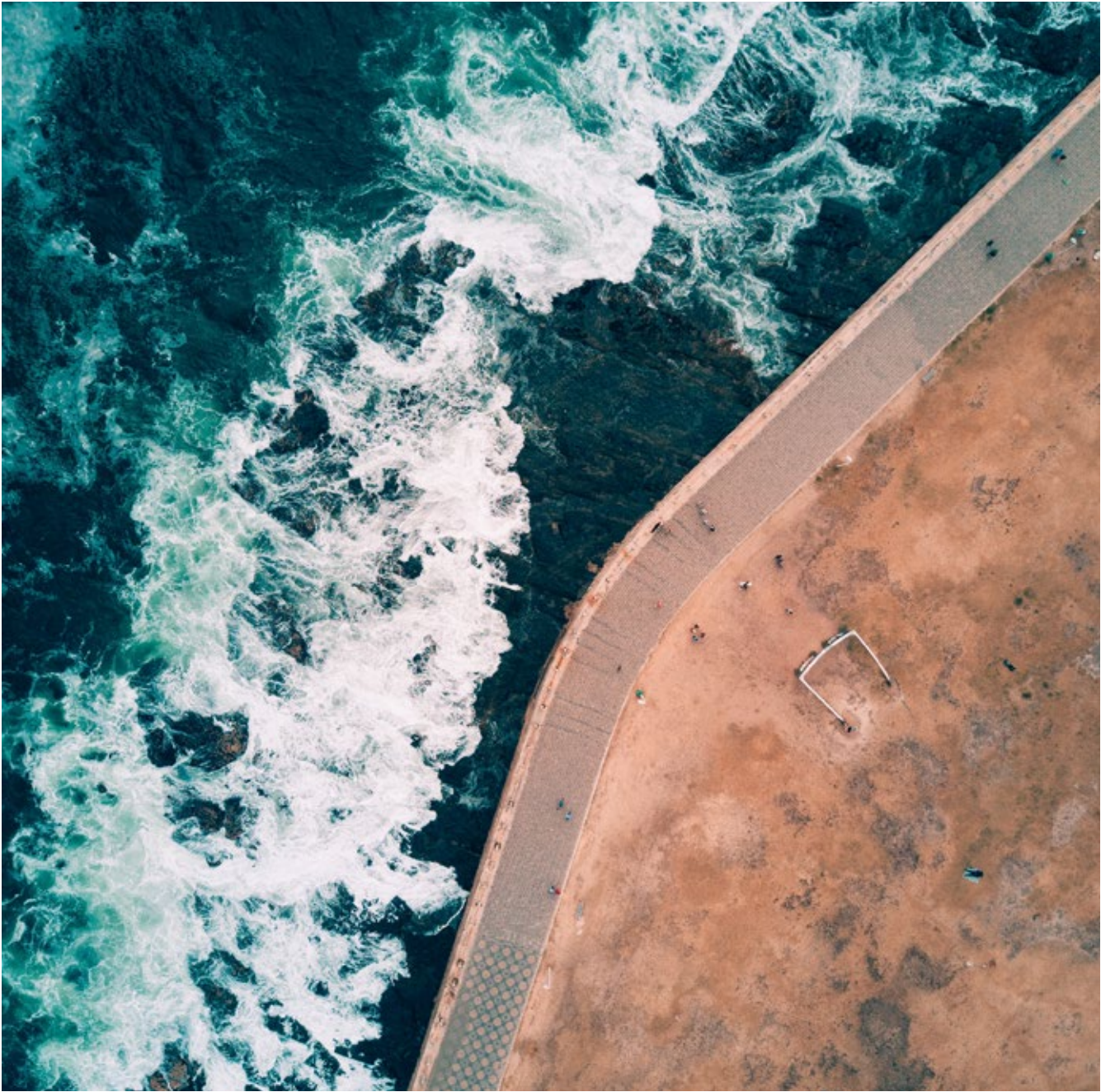
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UN-PAGE & TV debate

Taking citizen voice to ministers at the UN's leading green economy forum - and debating wealth across Africa.



Introduction



Cape Town, January 2019, was GEC’s ‘coming of age’ global meeting. Over the last decade, we’ve built a powerful alliance of organisations who are committed to a green and fair economic transition; we’ve established national hubs in seven countries; and we have co-written compelling stories of how this transition is underway. Together, we have lobbied key international institutions to widen their understanding of ‘green growth’ for people, particularly the poorest and most marginalised, and for nature.

To kick off our tenth year as a coalition, we had three inspiring days in South Africa, packed full of leadership and solutions. We were hosted by our **South African partners**, Gaylor from TIPS and Mao from Africege, we had GEC’s partner countries and regions, GEC global members, our steering group, and specially invited guests.

Together we tackled the most important question – ‘how does everyone **get a stake** in the green economy?’

We prioritise this overarching question because we know this transition will not happen unless more people help shape and benefit from this critical and defining moment in our histories.

The answers were captured in our new updated areas of work – on natural capital, on social inclusion, on financial reform, and on small business, four of the five building blocks of inclusive green economies. Each of these ses-

sions was led by **coalition members** – Mark Gough from the Natural Capital Coalition, Peter Poschen formerly of ILO, Benoit Lallemand from Finance Watch, and Rainer Agster from SEED.

We also thank the European Commission, who funded this meeting and **sent their strategy director** to thank us and encourage us further.

Together with our partners we then hosted a global TV **debate with CNBC**, broadcast for an hour across Africa. And then we helped fill the UN PAGE ministerial meeting with optimism, with reality and a solid set of policy demands; whose influence is evident in the UN’s **PAGE Cape Town declaration**.

The GEC team and its steering group, thank all partners and participants for this defining moment. It signals that the GEC is growing, is stronger, clearer and able to influence globally, regionally and nationally.

We are the people’s movement for a green economy and we stand for real, fair and commensurate solutions to the dire challenges articulated by environmental science and societies fracturing under the strains of inequality.

Our economies must change, and together we will lead that change. Please read this report, and then **complete our strategy questionnaire**. We want you help shape this movement, bring your skills and resources and work with us for a future we all want.

Oliver Greenfield
Convenor, GEC



green economy coalition

Global Meeting

Cape Town 2019

Who? +130 participants from over 30 civil society, small businesses, academia, government and international organisations. Representatives from the Caribbean, India, Mongolia, Peru, Senegal, South Africa, Uganda, the UK, and Zimbabwe.

What? Tackling the question “How can everyone get a stake in the green economies of tomorrow?”

How? A day-long partner workshop for our international hubs; a two-day open-access forum on equity & justice in the green economy; a televised panel debate on “What makes your country wealthy?”; and a special session at the UN-PAGE Ministerial.

Result? Citizen voice delivered to high-level UN Ministerial meeting; strengthened commitments from partners; agreement on new framework for 10-year strategy.

Key messages

From our coalition members and local participants, five messages stood out from the 2019 Global Meeting.



- **The transition is happening, and it's gathering pace.**

Today, we have global institutions dedicated to understanding the relationship between the economy and our environment; we have over 9 trillion of private investment invested in the green economy since 2007; and more than 70 governments have green economic national plans. Green economy is increasingly relevant to the interconnected challenges of climate, biodiversity, persistent poverty and growing inequality.

- **'Inclusion' is not a nice to have, it is the vehicle of the transition.**

The green economy transition is underway and gathering pace. But the transition will not find the popular support it needs to accelerate and endure unless it can give everyone a stake, delivering an economy in which everyone feels included, rewarded and listened to.

- **The voice of nature is missing from green economic debate and action.**

Oddly, nature is underrepresented in current green economy debates. This is despite dire warnings from IPBES, WWF and others that biodiversity is in crisis and we are on the cusp of a major extinction. The carrying capacity of the earth must guide and inspire the movement for greener economies.

- **We are calling for structural economic reform.**

Dismantling the 'brown' economy is as important as growing the green economy. That requires alternative governance and measurement systems, reforming our financial systems, transforming economic sectors, tackling inequality and valuing nature - our five themes of the green economy.

- **Our next step needs to be a giant leap. The GEC needs to grow significantly, geographically, thematically and in confidence.**

We need to better champion those groups who have been marginalised from the brown economy – young people, women, informal workers, small businesses. We must build a true 'people's movement' that cannot be ignored, so that a new social contract can be developed between society, government and business.

If you were at the global event, then **please do complete our [delegate survey](#)** - and let us know what you thought worked, what didn't, and how we can plan for an even better event next year.

Global status of the **transition**

From crisis to opportunity



“Those that will bet on the grey economy will have a grey future, and those that are betting on the green economy will have a dominant role in the global economy in the decades to come.”

Antonio Guterres, UN General Secretary

Lowlights

- **Biodiversity is in crisis:** New evidence from WWF Living Planet report 2018, IPBES Global Biodiversity Assessment and IPCC Special Report on Global Warming confirm our natural systems are dying.
- **Citizens feeling excluded and marginalised:** ‘Yellow vest’ riots in France been seen as protest against carbon taxation; populist movements in USA, UK, Brazil, Netherlands, Germany, etc.
- **Government implementation is woefully behind targets:** Majority of governments will miss all Aichi biodiversity targets; climate change NDCs cannot keep us within 1.5°C.
- **Financial markets are not alert** to biodiversity loss, climate risk, or destruction of natural, social, and human capital.
- The **green transition is not reaching small businesses** or the informal economy.

Highlights

- **Energy transition taking off:** China invested 126 billion dollars in renewables (up 30% from 2017); Sweden hits renewable energy target 12 years early; Morocco building a solar farm the size of Paris.
- **Divestment gathering pace:** Norway’s 1 trillion-dollar sovereign wealth fund has divested from coal; world’s biggest insurers, Allianz, has stopped insuring coal.
- **Green finance unleashed:** Green and climate-aligned bonds reached record \$1.45tr; investment managers controlling over 45% of global assets are backing carbon disclosure; reforms to EU Emissions Trading Scheme have driven carbon prices above €10 per tonne for the first time in six years.
- **Business and government accounting for nature:** Over 100 governments conducting natural capital accounts; nearly 500 companies setting science based targets.

This year we will be carrying out a global stocktake of the transition for our next **Global Green Economy Barometer** - and we want to hear from you. Email [Emily Benson](#)

Green economy in South Africa

Our South African partners share their insights on the status of the green transition in their own country

Wins and warnings

Carbon tax policy can be regarded both as a win and a warning. It's a clear indication of government's intention to follow a low carbon development trajectory, but its effectiveness is highly doubted.

The National Development Plan 2030 and its emphasis on a just transition is useful in helping to shape an inclusive green economy narrative for South Africa.

The Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) 2018 is a significant win as it recognises RE as key to South Africa's energy mix, allocating upto 32% of electricity generation to RE sources by 2030.

The industrial policy action plan (IPAP) 2017/18 has placed special focus on key green economy sectors, and 'radical economic transition' for job creation.

Significant biodiversity wins including legal precedence that prohibits mining in wetlands, and need for community engagement.

Action & Evidence

Significant goodwill from top leaders in government, right from the presidency to line ministry, but inter-departmental coordination in government still needs to be strengthened

Climate finance is starting to flow into the country, through bilateral arrangements and the Green Climate Fund. But this needs to be scaled up and more specifically channelled into the grassroots

Challenges and opposition to renewable energy producers is growing from coal industry aligned interest groups, which could threaten progress of the transition.

Over the next 18 months our SA hub will be engaging directly with policy makers to advance the transition to greener, fairer systems of governance and investment.

To find out more contact [Gaylor Montmasson-Clair](#).





Green economy in our hubs

Progress on the ground from our partner hubs around the world

Caribbean: CANARI

The Caribbean vision of a green economy has been developed through dialogue with stakeholders from all across the islands. Emphasising marine-based blue economy, resilience to natural disasters and the socio-economic impacts of climate, GEC member CANARI has developed an action learning network to explore what works, strengthen collaboration and raise awareness of green issues.

Caribbean governments are exploring renewable energy options, and increasingly recognise the potential for sustainable tourism. The 2018 GEC Santa Cruz Declaration on Local Green Enterprise calls for better support for small and micro-enterprises as a pathway to an inclusive and environmentally sustainable economy.

India: Development Alternatives

DevAlt are working in three states. In Bihar, work focuses on reducing damage caused by the brick industry on soils and air quality. In Madhya Pradesh, farming systems engagement brings together small holder producers and SMEs for sustainability. In Sikkim, work focuses on income opportunities through sustainable tourism.

In Bihar, engagement has successfully stimulated new state policies to regulate brick kilns and are progressing towards limiting soil-based bricks. Rising public discourse on the use of alternative fly-ash Bricks has reinstated government pledges to procure these in public construction.

Mongolia: EPCRC

In Mongolia, sustainability is compromised by increasing urbanization, large gaps between the official policy narrative and implementation, skills and knowledge deficits, economic and social inequality and associated poverty, and serious degradation of land, water and air.

The Government of Mongolia has launched landmark policies including the National Green Development Policy and Mongolia's Sustainable Development Vision 2030 (2016). Within these, five provinces have been selected to become "Model Green Provinces."

There is growing public pressure and protest over atrocious winter air pollution and its effects on mother and child health. The confluence of rural urban migration into low cost temporary housing, prolonged arctic winter temperatures and subsidized unwashed coal and stoves, combine to create a winter smog that makes urban life intolerable.

EPCRC are hosting public workshops on green economy, have launched an online information hub, and are mapping urban settlement and pollution issues with local populations. The aim is to foster local action to deal with the winter air crisis.

Peru: FNI, Libelula

Despite a good start across Peru, political struggles have hindered GEC partner work to create green economy policies. In the midst of political uncertainty, the private sector is emerging as a new driver for change.

There have been promising new initiatives in finance and green sectors, but limited uptake so far. To engage with



Peru (continued)

these opportunities, FNI and Libelula have convened a dialogue group of over 100 green SMEs who are providing insights and collaboration opportunities. Findings so far indicate how difficult it is for Green SMEs to access finance and taxation regimes that favour “brown” businesses. Moreover, without standardised labelling to differentiate green products, green products are invisible and consumers do not differentiate between green and brown products. A toolkit and web platform have been developed to support the growth of green SMEs.

Senegal: IUCN, IED Afrique

In Senegal, government support for green economy is growing, and national plans now define pathways for the growth of a sustainable economy and social development.

With UNDP, a US\$5 million joint government programme was started in 2016 to promote green jobs in agriculture, industry and services, and aims to create 100,000 jobs. IUCN and IED-Afrique focus on small scale fishing, and small farming system agro-ecology as there areas of policy dialogue.

Here, farmers and fishing communities are developing a picture of what works and what doesn't - and taking their insights to policy decision makers.

Uganda: ACODE

In Uganda, government green economy action is growing. A national Green Growth Strategy and a Green Incubation Programme encourage green SMEs and foster the integration of natural capital into national accounting. Uganda's third National Development Plan is being developed, and a draft National Public Sector Procurement Policy that incentivises green procurement has recently been published. A Climate Change Bill is being debated by Parliament and a National Environment Management Act (2018) is in place.

ACODE has established national and provincial platforms to engage citizens, civil society, businesses and government in critical conversation around sustainability and green economy issues. Around Mbarara and the Rwizi River catchment area, community engagement meetings are helping to find out what is happening to cause river system degradation, discuss ways to protect wetland ecosystems and engage community support for restoration. Dialogues have generated consensus among councils across 10 districts, and the need for joint actions to save Rwizi ecosystems. This work is being carefully watched by the Ministry of Environment with a view to scaling this up to wider river catchment management, including the Kasese river catchment.



Policy priorities for ministers

During the Global Meeting, our delegates discussed a set of policy recommendations to take to the UN PAGE Ministerial, ensuring that citizen voice is represented at the highest level.

Finance led by Benoît Lallemand, FinanceWatch

- **Stabilize & reform** – The design of the global financial system is structurally not fit for purpose and able to meet our environmental crisis. An unstable financial system won't set the 20-year+ time-horizon necessary for sustainability. Only civil society, government and financial actors acting in concert can initiate the reform needed.
- **Democratise finance** – The best way to re-direct financial flows is via a **democratic economic project**. Empowering transparent, ethical, and accountable finance can help to align economic regulations and financial incentives with society's interests.
- **Re-direct & improve** – We already have tools which can re-direct capital flows toward green - monetary, macro and micro-prudential finance policies can all help. But new regulatory, economic, and consumer driven means are also needed before finance will safely serve society.

Inclusion led by Peter Poschen, ex-ILO

- **Address process** – Genuinely inclusive outcomes are highly unlikely without **inclusive processes**. GEC and civil society are looking for shared partnerships and resourcing with government to deliver meaningful participation in policy design. The new PAGE expansion round offers the opportunity to embed inclusivity early in green transition processes.
- **Address outcomes** – We should judge policies by whether they measurably advance the SDGs, which speak directly to poverty & inequality reduction, and help offset elite bias. Pre-planning for those facing negative & unintended side-effects is an essential step to consider.
- **Address delivery** – Conventional policy implementation is insufficient for the scale and scope of the economic transition needed. Decentralised, multi-actor delivery can share the delivery burden, is faster on the ground, and offers potentially greater coverage.

Natural Capital led by Mark Gough, Natural Capital Coalition

- **Green success** – Green SMEs need business support and legal form that recognises social and environmental success as well as their bottom line.
- **Better decision making** – Natural capital approaches can provide a common, accepted international approach to help integrate environmental and economic decision-making, and improves links with the SDGs.
- **Uncover natural dependency** – Assessing and uncovering **dependency on the natural world** is key for green economy. Highlighting dependency can help clarify the diverse returns on investment we receive from stocks of natural assets, including the environmental, economic and social benefits, and also create paths to inclusivity by clarifying the question of nature's 'value to who'.
- **Challenge centric** – Natural capital accounting focused on solving specific challenges (e.g. water crisis in South Africa) can be the how of green economy implementation, and ensure new accounts are used, improved, and scaled up.

Small & Medium-sized Enterprises led by Rainer Agster, SEED

- **Focused policy, that can fail fast** – Prioritise piloting many specific SME policy interventions, before moving to testing at scale. Small businesses need a 'try and see' approach to policy that embraces and learns from failure quickly.
- **Aggregation** – **Engage SMEs at local level** via groups or networks. Small voices are amplified, while peer-to-peer exchange is encouraged, and the transaction costs of policy engagement are pooled for multiple smaller actors.
- **Finance & market** – SMEs at start-up level need most assistance with access to markets and 'missing middle' finance which help them reach self-sufficiency.

To find out more about our global policy work, contact [Chris Hopkins](#).



“The design of the global financial system is structurally not fit for purpose and meeting our environmental crisis.”

Strategy review: our ten year anniversary

Designing the next decade of the Green Economy Coaliton

2019 is our ten year anniversary as a coalition, and we're currently building our new strategy to guide our work for the next decade. It's an on-going and open-source process as we look towards the launch of our new strategy in the summer, and as well as incorporating the expertise and insights of our partners at the Cape Town meeting, we also want your help. So far, we've identified the following key areas as crucial pathways to expanding our reach and impact as a network:

- **Context:** In 2019, our society is fracturing, our environment is in crisis, and the brown economy that drives this destruction is still king. Inclusive green economies show promise around the world, but remain small-scale and fractured.
- **Positioning:** The GEC should be responsive and representative of social demand – a true “people’s movement for green economy”. That means getting more street, more political, more tech-savvy, more business, more media, with stronger focus on youth – whilst also being a constructive change partner for national and international institutions.
- **Vision:** By 2024, we need economies that serve people and planet to make life better. We need an environment that is returning to health. And we need a movement of citizens and organisations that can hold governments and companies to account to protect this recovery.
- **Pro-green, Anti-brown:** It's not enough to just build a green economy – we also need to dismantle the brown economy too, and quickly. The GEC needs to step up a visible, vocal opposition to existing brown economy structures that entrench inequality and environmental degradation.
- **Global hub, local action:** The GEC should expand its existing dialogue partner model to both broaden the geographical and thematic range of the network, and deepen the engagement and power of local partners to build bottom-up citizen movements in-country. The GEC should explore new opportunities to become an enabling platform for distributed action, providing centralised support on communications, dialogue, policy and strategy to regional, national and thematic franchises.



We have launched a **strategy consultation process** to help us plan for the next ten years of green transition.

If you have insights or expertise on green economy issues, in-country activism, or political movement building, then we'd love for you to be involved.

And if you don't have any professional experience of green economy but are passionate about building a better, more inclusive, more sustainable world, then we want to hear from you too!

Take our strategy consultation [here](#).





National Barometers

The Green Economy Barometers are detailed yet accessible reports into the state of national green economies around the world. Each one is produced in partnership with our local dialogue partners to produce a holistic review of policy and practice.



Eastern Caribbean
McHale Andrew,
CANARI
October 2018

[Download](#)



India
Anshul Bhamra,
Development
Alternatives
July 2018

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Mongolia
Lakshmi Boojoo,
Economic Policy
& Competitive-
ness Research
Centre
May 2018

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Peru
Foro Nacional
Internacional,
Libelula
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South Africa
Gaylor Montmas-
son-Clair, Sonwa-
bile Lugogo
Trade & industrial
Policy Strategies,
African Centre for
Green Economy
August 2018

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Uganda
Ronald Kaggwa,
Bernard Namanya
ACODE
July 2018

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Worldwide 2017
Emily Benson
GEC
July 2018

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UN PAGE & Media Debate

Citizen voice at the highest levels of environmental policy

Immediately following our Global Meeting was the **UN PAGE Ministerial Conference**, which brought together over 300 leaders from governments, civil society, private sector, development partners, media and the public to explore what it takes to further a “just transition” to economies which are more inclusive, stable and sustainable.

The GEC was an official partner of PAGE, and we were determined to ensure that the voices of real citizens and ordinary voters are heard at the highest levels of the ministerial event - making sure that everyone gets a stake in the green economy.

To that end, we collaborated on a series of policy asks which we presented at PAGE (see p. 16-17), and ran an event at PAGE which focussed on youth engagement and bringing under-represented voices into play - including indigenous peoples and LGBT+ communities.

On the opening night of the PAGE Ministerial, the GEC and the Green Growth Knowledge Platform hosted a televised debate on CNBC Africa, bringing leaders from business, politics and NGOs together to ask - have we been getting “wealth” wrong all these years?

The panel included Hon. Dr Mary Goretti Kitutu, the Ugandan Minister for the Environment; Kumi Naidoo,

Secretary General of Amnesty International; Prof. Cameron Hepburn, Director of the Smith School at Oxford University; and Nozipho January-Bardill, Chairperson, UN Global Compact Local Network.

The event, broadcast live on the African continent’s largest business media network, was anchored by CNBC’s Ms Nozipho Mbanjwa, and featured some of the foremost thinkers on development, sustainability, economic growth and environmental protection, exploring perhaps one of the central issues of our time.

Until recently, a country’s ‘wealth’ has been understood in narrow terms (e.g. GDP). Evidence now shows that nature is essential for economies and people to continue to generate wealth. Even by very conservative estimates, the World Bank this year showed that over 50% of Africa’s wealth is generated from nature – or ‘natural capital’. Yet, our environment is under severe pressure – over



60% of our global ecosystems are degraded (MEA); we have lost up to 60% of our wildlife since 1970 (WWF)..

Now Ministries of Finance, national statistical offices, policy units and corporations are starting to account for wealth in rather different terms. For the first time, natural and social capital is being quantified alongside productivity.

The approach could revolutionise what it means for a country or a business to be wealthy and profitable. It has the potential to overhaul historic divisions between rich and poor countries, or profitable and unprofitable companies, as credit rating agencies and investors shift behaviour.

You can watch the whole debate [here](#).





80-86 Gray's Inn Road
London WC1X 8NH, UK
+44 203 463 7399

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