



Ministry of Environment & Tourism

GREEN ECONOMY Stakeholder Dialogues Namibia 2011

BACKGROUND PAPER 1: Natural resource based production systems (agriculture, fisheries, water and forestry) July 2011

From 11 to 13 July 2011, the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) hosts a first 'Green Economy stakeholder dialogue' with representatives from various key economic sectors in Namibia. The workshop aims to discuss what a national Green Economy definition would be and what opportunities and challenges would exist in a transition to a green development pathway in these sectors. This is one of five background papers providing initial information on a specific sector group.

'Transitioning to a Green Economy will require a fundamental shift in thinking about growth and development, production of goods and services, and consumer habits'

World Resources Institute

Key questions and discussion points

- Natural resources are the backbone of Namibia's economy. What are the likely impacts on the economy and also on the environment if resources are not used in a more sustainable fashion?
- Why does agriculture matter for green economy and which land use methods lead to sustainable agriculture and welfare gains?
- What are the current and future environmental and economic impacts of agricultural production technologies and systems (in terms of environmental costs, e.g. CO₂ emissions, water and air pollution, land degradation)?

Agriculture is the most important sector for many countries in terms of its potential to influence a wide range of issues that are critically related to sustainable development. These include: the economy, employment, food security, trade flows, poverty, human health, climate change, the use of natural resources (especially land and water), and biodiversity.

Source: www.unep.ch/etb/publications/Agriculture/flyer%20UNEP%20FOAM.pdf

The oceans are in a worse state than previously suspected. Ocean life is at high risk of entering a phase of extinction of marine species unprecedented in human history. Issues such as over-fishing, pollution and climate change are acting together in ways that have not previously been recognised. The impacts are already affecting humanity.

- How would it be possible to take advantage of the country's abundant natural resources and use them for the benefit of all, and to sustain the country's economy?
- What are the likely economic impacts to Namibia's economy from other African countries and beyond, of consumer boycott of products and services produced without considering the green economy concept?
- What will be the likely impacts of increased competition emanating from green products in the agricultural, fisheries and other critical sectors?
- What is the potential economic impact of the Green Economy concept for natural resources to the Namibian economy in terms of job creation and poverty reduction?



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Value of agriculture, fisheries, water and forests in Namibia

Agriculture:

Fact 1: Agricultural activities contribute 5% to Namibia's GDP – most of which from livestock production.

Fact 2: Only 10% of the land in Namibia is used for cropping while 75% is used for grazing.

Fact 3: Livestock numbers have dropped by 45% in the past 40 years.

Fact 4: Agriculture is extremely sensitive to the climatic fluctuations that will occur with climate change.

Fisheries:

Fact 1: Fisheries production contributes 5.5% to Namibia's GDP, with an additional 2% from fish processing.

Fact 2: Government has strict policies in place to avoid depletion of fish stocks and they are estimated to have risen in value by 50% since independence.

Fact 3: Namibia's productive marine fishing industry is supported by the cold nutrient-rich Benguela Current; any rise of temperature as a result of climate change could radically decrease fish stocks.

Water:

Fact 1: Namibia will face absolute water scarcity within the next 10 years.

Fact 2: Climate change projections indicate that the water availability situation is likely to worsen in the future.

Fact 3: Desalination could become a major source of fresh water in future; its production consumes high amounts of energy.

Forests:

Fact 1: Namibia's forest resources constitute an important national heritage, which provides both economic and environmental benefits.

Fact 2: In the communal land alone, the government has set aside one State Forest and four Community Forests with a total combination of 6,140 km².

Fact 3: Forests make a direct contribution of N\$1 billion to national income – equivalent to about 3% of GDP.

Some 'greening' options

- Conservation agriculture and other sustainable practices
- Sustainable use principles for each sector
- Eco-labelling
- Green sector strategies ('white paper')
- International/regional trade policies
- Environmentally friendly trade and investment policies
- Environmental taxes
- Subsidies that promote environmentally friendly production systems
- Payment for environmental services (PES)
- Strategic Environmental Assessments.

Useful references and websites

- UNEP Green Economy Reports <http://www.unep.org/greeneconomy/GreenEconomyReport/tabid/29846/Default.aspx>
- Alexander Toto, Suzanne Thalwitzer. 2009. RTEA Namibia Sectoral Paper – EU sanitary Demands for Red Meat Trade: Impact on Sustainable Development in Namibia. <http://www.iisd.org/tkn/research/pub.aspx?id=1194>
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