



August 2011 Newsletter

prosperity for all within one planet limits



Note from the Convenor

It is now the first week of August and we are working hard to achieve a shared narrative and policy positions to influence government submissions for the 1st November Zero Draft for Rio 2012.

In the first instance, we have [drafted a response](#) to the [EU's Communication on the green economy](#), and once this is approved by our policy team, we shall be discussing this with member states directly.

The Rio Policy working group, representing all shades of our coalition, is in place to develop our policy positions. We would like to open up their drafts for wider coalition comment in August. We will use the UN DPI Conference in Bonn (3-5 September) to open up the debate to wider civil society. Through these conversations we are looking forward to crystallising and improving our thinking.

It is important that we recognise and work with the constant evolution of debate on green economy, and think beyond Rio 2012. To do this, our Big Picture project is moving ahead, developing our framework to the next level of detail and clarifying the many change options that are both available and necessary (not just the few we might get agreement for at Rio 2012). We will be using our re-launched website and its' supporting Green Economy Lab to clarify our current thinking and make it easier for you to

contribute directly so that we can continue to be part of this evolution.

Two further points are important for your attention:

5th GEC Global Meeting 14 -16 November, London. We shall be using this gathering to finalise plans for the event that is Rio 2012 itself, and to consider the role our coalition might take afterwards. Please put these dates in your diaries and send us suggestions for additional items for the programme.

GEC and Rio 2012. The transition to a green economy is one that will certainly require progressive leadership by our governments, but it is one that will be motivated and indeed implemented by the energy and expertise of civil society and other stakeholders. We are really keen to capture and showcase much of the energy amongst civil society. In order to complement the intergovernmental process we would like to generate a global civil society conversation at Rio 2012. We are developing our thinking on this kind of event and testing it with others. We welcome your thoughts on what it could look like and what you might be interested in contributing.

This is a busy and important time for all of us. But I hope we all see the opportunity and value of collaborative work and can make it a priority, even when our separate organisational demands leave little space.

Oliver Greenfield

Convenor

Green Economy Coalition

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

In last month's newsletter we encouraged you all to read the [EU's Communication on a green economy](#). The content of the document was a positive step in as far as it demonstrated a refreshed commitment on behalf of EU member states to the transition to a green economy. It also provided us with some useful insights into

policy directions. However, for us, there were also some glaring omissions in the document.

Most specifically, the EU's communication failed to adequately represent the social dimensions of a transition to a green economy. For the GEC, a green economy is not just one that 'invests in the sustainable management of key resources and natural capital', rather, it is one that invests in the

natural world in order to build an economy that explicitly pursues wellbeing for all.

Building on our collective thinking as a coalition we have drafted a response to the EU's Communication on behalf of the GEC. Our Policy working group is currently reviewing the paper, but in the meantime we also want to [share the draft with the wider community](#). If you have any comments or suggestions that you would like to make on the draft, please contact the Secretariat directly so that we can pass them on to the Rio Policy working group.

In addition, the Rio Policy working group is developing a series of policy position papers on each of our [themes of change](#) as part of our shared framework. We will be launching these recommendations for consultation at the UN DPI Conference in Bonn for a wider civil society consultation. Let us know if you would like to be involved.

Finally, as the largest civil society movement working on a green economy, the GEC has been requested to contribute a 'Challenge Paper' as part of the Global Transition project. Coordinated by the New Economics Foundation and Stakeholder Forum, the project is collecting a series of provocative discussion papers on different themes relating to a green economy. We will be drafting our Challenge Paper over the coming month, and we will update you on progress in next month's newsletter.

These papers will then feed into a dialogue session to be held in London in October. The GEC's Challenge Paper will build on all of the work being carried out on behalf of our Rio Policy working team. We will circulate a draft as soon as possible. If you would like to get involved, please [get in touch](#).

NATIONAL DIALOGUES

In October, our coalition member IIED will be coordinating a national dialogue on a green economy in Kazakhstan, together with national partners.

A huge country, the size of Western Europe, Kazakhstan has vast mineral resources and enormous economic potential. Protecting the ecological heritage of country, whilst also ensuring that growth meets the needs of the people represents a significant challenge. A conversation on a green economy is thus very timely.

As part of the preparatory process for the Kazakhstan dialogue, IIED has developed a diagnostic that builds directly on the GEC's framework for a green economy:

1. Greening high impact sectors
2. Improving societal wellbeing & investing in people
3. Managing natural capital & investing in natural systems
4. Influencing financial flows
5. Improving governance and measurement

We will be updating you on the outputs from the diagnostic and from the dialogue in next month's newsletter.

We're also happy to report that one of our coalition members, EcoUnion, has had its first successful workshop on a green economy last month. 30 NGO, government and private sector representatives were able to attend the workshop. This initial conversation has laid the ground for a much more intensive dialogue, the [Global Eco Forum](#) that will be taking place in October 2011, and to which the GEC will be attending.

Both these dialogues will enable our coalition to build on the knowledge that we have generated from our experiences in India, Brazil, Mali and the Caribbean, of the reality of debates and issues on the ground in different cultural and ecological contexts.

Finally, the GEC Secretariat has developed an information 'pack' to provide guidance to support coalition members and others who are developing national dialogues on a green economy. It provides suggestions on the 'process' in terms of hosting and supporting a national dialogue including a number of possible templates and publicity materials, but it also looks at ways to frame discussions. Get in touch for more info.

ROAD TO RIO 2012

It is now just over 10 months until Rio 2012. The summit is expected to generate high-level participation from all governments, and provide a unique opportunity for aligning government thinking and priorities around green economy goals.

Beyond the inter-governmental discussions, Rio 2012 will also bring together a vast array of NGOs, academia, policy analysts, practitioners, business and industry representatives and many more. These different global stakeholder groups bring a huge level of insight and knowledge to the table, which will be critical for developing ongoing initiatives that will help to accelerate a transition

to a green economy on the local, national and global level. The GEC is really keen to capitalise on all of that energy, expertise and momentum. So we're currently exploring different ideas for representing our collective presence at Rio 2012. We would like to be able to use Rio 2012 to catalyse a global discussion on the future role and dimensions of a green economy amongst wider civil society. We would like to build on all of the national dialogues that have been hosted both by the GEC and other initiatives.

We have a number of ideas for potential events and platforms. [Do get in touch](#) with us if you would like to be involved in these discussions.

THE BIG PICTURE

There are two questions that are always asked in relation to a green economy: what is a green economy? and, how do we get there?

The GEC has tackled the first question head on. We now have a collective understanding of what a green economy means through our shared definition and [shared framework](#) for a green economy. However, we're also keen to further develop our understanding and knowledge around the second question; how do we get there?

With this in mind, we are devoting one part of our new GEC website (soon to be launched!) to a

'Know How' section. This will draw together the best thinking from across the coalition and wider community on how we accelerate the transition to a green economy. It will be a platform for practical solutions, policy suggestions and examples.

In order to build up this section we are launching a 'coalition blog' which will collect some of the best thinking on the practical dimensions of how we make a global shift to a new, green economy.

We have already had a number of submissions from coalition members. If you are also able to contribute, please [get in touch](#).

GREEN GROWTH?

Finally, we would really like to draw your attention to Steve Bass's (IIED) blog, '[three angles on green growth](#)'. Whilst 'green growth' has become a term that is common in political discourse, it has been interpreted in numerous ways.

Understanding the objectives and dimensions of green growth is fundamental to a transition to our common vision of a green economy.

The article describes three of the more prominent understandings of the term and considers some of the challenges and advantages associated with each one.

The blog has already sparked some interesting discussion and we would encourage you to have a read and join the debate.

The GEC is supported by a secretariat hosted by IIED in London.

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