

Drupal.behaviors.print = function(context) {window.print();}>

Published on *EurActiv* (<http://www.euractiv.com>)

Source URL: <http://www.euractiv.com/en/sustainability/commission-calls-global-green-economy-roadmap-news-505794>

Commission calls for global 'green economy roadmap'

Published: 21 June 2011

The European Commission yesterday (20 June) tabled proposals for next year's Rio+20 Earth Summit, spelling out the 'what, how and who' of a transition to a green economy and calling for the adoption of global roadmap to guarantee continued commitment beyond the conference itself.

Background

In December 2009 the UN General Assembly adopted a [resolution](#) to hold the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) in 2012.

This conference is referred to as '[Rio+20](#)' or the 2012 Earth Summit, as it is being held exactly two decades after a landmark international conference in Rio de Janeiro, called the 'Earth Summit'. The 1992 summit agreed on a plan of action ([Agenda 21](#)) and a [declaration](#) setting out principles supporting sustainable development.

Hosted by Brazil, the 2012 summit will seek to secure renewed commitment for sustainable development and assess progress done. Its two main focuses are the green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication, and the institutional framework for sustainable development.

Presenting the EU executive's views to the press, Environment Commissioner Janez Potočnik insisted that the Rio+20 conference should be considered "as a beginning, not as an end in itself".

The [communication](#) preparing the ground for the EU's position at the Rio+20 UN Sustainable Development Conference in Rio de Janeiro in June 2012 was adopted yesterday (20 June).

It outlines objectives and specific actions on the two inter-linked themes of the Rio+20 summit: the transition to a green economy and better global governance for sustainable development.

The document lays the basis for further dialogue between the European Commission, Council and Parliament, individual countries, civil society and business in the run-up to Rio+20, before a consolidated EU position is submitted to the UN later this year (by 1 November).

In addition to ensuring that the agreed vision and goals will be followed through in a systematic manner after the 2012 conference, a 'Green Economy Roadmap' can, according to the Commission, "map out a range of international, regional and national

actions with milestones, indicators and targets, as well as mechanisms to monitor overall progress".

The underlying aim of such a global roadmap is to encourage countries to establish strategies for greening their economies, drawing up objectives and timelines for action at national and regional level.

The progress towards a green economy would then be monitored through "key indicators and a globally agreed system for environmental and social accounting," for example by building on the EU's planned regulatory framework for environmental accounts.

Towards global 'green markets'

Overall, yesterday's communication maps out the 'what, how and who' of a transition to a green economy, proposing specific actions that could be implemented at international, national and regional level.

In the 'what' part, the document suggests investing in key resources and natural capital such as water, renewable energy, marine resources, biodiversity and ecosystem services, sustainable agriculture, forests, waste and recycling.

These areas "underpin millions of livelihoods and can help alleviate poverty," and "could become areas for future economic growth and global markets," noted Potočník.

Indeed, the EU executive suggests that the above resource areas "could become the green economy's key growth markets," underpinning economic development and job creation.

But a number of regulatory and market instruments ('how') such as eco-taxes, tradable permits and environmental subsidies need to be put in place to enable growth in the above areas and ensure predictability and a level-playing field for business, the Commission stressed.

Mobilising public and private financial resources, investing in skills and green jobs and developing indicators that reflect environmental and social progress also feature among tools that can point the way towards a green economy, the EU executive said.

Outi Alapekkala

Next Steps

- **By 1 Nov. 2011:** Consolidated EU position to be submitted to UN.
- **4-6 June 2012:** Rio+20 Earth Summit.

Links

European Union

- Commission communication: Rio+20: towards the green economy and better governance (20 June 2011) [FR] [DE]
- Commission press release: Towards a global green economy and better governance – the Commission presents policy orientations for the Rio+20 Conference (20 June 2011) [FR] [DE]
- Commission: Rio+20: United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development

International Organisations

- United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD)

Industry federations and trade unions

- International Chamber of Commerce (ICC): ICC initial comments on the UNEP draft Green Economy Report (May 2011)