

UNDESA - ESCAP - ILO - UNEP

Expert Group Meeting on

GREEN GROWTH AND GREEN JOBS FOR YOUTH

12-13 December 2012

Chair's summary for the closing session

13 December 2012

The Division for Social Policy and Development of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific of the International Labour Organization and the United Nations Environment Program are have jointly organized an expert group meeting on “Green Growth and Green Jobs for Youth” from 12-13 December 2012, at ESCAP headquarters in Bangkok as part of the implementation of the UN system-wide Plan of action of the Second United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2008-2017).

The meeting was attended by more than 150 participants from Governments, academia, specialized national and international agencies, trade unions and employers' organizations, non-governmental organizations and the youth movement. Promoting green jobs for young people is an important component of the Plan of action.

The meeting was convened in the context of the General Assembly resolution on the implementation of the Second Decade (66/215) in which the General Assembly encouraged the inter-agency collaboration in sharing knowledge, promoting policy dialogue and strengthening the policy coherence on employment issues. In addition, the outcome of the meeting will contribute to the follow up to the Rio+20 outcome document "The Future we want" with regard to green jobs and youth employment, which *inter alia* “encourages promoting the exchange of information and knowledge on decent work for all and job creation, including green jobs Initiatives and related skills”.

The expert group meeting reviewed the following themes relating to green growth and green jobs for youth, namely:

- Creating an enabling environment for a job centred inclusive growth and green economy;
- Opportunities and challenges for promoting green jobs for youth
- Education and skills for green jobs
- Good practices and initiatives on innovative financing
- Promoting green youth entrepreneurship and small and medium- sized enterprises for green jobs
- Panel discussion with youth representatives

The second day of the meeting took place at the School of Tourism and Hospitality Management in Bangkok where a site visit was organized at the kind invitation of the Suan Dusit Rajabhat University. A talk show with youth representatives was also organized in the

afternoon of the second day in presence of 180 experts and students from the various universities in Bangkok.

Some of the key messages and recommendations from the presentations and the discussions held during the two day meeting are:

- Policy coherence among the economic, social and environmental areas is essential to achieve inclusive economic growth that is also more environmentally sustainable. The shift towards a green economy with green growth needs to be job centered and create decent work and green jobs for all.
- Green growth and green economy policies are a necessary condition to achieve sustainable development but are not sufficient. Policy coherence is required and additional and complementary policies are necessary. These complimentary policies, including active labour market policies, social protection that also target the most vulnerable young women and men as well as industrial policies are crucial to achieve sustainable development.
- The government, the private sector and civil society all can and should play an active role in promoting job-centered green growth.
- Most surveys and studies indicate that youth are most interested and aware of green policies and aspire to obtain green jobs. At a time when global youth unemployment has reached an unprecedented scale, promoting green jobs for youth brings a 'double dividend' for economic growth and youth. However, the youth is not adequately prepared and lacks basic education, as well as effective mechanisms for their smooth entry into the world of work, into green jobs, in particular.
- Green policies imply new technologies and new training requirements, although we learned that the degree to which new skills are needed vary among different occupations in a green economy. In this regard, all countries having invested into the green economy are faced with shortage and gaps of skillful labour – there is a need to invest into skills development to reap the benefits of the green economy. Therefore, skills anticipation and skills development schemes must be in place to ensure that the transition to a green economy can benefit all, in particular young men and women.
- Proactive and integrated green youth employment programs ought to be developed within each country's national context, including training and apprenticeship programs in the green sector, partnership agreements with the financial sector to encourage access to green finance for youth and SMEs, public investments in environmentally friendly infrastructure and natural resource management programs that promote youth employment and green entrepreneurship initiatives.
- The role of social partners (employers and workers' organizations) to engage in social dialogue is essential toward ensuring a smooth transition from school to work and toward promoting green growth with green jobs for youth.
- Youth, as well as women should be empowered to participate in policy-making in the transition to a green economy in order to maximize the impact on youth employment.

- In the Asia Pacific region, as in most developing regions, informal sectors make up a significant part of the economy and account for large shares of employment, especially for youth. Transition to green economy poses special challenges and opportunities .This aspect should be addressed by relevant policies.