



Ministry of Equipment and Environment and Ministry of Vocational Training and Employment of Tunisia, in collaboration with the International Labour Organization and GIZ

International seminar on green jobs: Environmental actions and creation of decent work

21-22 May 2013, Tunis

Tunis, 22 May 2013 - Green jobs play an important role in the fight against unemployment in Tunisia and offer opportunities to create more jobs today and in the future.

Jointly organized by the Ministry of Equipment and Environment and Ministry of Vocational Training and Employment of Tunisia, this seminar brought together for two days over 100 participants to take stock of on-going initiatives and explore new approaches to further promote green jobs and decent work in Tunisia.

In a context of high unemployment particularly among the youth and women, the fight against unemployment is a key priority for the Tunisian government and its development partners. At this seminar, experts from various government departments and specialised national agencies (including development planning, finance, transport), representatives of the ILO, GIZ, UNDP, UNOPS, the World Bank, African Development Bank, UNIDO, UNESCWA, the European Union, academic experts, financiers, and young Tunisian graduates exchanged with officials of the two host ministries in roundtables which addressed the following issues: activities of the green economy and job creation; skills development for green jobs; and investment, entrepreneurship and green economic initiatives that exist or could be strengthened. The seminar benefited from the participation of the Economic, Social and Environmental Council of Morocco, which presented their initiatives on green economy and green jobs, to foster exchange of experiences among countries.

Participants noted that there is a significant potential to create new jobs and to improve productivity and working conditions in many sectors and sub-sectors of the economy, including renewable energy and energy efficiency, agriculture and the agro-food industry, tourism, recycling and waste management.

The important role of policy and regulatory frameworks and financial incentives was emphasized to remove existing obstacles to private initiative. Many participants called for a greater emphasis on local and regional development to support the creation of green jobs at the governorate level. Participants agreed that Tunisia faces clear challenges of matching education/training and labour market needs, which prompted calls for new approaches to skills development and human and institutional capacity building.

Development partners, including GIZ, stressed that Tunisia currently enjoys a particular attention and commitment from technical and financial partners, which should be seized as an opportunity to bring about innovative and result-oriented programmes addressing national priorities.

Five key orientations resulted from the discussions and recommendations of the international seminar on green jobs:

Promote a better understanding and knowledge on green jobs

1. To carry out an assessment of the potential for green job creation to inform up-coming policy processes for the period 2014-2017. This would be led jointly by the Ministry of Equipment and Environment and the Ministry of Vocational Training and Employment, with technical support from the Tunisian Institute for Competitiveness and Quantitative Studies, the National Institute of Statistics, the National Observatory of Employment and the Tunisian Observatory for Environment and Sustainable Development. This ILO offered to provide support for such an assessment.
2. To set up an expert group on green jobs with the support of GIZ, so as to generate ideas towards the development of a National Action Plan on Green Jobs 2014-2017 and contribute to policy discussions on this subject in the medium and long term.

Promote support services for the creation of green jobs and decent work

3. To set up a "green economy help desk" and a "platform on green jobs" under the oversight of the two ministries, with the participation of the Tunis International Centre for Environmental Technologies and the Eco-Park Borj Cedria.
 - a) The platform on green jobs proposed by the Ministry of Vocational Training and Employment will be established in collaboration with UNOPS. It is expected to receive financing from the Transition Fund of the OECD.
 - b) The help desk on green economy would be implemented by the Ministry of Environment in collaboration with UNESCWA. This three-year project would start with an exploratory study in order to identify the most suitable institutional anchor for the help desk.

Strengthen the institutional framework and enhance coordination between stakeholders

4. To bring together the results of the above-mentioned initiatives as contributions to the formulation a green economy strategy and to strengthen national capacities to assess socio-economic development plans for their potential to create green jobs and decent work.
5. To mobilize support from Tunisia's partners, including the United Nations system, development banks and bilateral cooperation in the implementation of these activities.

Finally, participants noted that the International Labour Conference of the ILO to be held in June 2013 will have among its themes "sustainable development, decent work and green jobs." In this context, the results of the seminar in Tunis offer perspectives in terms of dialogue processes at the national level, on the opportunities and challenges, policy instruments and institutional mechanisms that could contribute to promote more and better jobs for sustainable development.