



International Conference
'Beyond Rio + 20: emerging challenges and opportunities'
Accra, Ghana, 18-22 November 2013
CALL FOR PAPERS

The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 20-22 June 2012, released an Outcome document entitled “The future we want”, a compromise of participating countries who strive to promote a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication. Green economy is considered as “one of the important tools available for achieving sustainable development ... and should contribute to eradicating poverty as well as sustained economic growth, enhancing social inclusion, improving human welfare and creating opportunities for employment and decent work for all, while maintaining the healthy functioning of the Earth’s ecosystems” (p.9).

At a pre-event to Rio+20, participants of a High-Level Panel Discussion¹ agreed on the urgent need for research and development on green economies in African countries. It is expected that these undertakings would improve the understanding of the benefits, challenges and transformation risks on the path to a green economy. Participants also agreed to engage in further consultations on the best means of collaboration for implementation of a green economy path in African countries. The Rio+20 Declaration echoed the preoccupations above as delegates urged “to take into account the opportunities and challenges, as well as the costs and benefits, of green economy policies in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication, using the best available scientific data and analysis.”

One of the most notable outcomes of the conference is a decision to launch "Sustainable Development Goals" (SDG). Definition of these SDG is left to the Open Working Group on sustainable development goals whose task is to make proposals for implementation in 2015. The SDGs will include all three dimensions of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental. The Secretary General of the United Nations has created a high-level panel of eminent persons on the post 2015 development agenda, which will focus on the above mentioned dimensions: economic growth, social equality and environmental sustainability. Other decisions include a wide range of actions, such as strengthening the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP); promoting corporate

¹ Africa @ Rio+20 : High-Level Panel Discussion on “Promoting Inclusive Green Growth and building a Green Economy as a means to achieve sustainable development: Perspectives on Opportunities and Challenges face by Africa, Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States”, 18 June 2012, Rio Centro, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

sustainability reporting measures; developing a strategy for sustainable development financing; and, adopting a framework for tackling sustainable consumption and production.

The on-going consultation process on the post-MDGs, taking place globally through a number of channels and in a variety of platforms, will certainly lead to a development agenda that takes into account the Rio+20 outcomes. It is therefore important to keep tracking the various activities related to the future of the MDGs.

The Initiative Prospective Agricole et Rurale (IPAR Senegal), the Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research (ISSER, University of Ghana) and the United Nations University Institute for Natural Resources in Africa (UNU-INRA) are organizing a three-day conference in Accra, Ghana from November 18-22, 2013 with the support of the International Development Research Center (IDRC) on the theme '**Beyond Rio + 20: emerging challenges and opportunities**'.

The conference intends to assemble several African think tanks to share views on the post-Rio+20, to deepen their understanding of the challenges and opportunities ahead and to lay the foundations of a collective reflection on the ways to better implement the Rio+20 outcomes within Africa. This initiative will contribute to strengthening the research capacities of the think tanks, improve their policy linkages and connect their voices to the global development agenda. The event will also bring together prominent policymakers and civil society who can help connect Africa to the reflection on inclusive green growth, contribute to mobilize political will throughout the continent and better incorporate the voice of Africa in this global policy debate.

The three days bilingual conference is designed in a diversified format with panel discussions, presentations by keynote speakers and session papers. The following outputs are expected from the conference: i) an edited book capturing the best outputs of the program; ii) research papers related to the post Rio+20 gathering; these may be published in a special issue; iii) Policy briefs on specific and relevant topics.

Papers are invited to discuss a range of themes that include, but are not limited to: Inclusive green growth; decent work and social inclusion; green jobs; opportunities and challenges of a green economy in Africa; sustainable development goals. Themes of the Open working group on sustainable development goals may also be discussed. The costs of participation at the conference will be covered for a limited number of invited speakers and selected papers. However, participants who can support themselves are encouraged to apply.

Prospective authors should send their abstract of no more than 600 words to Ibrahima Hathie, Initiative Prospective Agricole et Rurale (IPAR Senegal), ihathie@gmail.com and Felix Ankomah Asante, Institute of Statistical, Social & Economic Research, (ISSER, Ghana) University of Ghana, fasante@ug.edu.gh. **The deadline for abstracts is August 24, 2013 and for full papers is October 31, 2013.**