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Experts at UN meeting consider green economy's impact on society and environment



Green Economy

8 April 2010 – Experts from 75 countries gathered in Geneva today for a United Nations-backed meeting to discuss the social and environmental impact of transitioning to a more environmentally-friendly economy.

More than 600 delegates to 30th Annual Conference of the International Association for Impact Assessment (IAIA), hosted by the United Nations Environment Programme ([UNEP](#)), will look at the five sectors that have been identified as key green investment opportunities – agriculture, industry, tourism, cities and transportation.

“When they met in Bali [Indonesia] two months ago, the world’s environment ministers emphasized that the full impacts of green economy policies should be assessed, including environmental, social and economic aspects,” [said](#) Achim Steiner, UN Under Secretary-General and UNEP Executive Director

“Professionals involved in impact assessments thus have an important role to play in delivering more intelligent and sustainable choices to their customers and clients including governments, business, local authorities and civil society: choices that can direct investments to fit local, national and regional needs while addressing the broad agenda of low carbon, resource efficient development, poverty eradication and higher levels of decent employment,” he added.

One of the key goals of the conference – hosted for the first time by a UN agency – is to present the tools and methods that will help countries to assess and identify which green investments to make.

Nick Taylor, President of the IAIA, said delegates at the six-day meeting would share their ideas and insights on how impact assessment can address a complex range of global issues.

“A growing field of expertise, impact assessment can evaluate the linkages between investments and the environment, health, job creation, economic diversification and poverty reduction. This forum comes at a time when there’s heightened interest in the potential of impact assessments, so it’s vital experts exchange information and contribute to a growing body of knowledge,” Mr. Taylor said.

UNEP’s flagship Green Economy Report, to be released later in the year, will present in-depth assessments of 10 sectors based on economic analysis and modelling. Three of the report’s chapter authors will be present to share some of the report’s preliminary analysis.

IAIA is a global network for best practice in the use of impact assessment for informed decision-making regarding policies, programmes, plans and projects. It brings together researchers, practitioners, and users of various types of impact assessment from around the world.

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