

## Shifting to a green economy can hasten development, says new UN report



A family in Uvs Province, Mongolia, using a solar panel to generate power for their ger, a traditional Mongolian tent

20 September 2010 – Intensifying investments in clean energy can accelerate the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (**MDGs**), the eight globally-agreed targets to slash poverty by 2015, the United Nations Environment Programme (**UNEP**) says in a new publication.

A “green economy” is one that “not only improves human well-being and lessens inequality but also reduces environmental risks and ecological scarcities,” the brief says, underscoring its importance in realizing the MDGs.

In 2008 amidst the global financial crisis, UNEP launched its Green Economy Initiative, which seeks to demonstrate how to revive economies and create lasting jobs while simultaneously addressing environmental challenges.

The new publication, entitled ***Brief for Policymakers on the Green Economy and the Millennium Development Goals***, also emphasizes the interconnected nature of the eight MDGs.

For example, it says, sustainable agriculture and the provision of safe water are targets of the seventh MDG, but meeting that objective would also help to curb poverty, lower infant mortality rates and enhance maternal – each of which are separate Goals.

“There is rapidly-growing evidence that accelerating a transition to a low-carbon, resource-efficient, employment generating Green Economy may not only be the key to meeting sustainability challenges of the 21st century, but also provide a considerable contribution to meeting the other MDGs,” **said** UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner.

The publication was launched on the same day as the start of a three-day gathering at the UN, drawing scores of world leaders, seeking to assess progress made so far in achieving the MDGs.

Mr. Steiner said that on current trends, it is likely that not all of the Goals will be achieved by 2015.

This is “in part because the responses so far have been embedded in a 20th-century approach to a new century’s challenges,” he said, underlining the benefits derived from investing in modern clean-technology energy systems.

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