



# Rio Conventions Pavilion Bulletin

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**A Daily Report of the Rio Conventions Pavilion**

Published by the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)



ONLINE AT [HTTP://WWW.IISD.CA/UNCSD/RIO20/PAVILION/](http://www.iisd.ca/uncsd/rio20/pavilion/)  
ISSUE #2, VOLUME 200, NUMBER 2, FRIDAY, 15 JUNE 2012

## RIO CONVENTIONS PAVILION HIGHLIGHTS: THURSDAY, 14 JUNE 2012

The Rio Conventions Pavilion (RCP) continued on Thursday, 14 June 2012, convening for Africa Day, and Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities Day. Three sessions were held addressing: economic valuation of land (EVL) - an approach to advance sustainable development in the context of a green economy; facilitating green growth in Africa - perspectives from the African Development Bank (AfDB); and the contribution of traditional knowledge to climate mitigation and adaptation.



Kate Raworth, Oxfam

## ECONOMIC VALUATION OF LAND: AN APPROACH TO ADVANCE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF A GREEN ECONOMY

Co-chaired by Aly Abou-Sabaa, AfDB, and Simone Quatrini, Global Mechanism, the session was moderated by John Soussan, Offering Sustainable Land-Use Options (OSLO) Consortium.

Quatrini noted increases in foreign direct investment (FDI) in land acquisition as “a potential catalyst for the African green revolution,” highlighting the concern about hidden costs for society and environment from unsustainable land use. Quatrini explained the OSLO Consortium seeks to unlock responsible investment by providing incentives and safeguards to investors

while emphasizing: costs of inaction; net economic benefits from internal rates of return; and social, environmental and future values.

Soussan highlighted the economic case for investing in sustainable land management (SLM). He emphasized the need for policymakers to incorporate the full value of land resources and the wide range of ecosystem values that they generate into national accounting systems.

Abou-Sabaa noted that Africa has no choice but to manage its natural resources sustainably and build resilience to the increased incidence of droughts and floods, and desertification. Underlining that the notion of valuing ecosystem services is relatively new, he called for a gradual approach in introducing the concept in order to ensure buy-in from key stakeholders.

Elijah Phiri, University of Zambia, presented a case study on the economic land valuation in Zambia. He highlighted the contribution of land use to the economy including, agriculture, forestry, fisheries and wetlands, reflected by the distribution of Zambia’s resources into these sectors. He also observed the highest economic value is carbon sequestration in forestry and wetlands. Noting the economic value of these ecosystem services is estimated at US\$ 240 million, Phiri emphasized that failure to address rapid land degradation can have negative economic affects.

William Ehlers, the Global Environment Facility (GEF), described GEF’s investments over the last two decades through the Land Degradation Focal Area as a major catalyst of innovation in SLM, leveraging an additional US\$ 2 billion in co-financing. He highlighted this strategy includes explicit links between SLM and human well-being, establishing a foundation



Aly Abou-Sabaa, AfDB, and Simone Quatrini, Global Mechanism

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(L-R): John Soussan, OSLO Consortium; Aly Abou-Sabaa, AfDB; Simone Quatrini, Global Mechanism; Elijah Phiri, University of Zambia; Timo Busch, ETH Zurich; Andrew Seidl, IUCN; William Ehlers, Global Environment Facility (GEF).

for improving the livelihoods of millions of rural people who rely on agriculture and livestock management. He emphasized the focus on agriculture, rangelands and forest landscapes where the potential for maximizing global environment and development are greatest, and the value-added of land-based investments will show the greatest returns in a Green Economy.

Andrew Seidl, IUCN, spoke on IUCN's recent experience in economic valuation and development. Noting that this involves "recognizing value, demonstrating value and capturing value," he highlighted a global-level assessment linked to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Target 15 that found US\$ 84 billion global annual net benefit of forest landscape restoration. Seidl highlighted challenges including: inadequate local technical and human capacity; methodological issues such as "answering the right questions," transferability and scaling, and dealing with communal tenure systems; and political considerations such as the misuse of information, and ensuring distribution and equity are taken into account.

Timo Busch, ETH Zurich, presented on the private sector perspective. He observed that the growing interest in ecosystem services among large institutional investors and a rising number of socially-responsible investors provide important opportunities for investing in sustainability. Noting, however, that the short-term focus of financial markets presents a greater challenge, he suggested that it might be necessary for valuation processes to explore appropriate policy incentives for longer-term investments, modeled for instance on feed-in tariffs within the renewable energy sector. In conclusion, he highlighted

government involvement in securing sustainable investments and negative externalities in the value chain as critical issues for investors.

During discussions, panelists responded to questions on environment and gender equity inter-linkages, with Soussan observing "women are principle users but not controllers of land resources" and Abou-Sabaa acknowledging the need to increase inclusiveness in development and to distribute economic growth in a more equitable manner, including through better shares of land use. Seidl noted the incorporation of women and vulnerable populations is still in the early awareness raising stages with a long way to go.

## FACILITATING GREEN GROWTH IN AFRICA: PERSPECTIVES FROM THE AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

Daniel Makokera, CEO, Pamuzinda Productions, South Africa, introduced the panel. Kate Raworth, Oxfam, presented a vision for inclusive and sustainable economic development as a safe and just space for humanity. Raworth noted scientists' emphasis on global climate change, soil degradation and biodiversity loss where environmental boundaries have already been over stepped. She stressed the need to focus beyond green limits and that national level analysis must also include assessment of the social foundations, including meeting human rights to resources such as food, water and jobs. She stated all countries are developing nations, because no country yet lives in the safe green economic space.



David Oswald, Design + Environment



Junye Nakano, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan, and Laurent Some, WWF



(L-R): Kate Raworth, Oxfam; Frank Sperling, AfDB; Aly Abou-Sabaa, AfDB; Anthony Okon Nyong, AfDB; Junya Nakano, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan; and Laurent Some, WWF.

Frank Sperling, AfDB, provided perspectives on facilitating green growth in Africa, which he defined as a transformative and iterative process towards more sustainable pathways. He pointed out that Africa's bountiful natural resources and low ecological footprint at present offer real opportunities for this transition, noting that the priorities for the continent include: addressing the infrastructure deficit; sustainable management of natural resources; enhancing resilience to natural disasters; and food security. He noted that meeting these needs requires strong political leadership, an enabling regulatory environment, multi-stakeholder engagement and a focus on the quality of growth. Stressing that African countries run the risk of lock-in to unsustainable pathways, he called for adequate financing of the upfront investments required in this transition.

During the panel discussion, Anthony Okon Nyong, AfDB, stressed that green growth should be a priority for all countries. Highlighting initiatives by Japan, Junya Nakano, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan, remarked that green growth offers additional opportunities for leapfrogging Africa's development challenges while avoiding the negative social and environmental impacts of economic growth. Noting that some of the misconceptions around the concept arise from a narrow interpretation of the green economy as an "anti-growth" development trajectory, Sperling emphasized the need for each country to map its own green growth path.

Responding to a question about reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation's (REDD) role in African green growth during discussions, Sperling stressed carbon as an asset and huge opportunity for Africa to benefit from global interest in carbon mitigation. He emphasized the need for capacity building to up-scale African project proposals to meet

performance-based criteria to attract investments in REDD at a comparable level to Brazil and Indonesia. Abou-Sabaa explained how the AfDB serves as catalyst, covering upfront costs and providing technical and design support for project proposals. Okon Nyong emphasized that AfDB also finances public goods and development projects that may not recover all costs as required by private sector investments.

Raworth noted that besides finance, "we need an injection of creativity" and stressed that leadership on green growth should be taken by developed countries whose traditional economic growth model has neither solved poverty nor been sustainable. She explained an inclusive and sustainable development course would allow low-income countries to focus on poverty alleviation while avoiding being locked into unsustainable pathways, learning from emerging economies that have the highest potential to transform resource use while increasing well-being. Noting the need for political will at all levels of governance for such a transition, Okon Nyong lauded the Brazilian government for its leadership and engagement in South-South Cooperation with the AfDB.

## THE CONTRIBUTION OF TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE TO CLIMATE MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION

Moderator Johnson Cerda, Conservation International, noted the importance of respecting the rights of indigenous peoples, underscoring that indigenous peoples have valuable traditional knowledge that could be contributed to international processes. He said Conservation International has started a fellowship



(L-R): Diana Nacimient, Conservation International Fellow; Johnson Cerda, Conservation International; Jennifer Rubis, UNESCO; and Jadder Lewis, Center for Indigenous Peoples Autonomy and Development, Nicaragua.



Diana Nacimiento, Conservation International Fellow

programme to encourage the study of traditional knowledge in specific indigenous communities and how it could contribute to multilateral negotiations. Cerda said the panel would also address work on indigenous peoples by UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and a case study on Central America.

Diana Nacimiento, Conservation International Fellow, said her project supports the recovery and restoration of indigenous lands in the Kaingang territory in Brazil. She highlighted that Kaingang territory has a complicated background due to colonization, noting that in 1949 17000 hectares were taken from the indigenous peoples and turned into a state park. She stressed that the indigenous population relied on this land for their livelihoods, but said that in 1989 the state park was abandoned by the government and reverted to indigenous management. She noted the resulting challenges, including illegal logging and exploitation, are harming the Kaingang area, which she characterized as “an island of biodiversity floating in a sea of monocultures.” She said the objective of her study was to develop appropriate methodologies in consultation with local communities, noting that external agencies with proposals of recovery and restoration do not consider what local communities desire or local and indigenous knowledge. She highlighted the role of intergenerational transfer of knowledge, in particular as outside cultural influences creep in, and noted the goal of “rescuing” traditional stories and knowledge to preserve them for future generations. She said a next step is to engage indigenous school children in planting native species to restore degraded areas.

Jennifer Rubis, UNESCO, announced the book launch of “Weathering Uncertainty: Climate Change Assessment and Adaptation” and explained that Climate Frontlines supports the voices of indigenous peoples and promotes traditional knowledge in climate adaptation working at the science and policy level. She noted that after having claimed “full participation in issues that affect us” indigenous peoples’ knowledge has been recognized in several texts including the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the CBD. Rubis reported that while their communities can be targets of interventions, indigenous people “do not see themselves as passive victims but actively engage: they have negotiated; resisted; and adapted.” She highlighted the need for flexibility in programming and climate financing. She explained that



Jennifer Rubis, UNESCO

moving beyond recognition towards respect for indigenous traditional knowledge that challenges reductionism would require a conceptualization of traditional knowledge on the same footing as science, giving them equal inputs and looking at complementary areas that can benefit communities.

Jadder Lewis, Center for the Indigenous Peoples Autonomy and Development, Nicaragua, lamented the many misconceptions at the heart of mainstream approaches to supporting traditional knowledge. He noted that ignorance of how indigenous social institutions work and the assumption that they want to “conserve nature for the sake of it” has resulted in an overemphasis of the protected area approach, which often exacerbates the marginalization of indigenous communities and increases poverty. He stressed the need for support programmes to strengthen local governance capacities by enhancing equitable access to the benefits of ecosystem services and involving them more meaningfully in global value chains. He also highlighted the role of education and exchanges among indigenous communities in protecting local institutions and enabling indigenous peoples to consolidate their territories as viable economic, social and political systems.

In the ensuing discussion, panelists emphasized the need to strengthen learning alliances between indigenous and academic communities and noted the opportunities that South-South cooperation offers for scaling up good practices.



Jadder Lewis, Center for Indigenous Peoples Autonomy and Development, Nicaragua

Funding for coverage of the Rio Conventions Pavilion has been provided by:

