



SPECIAL ISSUE
celebrating 40 years
of UNEP

Our Planet

CAMILLA TOULMIN 40 YEARS OF UNEP A.H. ZAKRI PERSPECTIVES ON Rio+20
ADNAN AMIN POWERING THE GREEN ECONOMY ELIZABETH THOMPSON REVOLUTION AT RIO



“We believe that we, as a country, can be a pioneer for a new age of renewable energy sources.”
ANGELA MERKEL
CHANCELLOR, GERMANY



“The UNEP Green Economy report challenges the myth that there is a trade-off between the economy and the environment.”
BAN KI-MOON
SECRETARY GENERAL,
UNITED NATIONS



“Our green economic mantra is pro-growth, pro-job, pro-poor, pro-environment — and of course pro-business.”
SUSILO BAMBANG YUHOYONO
PRESIDENT, INDONESIA

RIO+20



“If we want to solve financial and environmental crises, we need to find a solution for both — and that solution involves green growth — sustainable growth.”
FELIPE CALDERÓN
PRESIDENT, MEXICO



“And the new Green Economy dialogue that we’re creating today will deepen our cooperation even further, in green buildings and sustainable development.”
BARACK OBAMA
PRESIDENT, UNITED STATES



“We are here today...to make the first positive steps toward greening our economy.”
KAMLA PERSAD-BISSESSAR
PRIME MINISTER,
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO



“Our goal is clear, that is to build an economy that protects the environment as well as an environment that supports the growth of the economy.”
SHEIKH MOHAMMED BIN RASHID AL MAKTOUM
PRIME MINISTER AND VICE-PRESIDENT,
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES



“The Green Bridge initiative ...will strengthen the partnership between Europe and Asia in the promotion of green economic policies.”
NURSULTAN NAZARBAYEV
PRESIDENT, KAZAKHSTAN



“China will honor its commitment to growing a Green Economy.”
HU JINTAO
PRESIDENT, CHINA



“The future of the world is in green and when we plan our future we must do so on the basis of green technologies.”
MELES ZENAWI
PRIME MINISTER, ETHIOPIA

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* All dollar (\$) amounts refer to US dollars.



2012 INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF
**SUSTAINABLE ENERGY
FOR ALL**

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Green Economy in a Blue World

Prepared by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and a wide-ranging group of partners, the publication takes a sector-by-sector approach to examine the potential of each to deliver economic growth. With as much as 40 per cent of the global population living within 100 kilometres of the coast, the world's oceans and coasts – the Blue World – provide essential food, shelter and livelihoods to millions of people. But as more and more people move to coastal regions, human impacts are taking a toll on both the ecological health and the economic productivity of the world's oceans.



UNEP Annual Report 2011

The Annual Report 2011 shows the full range of UNEP's work for the environment and development and brings the work of UNEP in 2011 full circle and back to the Green Economy with its potential to deal with multiple challenges and assist the international community realize and implement sustainable development.



UNEP Year Book 2012

From the depletion of soil carbon to decommissioning nuclear reactors, the UNEP Year Book 2012 puts key emerging issues on the global radar. In particular it points out that the dramatic improvements in the way the world manages its precious soils will be key to food, water and climate security in the 21st Century and it highlights another issue of emerging global concern — the challenges of decommissioning the growing numbers of end-of-life nuclear power reactors.



Technology Transfer Perspectives Series: Technologies for Adaptation Perspectives and Practical Experiences

UNEP Risø Centre on Energy, Climate and Sustainable Development

This edition of the Technology Transfer Perspectives Series collects ten articles from adaptation experts and practitioners around the globe. The articles discuss the concept of 'technologies for adaptation' which are divided into three broad themes: Concept and Context of Technologies for Adaptation, Assessments of Adaptation Technology Needs, and Practical Experiences from Working with Technologies for Adaptation.



Green Hills, Blue Cities:

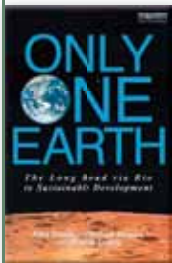
An Ecosystems Approach to Water Resources Management for African Cities

Africa is currently the least urbanised region in the world, but this is changing fast. Of the billion people living on the African continent, about 40 per cent lives in urban areas. The urban population in Africa doubled from 205 million in 1990 to 400 million in 2010, and by 2050, it is expected that this would have tripled to 1.23 billion. Of this urban population, 60 per cent is living in slum conditions. In a time of such urban growth, Africa is likely to experience some of the most severe impacts of climate change, particularly when it comes to water and food security. This places huge pressures on growing urban populations.



Women at the frontline of climate change - Gender risks and hopes

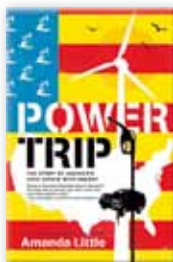
Women are often in the frontline in respect to the impacts of a changing climate. Globally the world is seeing increasingly frequent droughts and floods which are having economic but also profound social consequences. The women and people of Asia are currently at greatest risk with over 100 million people affected in this region annually.



Only One Earth: The Long Road via Rio to Sustainable Development

By Felix Dodds and Michael Strauss with Maurice Strong

Only One Earth provides a roadmap of how we have arrived at present-day environmental concerns and where we must go next. It presents a policy agenda for the survival of humankind on a planet with finite resources addressing issues such as the implementation gap, the democracy gap, the governance gap and what should be done to move to an economy that supports sustainable development ending with 21 issues for a survival agenda.



Power Trip By Amanda Little

After covering the environment and energy beat for more than a decade, Amanda Little decided that the only way to really understand America's energy crisis was to travel into the heart of it. She embarks on a daring cross-country power trip, and describes in vivid, fast-paced prose the most extreme and exciting frontiers of our energy landscape. Hard-hitting yet forward-thinking, Power Trip is a lively and impassioned travel guide for all readers trying to navigate our shifting landscape and a clear-eyed manifesto for the younger generations who are inheriting the earth.



Achim Steiner
UN Under-Secretary-General and
Executive Director, UNEP

Fourty years ago in the Swedish capital city of Stockholm history was made at a UN conference on the future of humanity and the planet. Amid rising concern over pollution, the growing loss of species and the dying of forests as a result of acid rain, governments agreed that a UN body charged with coordinating a global response to such challenges should be established.

It was the birth of UNEP and between June 1972 and the UN General Assembly that year, countries lobbied to host this new environmental body. In the end Kenya won the diplomatic debate and in doing so became the first developing country to host a UN headquarters.

Black and white photographs taken on 2 October 1973 at the inaugural celebrations show President Kenyatta, flanked by forest rangers and game wardens, waving his signature fly whisk while 43 year-old Canadian Maurice Strong, UNEP's first Executive Director, stands to attention.

It was originally set up to coordinate the rest of the UN system's activities on environmental issues and to provide the science to member states on emerging trends in environmental change.

The emphasis on science has perhaps been among UNEP's most important contributions that in turn has led to governments negotiating key global treaties to address emerging environmental crises.

The Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone layer – the protective shield that filters out dangerous levels of the sun's ultraviolet rays – is a case in point. Without the Montreal Protocol, atmospheric levels of ozone-depleting substances could have increased tenfold by 2050 which in turn could have led to up to 20 million more cases of skin cancer and 130 million more cases of eye cataracts, not to speak of damage to human immune systems, wildlife and agriculture.

Bringing forward the science and convening treaty negotiations continues to this day.

In the late 1980s, as the world was struggling to understand the implications of rising greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, UNEP and the World Meteorological Organization established the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

Its scientific work has become the premier risk assessment and reference work for governments on the likely trends and impacts of global warming and the IPCC's findings played a key role in the decision to establish the UN climate convention and its emission reduction treaty, the Kyoto Protocol.

At the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002, UNEP was asked to spearhead a partnership in order to accelerate a global phase-out of leaded petrol. Lead is especially damaging to the brain of infants and the young.

Since then around 80 developing countries including Ghana, Kenya, Tanzania, South Africa and Vanuatu have removed lead from transport fuels and only now are the enormous benefits emerging.

Scientists calculate that improvements in IQ, reductions in cardiovascular diseases, and decline in criminality are among the annual \$2.4 trillion benefits linked to ridding the world of leaded petrol.

It is yet another example of how environmental measures and action also links directly to the social factors and issues of poverty, equity and livelihoods.

Since 2008, UNEP has also been championing the Green Economy as a way of generating development and employment but in a way that keeps humanity's footprint within ecological boundaries.

Part of the Green Economy work has been to assess and communicate to governments the multi-trillion dollar services that nature provides, but which until recently have been all but invisible in national accounts of profit and loss.

So what of the future? As Environment Ministers gather in Nairobi for their annual meeting of the UNEP Governing Council in February 2012, all eyes are on the follow-up to the Earth Summit of 1992, or Rio+20.

This meeting, taking place in June, may prove to be an opportunity where the Green Economy initiative is translated into a fresh and forward-looking way of finally realizing sustainable development for seven billion people, rising to over nine billion by 2050.

And in their submissions to the Summit, many governments are also signaling that the time has come to evolve UNEP itself onto a higher level, perhaps into a World Environment Organization.

Whatever the final outcome of Rio+20 – it is a great compliment to an institution when after 40 years member states express the wish to strengthen it and to do so in its African home.



ELIZABETH THOMPSON
Executive Coordinator
Rio+20 Conference

Revolution at Rio

“We can’t solve problems”, said Albert Einstein, “by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them.” His warning is very relevant as world leaders consider how to construct multilateral approaches and solutions to surmount the social, environmental and economic challenges facing humanity. As Rio+20 approaches, they have a rare opportunity to adopt the revolutionary thinking needed to craft solutions for change and chart a new path of sustainable development for countries, citizens, communities, companies – and Planet Earth.

Rio+20’s “Zero Draft” – which will form the basis of the negotiating text – was released on January 10th after a transparent process which published all submissions online. Writing it was an enormous task, involving distilling and capturing the essence of those documents, faithfully following the submissions of member-states, injecting the text with all the important elements, finding language which did not conflict with previous multilateral

agreements or offend any geopolitical grouping, and deciding what length of document best achieved all these objectives without exceeding practical functionality.

Member-states must now lift this draft to a higher level by transforming it into an ambitious platform for sustainable development, catalysing a global Green Economy. As the Secretary General of the United Nations says: “to make sustainable development happen we have to be prepared to make major changes – in our lifestyles, our economic models, our social organization, and our political life... We need ... Revolutionary thinking. Revolutionary action.”

The Rio+20 Outcome must simultaneously serve multiple interests. It must respect the North’s industrialisation and desire for continued growth and satisfy the South’s development needs and nuances. It needs to assure large emerging economies that their development trajectories will not be halted or present gains reversed.

It should present LDCs, SIDS and Africa with new opportunities to bolster development prospects. And it will be expected to increase the resilience of middle income countries to cope with disasters and crises.

Rio should promote positive South-South and triangular collaborations and establish effective partnerships between governments and private sectors. It should identify the financial resources that the more vulnerable developing countries will need to effect the transition and create a more stable and sustainable global economic system. It must find a list of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) around which all can coalesce. Even, more important, it must challenge politicians to consider development beyond the narrow political cycle. Put succinctly, the Rio Outcome, together with the Report of the Secretary General’s Global Sustainability Panel (High Level Panel), must craft “the future we want” for the people and planet. This may be a tall order, but – as Nelson Mandela has told us – “it always seems impossible until it’s done.”

Despite Agenda 21, a universally accepted definition of sustainable development, and keenly pursued Millennium Development Goals, poverty has not been eradicated. There must therefore be a renewed global effort to end poverty and achieve social equity and justice. Member-states are expressing a strong desire to enhance the institutional framework's effectiveness in implementing sustainable development; this involves addressing several questions:

- Given their importance and impact on growth, why have sustainable development issues remained the province of environmental ministries rather than being embraced by heads of government and ministries of finance/economic affairs?
- How can the multilateral system and international development institutions function more efficiently, effectively and collaboratively to deliver global sustainable development?
- How can any defects in the existing architecture for sustainable development be prevented from being replicated in the new structures?
- To what extent will appropriate national structures need to evolve to complement, and deliver, on the multilateral sustainable development agenda?
- What policies, strategies and mechanisms are essential to mainstreaming sustainable development?
- How can understanding that environmental and economic issues are synonymous be reinforced at the highest levels of government and business?
- How do we best demonstrate to business that sustainability equals profitability?

Recent social uprisings, from the Arab Spring to Occupy Wall Street, have represented citizens' calls for greater equity, sustained well being, greater

“There may be differences over the definition of the Green Economy, its potential for universal application and its capacity for transformation – but it must be conceded that the status quo has not produced the needed development solutions.

New approaches must be tried to allow us to prosper while living within planetary boundaries.”

involvement in their governance and a fair share in the benefits of globalisation. The near complete inability of both North and South to escape the contagious food, fuel and finance crises has served to emphasize the interconnection of economy, environment and society – or, as some express it, “people, planet, profit/prosperity”. There may be differences over the definition of the Green Economy, its potential for universal application and its capacity for transformation – but it must be conceded that the status quo has not produced the needed development solutions. New approaches must be tried to allow us to prosper while living within planetary boundaries.

Governments have a critical leadership role in mainstreaming and practising sustainability. However, the transition to a global Green Economy will not be possible without the constructive engagement of non-state actors and the involvement and cooperation of the private sector; especially if, as Naomi Klein contends, “of the top 100 economies, 51 are companies and only 49 are countries.” Moving the private sector toward taking greater corporate social responsibility, practising sustainability and making green investments will be critical in creating decent work, generating

wealth and eradicating poverty while protecting our natural resource base.

In a resource-constrained international economy, investment in and management of natural capital will be pivotal in enhancing shareholder value and raising brand or company profile. As Andre DuBrin puts it, “a company that pursues the ideals of a Green Economy will therefore gain some competitive advantage in the global market.” Governments should create the enabling policy, legal, fiscal, and regulatory frameworks for private sector involvement: moving toward financial transparency – and the possibility of a convention for business sustainability – are significant inclusions in the Zero Draft.

Thinking and action after Rio+20 must blur the line between so-called “soft” issues like the environment and “hard” ones such as the economy, between social equity on one hand and GDP and interest rates on the other; the emergence of new metrics which go beyond GDP to encompass quality of life and social indices as part of the new sustainability paradigm holds promise. The Rio Conference will be a success if it is perceived and treated as a special general meeting of all the shareholders of Earth Incorporated, aimed at demonstrating the costs, benefits and value of simultaneously building natural, human and social capital; fostering social cohesion and economic sustainability.

When the gavel goes down at Rio we should be walking away with an immense sense of satisfaction, carrying in our hearts a commitment to sustainable development, carrying in our minds the intent to make it happen and carrying in our hands a tangible set of policies and initiatives that will make the transformative difference across the globe. In Conference Secretary General Sha Zukang's words: “history has given us an opportunity to make a difference. Let us all seize that.”



A.H. ZAKRI
Science Advisor to
the Prime Minister of Malaysia

Perspectives on Rio+20



In June leaders from around the world will gather in Rio de Janeiro to mark the 20 year anniversary of the 1992 Earth Summit, a summit that was largely responsible for setting up the global governance architecture for environment. High among the priority issues is recognising the grim reality that the current governance arrangements for environment have failed to meet expectations; indeed, have not reversed or even contained the decline of the environment over

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