

Issue # 1:

Newsflash



Economic growth and industrialisation – together with a rising number of consumers caused by population growth – often lead to unsustainable consumption of natural resources. Climate change impacts are putting additional pressure on ecosystems, societies and economies, especially in developing countries. As a consequence, new environmental and climate-friendly development paths are needed, as well as socially sound forms of economic development that generate broad-based employment and income and contribute to the reduction of poverty.

What is a "Green Economy"?

Green Economy is defined by UNEP as "an economy that results in improved human well-being and social equity, while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities". It is a holistic concept, ensuring the balance between social, ecological and economic dimensions while promoting economic growth and employment. Green Economy as one of the key themes for the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) and the related concepts of 'Green Growth' and 'Low-Carbon Development' have received significant international attention over the past few years as a tool to addressing the 2008 financial crisis.

The intervention areas addressing a green economy are manifold and include agriculture, forestry, fisheries, industry, tourism, transport, waste, energy and water. Supporting factors which play a role in the key intervention areas cover institutional and human capacity development (green skills) and the development of adequate basic conditions (e.g. finance mechanisms).

GOPA Group's Green Economy Competence Unit (GECU)

On the pathway to a Green Economy, integrated solutions are required on the basis of combined expertise and technical know-how in various intervention areas. The GOPA Group comprises specialised consulting companies and operational units covering all afore-mentioned intervention areas. Since September 2012, the GOPA Group has been bundling its efforts in the established Green Economy Competence Unit (GECU) which is able to provide the expertise and developed integrated concepts required to address the challenges of a green economy. The GECU is an interdisciplinary working group and knowledge platform focusing on the acquisition and implementation of projects supporting the shift towards a Green Economy. GECU reaps the benefit of more than 45 years of project experience in all main sectors relating to a Green Economy. It also provides expertise and holistic concepts in the areas of environmental & climate protection and economic sustainability, as well as social equity and inclusion. GECU members take part in the current international debate on Green Economy and help to integrate the concept in the GOPA Group's day-to-day activities.

For a greener tomorrow

In addition, GECU supports the GOPA Group in reducing its environmental footprint by systematically improving the corporate environmental management system. Abroad, GECU advises clients and development partners in protecting the environment and guides them towards a sustainable use of natural resources.

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GOPA
 Consulting Group


MEXICO

GOPA-Integration on behalf of GIZ advised Infonavit and CONAVI within the **Sustainable Energy Programme** on drawing up a new energy label for residential buildings, covering all aspects of this scheme and worked with Passivhaus Institute in Germany to develop a software, that architects and engineers can use to verify the energy efficiency of the houses at the drawing board.

"Energy efficiency in homes is one of the most logical and effective ways to save money and curb climate change at the same time. If you keep an eye on your energy and water usage and find intelligent ways to scale back your resource consumption over the years will go down considerably".

Jorge Wolpert, Head of Department, CONAVI (Comisión Nacional de Vivienda)



CHINA

The EU-China Environmental Governance Programme (EGP) contributes to improving environmental governance in P.R. of China through enhanced governmental function, public access to information, public participation and corporate responsibility in the environmental field. The GOPA consortium is providing state-of-the-art technical assistance in order to support the Ministry of Environmental Planning (MEP) to fulfil these tasks.

VIETNAM

"Our Environmentally and Socially Responsible Tourism Capacity Building Programme (www.esrt.vn) aims at mainstreaming responsible tourism principles into Vietnam's tourism sector to enhance competitiveness and to contribute to achieving the Socio-Economic Development Plan. Responsible tourism principles addressing ecological, economic and social aspects are systematically taken into account during programme planning and implementation".

Vu Quoc Tri, Programme Director



NIGERIA

After successful implementation of the pilot project "Support to the **NAPTIN Training Institute - Training of Trainers in the Field of Renewable Energies and Design & Construction of a Hybrid Power Plant (22 kW)**" in 2012, GOPA and INTEC will commence the subsequent GIZ project "Energy Policy Advisory" this month (2013-2016). While the pilot had a clear focus on enhancing NAPTIN and the Yola Technical University, the new project has a broader approach to support sustainable power supply and the use of clean technologies and renewable energies in Nigeria.

