



**At UAE-hosted Inaugural Conference on
*Partnership for Action on Green Economy (PAGE)***

New UN-led Global Partnership to Help Green

30 National Economies by 2020

Donors Provide over US \$11 Million in Support of Country-level Action

Front Runners Showcase Economic and Social Benefits of Transformation

DUBAI, 4 March, 2014 – Countries such as Burkina Faso, Peru, Mauritius, Mongolia and Senegal are set to boost their economies through a shift of investment and policies towards a new generation of assets that include clean technologies and resource-efficient infrastructure, green skilled labour, well-functioning ecosystems and good governance. Such a transformation, supported by the UN-led *Partnership for Action on a Green Economy (PAGE)*, will pay significant dividends in social, environmental and economic terms. PAGE aims to extend its support to a total of 30 countries by 2020.

Well over US\$11 million were announced in support of PAGE activities by donors including Finland, Norway, the Republic of Korea, Sweden and Switzerland. The announcement was made at the first Global PAGE Conference, hosted by the United Arab Emirates (UAE), under the auspices of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai.

The event attracted more than 30 ministers of finance, environment, labour and trade from around the world, in addition to high-level UN officials, international experts, representatives from the business community and civil society.

In his welcome address, the UAE Minister of Environment and Water, Rashid Ahmed Bin Fahad, speaking on behalf of His Highness Sheikh Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of UAE and Ruler of Dubai, referred to the UAE's Vision 2021 and Green Growth Strategy, which was launched in 2012.

Minister Rashid Ahmed Bin Fahad said: “As the United Arab Emirates begins its own journey towards a more sustainable future, it is fitting that we host the inaugural meeting of the UN-led Partnership for Action on Green Economy - PAGE. The next few days are an opportunity to identify innovative ideas and best practices, which can be replicated and scaled-up, as well as areas of common concern that need further study and resolution. Together, country by country, we can contribute to a global transformation – one that is thriving for future generations”.

Speaking on behalf of UN PAGE partners, Achim Steiner, UN Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), said: “On behalf of the UN PAGE partners, I would like to thank the Government of the UAE – and especially His Highness Sheikh Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum — for graciously hosting this pioneering inaugural PAGE conference in Dubai; allowing countries to exchange experiences and create opportunities for a more prosperous and sustainable world. It is becoming increasingly evident that generating growth and prosperity can and must be achieved within the ecological boundaries of a resource-constrained world.”

“The Partnership for Action on Green Economy has the potential to help countries improve human well-being and social equity, while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities in line with their own national development priorities. Growth in income and employment would be driven by public and private investment that reduces carbon emissions and pollution, enhances energy and resource efficiency, and prevents the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services.”

“The time has now come to ensure that by 2015 – when the UN Millennium Development Goals transcend into the Sustainable Development Goals – the global community has the strategies and the policies in place to fully integrate nature into economic planning and accounting. Lifting the world’s 1.2 billion poorest to a life of dignity will require financing, innovation, technology transfer and capacity building, along with effective governance and mutually beneficial partnerships at all levels. Underpinning all that is the sustenance of the natural capital upon which any form of development relies,” he added.

In the context of the Partnership, UN partner agencies – UNEP, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) – will provide a comprehensive suite of green economy services that will enable countries to transform their national economic structures to meet the growing demands and challenges of the 21st century. The UN Development Programme (UNDP) is also set to join PAGE.

Also speaking at the PAGE inaugural session were: **Oyun Sanjaasuren**, Minister of Environment, Mongolia; **Jae-Hyun Lee**, Deputy Minister of Environment, Republic of Korea; and **Katariina Poskiparta**, State Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Finland.

Participating in the event were ministers and high-level representatives from Armenia, Bhutan, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, China, Denmark, Ghana, Indonesia, Jordan, Kenya, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Norway, Palestine, Peru, Republic of Moldova, Saint Lucia, Senegal, Seychelles, South Africa, Tunisia, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania and Uruguay.

The Conference covers key issues such as: green and decent jobs; fiscal policy and investments; green industrial policies; social inclusion and poverty eradication; trade policies and opportunities; and metrics and indicators for inclusive green economies.

The outcomes of the two-day Conference are expected to contribute to the post-2015 development talks, currently under way at the United Nations, as well as other international fora, such as the first United Nations Environment Assembly meeting, due to be held in Nairobi this June.

The event is one of the first opportunities, since the Rio+20 Conference in 2012, for Governments and other stakeholders to take stock of national progress on the Green Economy as a pathway for achieving sustainable development and poverty eradication.

The Rio+20 Declaration – the Future We Want – mandated the United Nations to support countries in their transition to greener and more inclusive economies. The PAGE initiative was created last year by UNEP, ILO, UNIDO and UNITAR, in response to this call for action.

Friends of PAGE, a group of countries committed to supporting the economic transition to sustainability, have collectively contributed and pledged more than USD11 million to jump start activities under the Partnership.

Notes to Editors

Quotes by PAGE partners:

- Underscoring PAGE’s ambition, ILO Director-General Guy Ryder said: “Supporting the creation of new green and decent jobs is part of the PAGE offer, but so is ensuring that all workers – women and men - have the skills and support needed to help making the transition to an inclusive, low-carbon economy. In a time of persistent unemployment, especially among youth, investing in new forms of entrepreneurship and small enterprise development could lead to real and sustainable gains in the economy.
- UNIDO Director General LI Yong added: “Greening industry can play a key role in helping countries deliver their sustainable development goals. Under PAGE, UNIDO is scaling up its work with key industrial sectors to examine how they can increase their productive use of natural resources, minimize generation of waste and emissions, and foster safer and more responsible production, which in turn will contribute to creating cleaner and healthier societies.
- Sally Fegan-Wyles, Executive Director and Acting Head of UNITAR, underscored the benefits of the Partnership: “One of the goals of PAGE is to create a space for policy dialogue, knowledge sharing and learning on Green Economy among countries. Our role in UNITAR is to support these efforts and to offer learning services and training programmes to help Governments and stakeholders develop and implement their Green Economy plans.”

- This inaugural PAGE Conference will draw on the experiences of countries adopting national Green Economy pathways and policies, and put forward recommendations on how Governments can accelerate their transition. The Conference outcomes are expected to be announced at the close of the meeting on 5 March.
- The PAGE partnership was launched earlier this year in response to country-led demand for support and training on how to implement Green Economy policies and best practices. The Rio+20 Declaration, The Future We Want, also asked UN entities to support countries interested in making this transition by providing them with the tools and resources.
- Drawing on the expertise of its various members, PAGE assists participating States to build enabling conditions by shifting investment and policies towards the creation of a new generation of assets, such as clean technologies, resource-efficient infrastructure, well-functioning ecosystems, green skilled labour and good governance.
- Information on PAGE is available at:
<http://www.unep.org/greeneconomy/PAGE/tabid/105854/language/en-US/Default.aspx>
- UAE's PAGE Conference website: <http://www.moew.gov.ae/Portal/en/home.aspx>

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