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Delegates Depart GGGWeek with Green Growth Strategies and Lessons



Credit: Wambi Michael

Robert Mukiza, GGGI Deputy Director & Ethiopia Country Rep

By Kudzai Makombe

Over 600 government, think tank, private sector and other delegates from 40 countries attended the Global Green Growth Week (GGGW) 2017, 17 – 20 hosted by the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI).

Covering a range of topics from scaling up renewables to public-private partnerships, China-Africa collaboration and Africa green growth successes and challenges, this dialogue platform sought to identify ways to unlock Africa's green growth potential – the theme of the Week.

"We had sessions here where people said renewable energy is a revolution for Africa just like mobile phones were ten years before. Renewable energy is becoming the cheapest form of energy. It is no longer about big centralised grids. It has also democratised energy," GGGI Director General Dr. Frank Rijsberman told IPS.

Renewable energy and climate resilient agriculture in Africa are, according to Rijsberman, the priorities for the continent.

"Energy and food, creating green jobs -- that I think was a key outcome where we see a lot potential. I think we made a good step towards unlocking Africa's potential," he said.

Financing green growth was a common thread throughout the various topics, with Ethiopia's Climate Resilience

Green Economy (CRGE) strategy as a case. It is amongst the oldest and most ambitious climate strategies in the world. The strategy is part of the country's five-year Growth and Transformation Plan and will contribute to Ethiopia's goal of reaching middle-income status by 2025. This, while reducing emissions by 64% by 2025 compared to 2010 levels. The strategy recognizes that achieving growth through the conventional development path would result in dramatically increased carbon emissions and

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unsustainable use of natural resources.

"It's a no-brainer that Ethiopia would be the natural host for the first GGGWeek held in Africa," Robert Mukiza, GGGI Deputy Director and Ethiopia Country Representative, told IPS.

"I always say they have the growth and transformation plan but that T in the transformation, for me, for Ethiopia, is climate action. What I see as a takeout for delegates here is that you will not compromise your growth by taking climate action because it is happening here," Mukiza added.



Dr. Mahamadou Tounkara, GGGI Senegal Country Representative

According to Mukiza, almost a third of Ethiopia's budget is in the climate space. The country is not only depending on external investors but is mobilising domestic resources for climate action. Its commitment and action has also send a clear message to climate investors that it is a secure space with certainty for their profit seeking interests.

Senegal has seen the potential of Ethiopia's achievements and is following a similar path. GGGI has

established an office in Senegal and is closely working with the government on green growth strategies and action.

According to GGGI Country Representative Senegal, Dr. Mahamadou Tounkara, among the reasons why Senegal was selected is the dynamism of the country's leadership on getting the country transitioning into a different model of growth.

Although Senegal's strategy is relatively new, Tounkara said it already has lessons to share with other countries. "One of these is the waste to energy. The other is the development of innovative financing mechanisms like the renewable energy and energy efficiency fund. This is a tripartite initiative from the Government

of Senegal, GGGI and the African Development Bank that will start with USD50 million and over 24 months will become optimal to have about USD200 million. This is to improve access of the private sector into the funding but also getting private banks into the initiative and accessing quality projects that they have assurance to fund," Tounkara explained.

One of the main challenges to funding raised during the week's deliberations was how to get to 'bankable' projects -- defined by Tounkara as the capacity of the private sector to take their ideas through the process of providing quality assurance to the institutions that will finance the project.

"This is where we as GGGI with our partners play a key role in making sure that technical support, technical expertise are built in there so that access to investment is done in a much better way," Tounkara said.

Just last week Senegal held a dialogue with the banking sector followed by a conference with 80 participants from development support agencies to private banks, investment fund and equity managers, public sector and GGGI, on the renewable energy and energy efficiency fund.

Tounkara pointed out that lack of capacity to get to bankable projects is an especially big constraint for local private sector, which struggles to compete with foreign companies.



Q&A with Dr. Frank Rijsberman, Director General, Global Green Growth Institute.



Dr. Frank Rijsberman with FDRE Environment Minister Dr. Gemedo Dalle at the start of the General Assembly

The Global Green Growth Week 2017 Conference under the theme “Unlocking Africa’s Green Growth Potential” closed Thursday in the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa, after extensive deliberations in areas of financing renewable, innovations in agriculture for climate resilience and greening African cities, among others.

Wambi Michael spoke with Dr Frank Rijsberman, Director General, Global Green Growth Institute, on the deliberations, the meeting’s outcomes and what next to unlock Africa’s green growth potential.

Q: Can you demystify this relatively new concept of Global Green Growth?

A: Yes it is relatively new. Of course we have had sustainable development for a long time. You can say this is definitely the first cousin of that. The most important thing is that the quality of growth really matters. We know we need growth to fight poverty but when you have growth, growth, growth that is unchecked, you get what you see in Asia where cities are dealing with fine dust, with toxic air pollution which kills people. In Ulaanbaatar [in Mongolia], which had a wonderful growth spurt, last winter they had a state of emergency because you could hardly breathe the air. So the quality of growth for us really matters. Green growth for us is growth that is sustainable but also inclusive. So it is not about large plantations that push small farmers out. It is growth that actually provides jobs to young people, which obviously are desperately needed.

Q: So what is Green Growth bringing to the table?

A: Right now there is huge focus on renewable energy. We had sessions here where people said renewable energy is a revolution for Africa just like mobile phones were ten years before. Renewable energy is becoming the cheapest form of energy. It is no longer about big centralised grids. It has also democratised energy. It will be available in the most remote villages, it can help people with unstable grids, it can provide energy for irrigation, it can provide energy for productive sectors and it can be an engine for the economy.

Q: What have been the highlights of GGGWeek?

A: We have really focused here on unlocking the green growth potential of Africa. The former Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Meles Zenawi, was one of the signatories of our establishment Act in 2012 and he was a real champion for green growth. Ethiopia developed and we supported their Climate Resilient National Strategy. Then we helped them to support a national fund inside the Ministry of Finance to implement the strategy. And we have been working with them to then come up with projects to being green finance to Ethiopia. This year we helped them to raise USD180 million. I have to tell you that is a success story for Ethiopia and for GGGi.

Q: How do we get this progress to the entire African Continent?

A: We actually believe that there is a lot of money out there and that the bottleneck is developing good bankable projects. So I was in Senegal to develop something similar -- a renewable energy and energy efficiency fund which over the next two years is expected to bring money together from their national sovereign wealth fund, from the African Development Bank, the Green Climate Fund

and from the private sector. That is two hundred million dollars to invest in energy and renewable energy in Senegal. Those are the good examples of what we bring to the table working together with partner governments. Off course not only on energy.

Q: It is surprising to hear you say there is a lot of money out there at a time when some are saying there is no money flowing to Africa for green growth projects.

A: The bottleneck, the reason why it is not flowing is that there is serious lack of capacity in developing bankable projects. Overall I would say there are three constraints in unlocking Africa’s huge green growth potential. First, if governments don’t have policies that make renewable energy welcome, this could be feed in tariffs or power purchase agreements. So, the right policies first. Then attracting finance by having the right bankable projects through capacity building. [For example] training people to be solar energy maintenance technicians and having capacity in the right people, which also means green jobs. Additionally, making sure that devices are manufactured in Africa, maintained in Africa and providing a real engine for the economy.

Q: Everyone here was saying Ethiopia has not just developed plans but actually implemented them. What was GGGi’s role in ensuring that the plans extend to implementation?

A: First, our specific business model is to sit right in government, a model we refer to as being embedded in government. We have advisors that sit in the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Finance, the Prime Minister’s Office and also ministries of water, agriculture, and energy as needed. We work very closely with government bringing technical and financial assistance. We help government to develop this financial vehicle as we have done in Senegal, Mongolia, Vanuatu and elsewhere. Then we help to develop these bankable projects. That is what we bring to the table in very close partnership with the Ethiopian government. And it is working. That is why we are happy to be in Addis. We will make it our regional office for Africa as well.

Q: Has GGGWeek 2017 been a success?

A: Absolutely. We had great participation from the continent. We had more than 600 people. I think over 400 of those were from Africa. Our stories were from Africa. We shared opportunities like those from Ethiopia and other countries and we brought Chinese companies to the table. Energy and the one we did not talk about much -- making agriculture more resilient to climate change -- are top priorities for the continent. Energy and food, creating green jobs -- that I think was a key outcome where we see a lot potential. I think we made a good step towards unlocking Africa’s potential.

Q: What next?

A: What next is getting to work and delivering. Not more conferences but more projects, more finance flowing. That is what we want to see.



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Sixth Session of the Assembly and Tenth Session of the GGGI Council



GGGI held its 6th Session of the Assembly and 10th Session of the Council at the UN Economic Commission for Africa Conference Centre in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 19 October. The joint session provides an opportunity for members to substantially shape GGGI's work supporting members to make tangible progress against their Nationally Determined Contributions and the Sustainable Development Goals.

The Assembly, composed of all GGGI members, meets every year. The Council serves as the executive organ of GGGI and thus approves the organization's strategy, budget, admission of new members, and criteria for green growth planning and implementation programs.

Éthiopie : Lancement de La Plate-forme P4G à L'échelle Nationale



Panel discussion on launch of P4G platform in Ethiopia

Credit Wambi Michael

Par Wambi Michael

Addis-Abeba — Le gouvernement éthiopien a lancé une plate-forme nationale P4G dans le cadre de son ambitieux projet de développement par la croissance verte.

Le P4G est un acronyme de Partenariat pour la croissance verte et les objectifs mondiaux de 2030. Soutenu par le gouvernement danois, il s'agit d'un cadre de partenariats innovants avec les leaders d'entreprises, les leaders nationaux et municipaux, les financiers et les défenseurs du développement communautaire

pour trouver des solutions à l'appui au développement durable et inclusif.

D'autres pays dans le cadre de cette initiative comprennent : Le Kenya, le Danemark, le Chili, la Corée, le Mexique et le Vietnam.

Lors de son intervention pendant le lancement, qui a eu lieu en marge de la Conférence mondiale sur la croissance verte, le ministre éthiopien de l'Environnement, Gemeldo Dallen

Tussie, a déclaré que l'Éthiopie, comme d'autres pays touchés par le changement climatique, doit forger des coalitions avec les différents acteurs pour construire la résilience vers une croissance durable.

« L'implication du secteur privé est très importante si nous devons atteindre les objectifs nationaux et internationaux à long terme. Je pense que les partenariats public-privé seront d'importance cruciale pour atteindre les objectifs de développement durable et mon pays reste déterminé à encourager et à travailler en étroite collaboration avec le secteur privé », a déclaré le ministre.

Il a rappelé que l'Éthiopie a fait son possible pour atteindre les ODD. Le pays a mis en œuvre la Stratégie climatique de l'économie verte et l'adhésion au P4G fera partie intégrante de ses efforts à la réalisation de son programme national d'économie verte.

Selon l'ambassadeur danois et chef du secrétariat de P4G, Lisbeth Jespersen, le P4G en Éthiopie, comme dans d'autres pays, mettra l'accent sur l'énergie, l'eau, la restauration des écosystèmes, l'utilisation durable des terres, les systèmes alimentaires, les villes durables et l'économie circulaire.

Avancer dans cette direction pourrait créer au moins 12 milliards de dollars dans certains secteurs, a-t-elle déclaré. P4G devrait également permettre la création de 380 millions d'emplois d'ici à 2030, dont près de 90% dans des pays en développement comme l'Éthiopie.

Jespersen a déclaré que le gouvernement danois fournira chaque année 4 millions de dollars américains pour un appui financier visant à incuber et à développer les stratégies des partenariats P4G.