

## Green economy and blue economy

Green is the color of the month. Blue is running a strong second. Each color marks a world event this June. Green goes to Rio de Janeiro and blue to Yeosu, South Korea.

Rio is hosting the once-a-decade United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development on June 13-22, which will climax when world leaders attend the June 20-22 summit.

Called the Earth Summit, the conference reviews the progress has been made (and not made) since the first summit in Rio in 1992 and the second summit in Johannesburg in 2002. One major theme of Rio +20 is "a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication".

Short of a universally accepted definition, the concept of a green economy "carries the promise of a new economic growth paradigm that is friendly to the earth's ecosystems and can also contribute to poverty alleviation," a United Nations document prepared for the conference stated.

The paper, *The Transition to a Green Economy: Benefits, Challenges and Risks from a Sustainable Development Perspective*, says a green economy would nevertheless entail risks, particularly for developing countries.

The concept could be used to reinforce protectionist trends, impose conditions tied to financial aid and reinforce international inequalities, the document said.

Meanwhile a United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP) report on the green economy said that strategies for economic growth and environmental stewardship could complement one another and prevail over the trade-offs. UNEP defined a green economy as "one that results in improved human well-being and social equity, while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities." This definition is in line with the three pillars of development – economic, social and environmental – established in the past Earth summits.

Indonesia has not declared that it has a green economy per se. But President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono has forwarded a four-prong strategy for the nation's development in 2007. Yudhoyono has stated his government's programs are pro-growth, pro-jobs, pro-poor, and pro-green. The government's target is to achieve a 7 percent economic growth rate by 2014 and a decline of greenhouse gas emissions by 26 percent as against a business as usual scenario in 2020.

Meanwhile at the provincial level, natural resources-rich East Kalimantan has launched a green economy initiative. Governor Awang Farouk Ishak declared a low-carbon growth strategy or green growth concept (LCGS) in December 2009.

The LCGS was drafted March 2010. Within a sustainable development framework, the province's LCGS has four aims: scale up the quality of life; reduce the threats from ecological and climate change like floods, landslides and fires; reduce pollution and degradation of the ecosystem; and increase public awareness of the importance of the strategy. The strategy identified 20 priority initiatives in five sectors: oil and gas, coal, palm oil, forestry, and agriculture. The idea is to lower carbon emissions in each sector and at the same time gain added value in their economic growth.

While delegates draft and redraft the outcome documents (one is Sustainable Development Goals, another is The Future We Want), many other participants will engage in the more than 500 side events starting June 13. These side events are a clearinghouse for new knowledge. Indonesia is involved in at least 24 thematic events, according to the conference website <http://www.uncsd2012.org/rio20>.

They include Developing Green Economy Approaches: The Role of Heart of Borneo, *Women's Leadership in a Green Economy: Valuing Women's Contributions*, *Climate Policy under a New World Order*, *Analyzing REDD+: Challenges and Choices*, and *Blue Economy Leadership Event: Showcasing Efforts to Achieve a Blue Economy*. In this last event, the blue economy relates to the aspect of the oceans and coasts in sustainable development and poverty eradication.

The blue economy will be the principal issue at Expo 2012 Yeosu. This world expo with the theme "The Living Ocean and Coast" is now taking place in the new port area of Yeosu in the south of Korea from May 12 to Aug. 12.

The seas cover 71 percent of the Earth's surface. They are a rich repository of marine life, sea-based food, sea-embedded minerals, and coral reefs, the oceans' equivalent to the tropical rainforests. They are, however, under threat of ocean warming and acidification, to name two problems.

In Rio and Yeosu, Indonesia can contribute in sharing its experience. Both events focus on sustainable development. If sustainable livelihood is a subset of sustainable development, Indonesia has real-life stories to share.

In Rio on the green economy, one story is the hamlet of Lubuk Beringin in Jambi province, Sumatra. In their forested area, some 80 families made a pact of protecting trees and not growing crops on hilly soil and along river banks to prevent erosion. They get light from a power generating water mill they installed. They ban outsiders from planting monoculture crops such as oil palm that deplete much ground water.

For the blue economy, sustainable living is found in the coastal village of Kutuh in the south of Bali. Once poverty-stricken because their land is poor, villagers switched to sea farming by cultivating seaweed.

World market demand for seaweed is high. More than 30 products are derived from seaweed: tooth paste, cosmetics, baby food, fertilizer and medicines.

From these two stories, forest people in Jambi and seaweed farmers in Bali show how green and blue their local economy works.

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