

Report

on the UN Colloquia Session IV: Green Economy and Development

The UN Colloquia Session IV took place in the UN Headquarter in Vienna on the 11th of January, 2012. Dr. Dr. Miroslav Polzer, the head of the Austrian Science and Research Liaison Office Ljubljana, was invited as moderator and as speakers on the topic of greening the economy the following four gentlemen did us proud:

Heinz LEUENBERGER, Director, Environmental Management Branch, United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) with the main statement...

Business as usual does not work for the future

Greening the industries in certain sectors is of a crucial importance to create a healthier planet – not only – for human beings.

For a healthier environment the handling of climate change should be a serious concern. If we speak about climate change, we speak about (over-) using natural resources like oil. One aspect of oil production is indeed climate change. As other reasons land pollution or ground water pollution can be mentioned. Also in this itemization the overuse of water has to be added, as to say that the biggest user of water is the agricultural sector.

The benefits of a green industry should be outlined: Not only the environment, but also the companies will notice a positive aspect, because reducing the production costs by using less material although producing the same amount of the product can be seen as a magnificent achievement, which goes hand in hand with reducing the risks of workers to lose their jobs as a social aspect.

Another approach would be to help special ethnical groups to effort new and cleaner technology for themselves. For example if those groups lacks in financial background and buying the cheapest industrial accessories can occur in an environmental problem.

Indeed nothing works without changes in society. For instance a challenge for our society would be to decouple the well being of humans from consumption of natural resources.

To do more is less.

What is needed is a productive future plan to greening the industries, maybe as well by creating new green industries.

At least there can not be a great change without legal implementation. So greening the industry is a long term strategy, which should last from 20 to 30 years.

To conclude the remarks the aims of UNIDO can be assumed to the followings:

Greening of the existing industry

Substitute fossil fuels

Chemical management, especially referring to toxic waste or toxically chemical products

Waste watcher treatment.

Philip WELLER, Executive Secretary, International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR) with the theme...

River basin management and green the economy

The Danube River is important for many sectors of life, and it is endangered. The problems concern the pollution of groundwater, organic pollution, nuclear pollution, and changes in the straightening of the river. These are risks for a further development and at least a risk for human beings. This river connects diverse regions in Europe, poor countries as well as rich ones.

These countries started gathering together to create a community for protecting the river basin against pollution and signed the *Danube River Protection Convention* in 1994 in Sofia/ Bulgaria which came into force later in 1998.

Sustainable use of the basin, like navigations plans for ships not to destroy the ecological system of the river, and managing floods are just some aspects of the protective behaviour, which need to be done. Another refers to handling water resources ecologically to save clean water for the possibility of creating green economy; but for all that there is a strong need for additional legal standards to ensure protection. States within the European Union as well as non member states use European law as legal framework to have at any rate regulative standards.

The question of protection can not be managed by the governments alone. For instance involvement of NGOs is one part of the collective work, which needs to be done. Meanwhile River Basin management plans were set up, which reflects the necessary measures and policy initiatives. Other possibilities for effective protection would be to talk to big industrial producers not to pollute Danube water. Furthermore there are areas for intersectional work like: hydro power, agriculture and climate change adaptation. However, this is a matter of balancing the interests and development principles to avoid pollution and have some process to save clean water and green the economy.

One, maybe the most important, aspect of the Danube River Basin projects aims is to bring people together and adopt them to help. On the academic level involving people takes place by the positive involvement of the academic community, on public level support is coming from creating business partnerships, but also private partner join the Danube community. The last mentioned efforts are especially part of the "Business friends of the Danube"-Project, which can be said to demonstrate corporate social responsibility.

So it is shown that working together is essential for greening the economy and to accomplish green development.

Matthias JUREK, United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) with the theme...

Protecting mountain areas

Mountains are a recreation area for the public, a place where people can rest and centre their selves. Mountains for example shelter a great biological diversity, are energy supplier, cultural heritage, in touristic regions assure an income for the communities, and support the states with ground water. In example Bhutan depends on mountains as a source of water supply.

On the other side mountains can show the signs of the times, like the shrinking of the glacier as signs of climate change.

The approaches of protecting the mountains are conventional, legal and project based. Through UNEP programmes people should come together and take action on several levels. Universities and private persons can, even throughout transboundary actions, work together for the protection of the mountain areas.

All things considered mountains are a sensitive ecological system and surely important to save.

Green Criminology

Green Criminology is a project supported by a national team of experts, which developed slowly on the scale of a small national project beginning with eight research fields, which grow out to twenty by now. The research proposal was to create together with inputs from students a factual overall picture of green crimes. The Project was grant by NATO in 2010.

The Project was meant to discuss the main ideas to prevent and protect the environment against green crimes. Overall it is about risk management and mechanism to reduce dirty business, like for example in Bosnia, where there is still no standardized protection of forests. As an effect there are no legal consequences for committing green crimes in forest areas.

In general, those who perform these green crimes are mainly prominent industrial people for profit purpose only.

At the beginning of the research some students went to Australia to study criminology topics and to get proficient English (to work on the international field meaning interstate). At the next step the research team was collecting all green crimes reported to police and made a map from those crimes. Then workshops were organized and eastern European as well as southern countries invited to inform them about green crimes. Beside this the research team started to network with colleges to deal with green crime topics, as well as to try to adopt civil society to start supporting cooperation.

To conclude, the research team and the project is leaded and convinced by the following important tools for environmental protection, namely: research (concerning international research papers), policy making (starting national prevention programme analyzing national and international green crimes) and public awareness (meaning school programmes, training and education).