

ENVIRONMENT

38. Facing such an acute economic downturn, there is a real risk that governments, business and other economic actors and multilateral agencies sacrifice their commitment to fight climate change and environmental degradation for economic survival and funding more immediate priorities. However, government responses to the crisis so far have provided reasons for optimism and environmental investments are increasingly seen as a solution to addressing short-term concerns over aggregate demand, jobs, and economic recovery as well as laying the foundation for a sustainable, low-carbon economy in the future. But environmental pressure in many developing countries and countries with economies in transition may be most acute.

39. Under the GEI, a direct and immediate response to the financial and economic crisis, is a “Global Green New Deal” (GGND). In Poznan, the UN Secretary-General called for such a global deal that would work for all nations in the face of both climate change and the global economic downturn – managing the crisis requires massive global fiscal stimulus and a large part of that spending must be an investment in a green future, which fights climate change, creates green jobs and spurs green growth. Negotiations in the way to Copenhagen at the end of 2009 will have to take this into consideration. A GGND would require governments to allocate an agreed percentage of the stimulus funds to environmental sectors.



On-going initiative

Lead Agency

UNEP

Cooperating Agencies

FAO

ILO

**UN Regional
Commissions**

UN-DESA

UNDP

UNESCO

UN-HABITAT

UNIDO

WFP

WHO

WIPO

WMO

World Bank

GREEN ECONOMY INITIATIVE

Launch a Green Economy Initiative to promote investment in long-term environmental sustainability as part of stimulus and recovery expenditure and to put the world on the climate-friendly path.

The Green Economy Initiative (GEI), which UNEP has launched amidst the financial and economic crisis in close collaboration with sister agencies of the United Nations, aims to assist governments and businesses to significantly increase investment in the environment as a new engine for sustainable economic growth, job creation and poverty reduction. It has three components: (i) Green Economy report – an analysis of how public policy can help markets accelerate the transition towards a green economy; (ii) The ‘Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity’ partnership, which focuses on valuation issues and (iii) The Green Jobs Initiative, which highlights on the potentialities in job creation in a context of a more environment- friendly economy. This initiative can render benefits in the long term, assuring policy coherence of the UN system towards incorporating these important issues in the policy advice at the country level. ■