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Deutsches Institut für
Entwicklungspolitik



German Development
Institute

PEGNet

Call for Papers – International Workshop

Green and social: managing synergies and trade-offs

Bonn, 12-14 March 2014

Existing development pathways need to be transformed so that they are more environmentally sustainable and socially inclusive. To be environmentally sustainable, development must be reconciled with planetary boundaries. To reduce poverty, development must be inclusive, such that it benefits all members of society. Environmental sustainability and poverty reduction can be synergistic or conflicting. For instance, solar panels can give poor people access to low-carbon energy. Meanwhile, ecologically sustainable energy or food production may increase costs and consumer prices, or production of biofuels may crowd out food production, thereby compromising food security.

Synergies and ‘win-win’ cases have been explored in recent concepts such as the ‘green economy’ and ‘green growth’. UNEP’s Green Economy Initiative sets the stage for the transition to a green economy that is low carbon, resource efficient and socially inclusive. OECD’s Towards Green Growth Initiative provides a framework for achieving economic growth and development while preventing environmental degradation. World Bank’s Inclusive Green Growth sets out a pathway to sustainable development. These concepts explicitly focus on the positive and reinforcing interlinkages between environmental sustainability and development. However, the trade-offs and conflicts associated with these two agendas have received less attention. For example, despite the rhetoric of integrated frameworks and pathways, social and environmental policies continue to be designed and implemented by separate and often disconnected government bodies, rather than one coherent policy framework navigating both. Even in research, the social and environmental communities often lack exchange and interaction.

To overcome this problem, the German Development Institute / Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE) is organizing an international workshop on 12-14 March 2014 in Bonn, in cooperation with the Poverty Reduction, Equity and Growth Network (PEGNet). With this workshop, we aim to address the gap between social and environmental perspectives on development by bringing together people not only from research and practice but also from the social inclusion community and the environmental community. The objective is to examine synergies and trade-offs using both research lenses, find ways to merge research approaches and discuss good practices in the design of environmentally sustainable and socially inclusive policies.

We are looking for empirical and theoretical contributions that offer concrete policy recommendations in any of the three broad areas outlined below:

1. Effects of environmental-oriented policies on poverty

Environmental-oriented policies may have positive or negative impacts upon poor people. For instance, improved water and sanitation facilities may imply changes in access, availability and affordability with both positive (e.g. better quality) and negative effects (e.g. higher prices) for the poor. The conversion of land into an environmentally protected area may limit access to natural resources such as water, land and game. Subsidies for clean technologies or stricter environmental standards can increase the price of goods and services. Interesting questions include: What are the impacts of environmental policies? How can they be measured? How can poor people benefit from environmental policies? To what extent do the poor suffer from environmental-oriented policies, and how can they be protected?

2. Effects of poverty-oriented policies on the environment

Vice versa, poverty-oriented policies can have positive and negative effects on the environment. Waste disposal systems and sewage systems in slums decrease environmental pollution and significantly improve the living conditions of poor people. Additional housing may affect ecosystems and put pressure on land and water resources. Energy subsidies may enable energy access but the artificially lowered price for energy offers little incentive to save energy. Interesting questions include: How and to what extent does the environment benefit or suffer from pro-poor policies? How can the effects be measured? How can negative environmental effects of pro-poor policies be mitigated?

3. Environmentally sustainable and socially inclusive development policies

Development processes that do not target poor people and that do not regard the environment will have high future costs. In the worst case, the long-term negative effects will destroy the societal, economic and environmental progress previously achieved. Interesting questions include: What concepts exist for the transformation towards sustainable development? How do these concepts address the interplay of environmental sustainability and social inclusiveness? How can development policies be made both environmentally sustainable and socially inclusive? Who are the relevant stakeholders and what are the relevant institutions necessary to foster such policies? What drives and what hinders a shift in the development path?

The workshop will be split into two phases: The first two days will provide room to discuss the workshop themes outlined above in panel sessions, working groups and during keynote presentations. The third day of the workshop aims to translate the findings into practice and offers researchers and practitioners the opportunity to engage in a dialogue on the practical implications and consequences of the earlier discussed issues. The main topics will be: 1) good practices associated with the integration of environmental and social policies into national development policies and 2) environmentally sustainable and socially inclusive development goals post-2015.

Because of the multidimensional nature of the topics, we invite submissions from across disciplines such as economics, political science, sociology, and geography. We are particularly interested in interdisciplinary approaches.

The format of the workshop will be designed to stimulate interactions between researchers and policy makers. In panel sessions, short presentations by a group of academic experts will be followed by comments from policy experts. Ample opportunity for debate will be provided.

Please submit your abstract(s) of up to 500 words electronically to Sonja Neweling (sonja.neweling@die-gdi.de), using 'PEGNet 2014' as subject matter.

Timeline:

Abstract submission: 30 September 2013

Notification of acceptance: 11 November 2013

Full paper submission: 31 January 2014

Participants will have to cover their own travel and accommodations expenses. PEGNet will provide a limited number of travel grants for participants from developing countries.

For organizational matters such as travel and accommodation please contact Sonja Neweling (sonja.neweling@die-gdi.de). For content related information please contact Anna Pegels (anna.pegels@die-gdi.de) or Carmen Richerzhagen (carmen.richerzhagen@die-gdi.de).