

## **How to ensure that green is truly green? Policy mixes for integrating nature in green economy**

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There is an increasing appreciation that nature, including biodiversity and healthy ecosystems, underpins both the functioning of economies and wellbeing of societies and individuals through the provision of ecosystem services (MA 2005, TEEB 2010, 2011, 2012a and b). Furthermore, there is also a growing recognition that the current model of economic growth is socially, environmentally, and economically unsustainable and that there is a need for a transition towards a green economy that promotes social equity, poverty eradication, and human well-being (UNEP 2011). Since well-functioning and resilient ecosystems are necessary for long-term socio-economic development, it follows that the efforts taken towards a transition to a green economy should be based on a sound understanding and appreciation of the role and value of nature.

There are a range of nature-based “building blocks” that can support the transition to a green economy (ten Brink et al. 2012). These include, for example, using the increased understanding on natural capital to avoid inappropriate trade-offs, investing in green environmental infrastructure, active management of environmental risks using nature-based solutions, and increasing eco-efficiency and ultimately decoupling economy from resource use and its negative impacts. The emphasis of these components in a transition to a green economy depends on the national, regional or local context, reflecting the current circumstances and windows of opportunity for progress. However, in all cases the uptake of different building blocks requires a combination of suitable policies and instruments, leading to the development of context-specific policy mixes. Furthermore, nature-based measures for green economy can - and even should - be adopted at different governance levels, recognising the roles and responsibilities of all relevant sectors and stakeholders. This further increases the need for policy mixes, sensitive to aspects related to both scales and equity.

The purpose of this key note talk is to highlight how integrating the value of nature - including values related to both economic prosperity and broader wellbeing – into policies and decision-making supports a transition to a green economy. In particular, it aims to demonstrate how well-designed policy mixes for conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity play a crucial role in ensuring a successful transition in practice.

### References

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