

SOUTH AFRICA 2015-2020

RESULTS FACTSHEET

CONTEXT

South Africa has embraced a green development trajectory to realize inclusive, equitable and sustainable economic growth, as demonstrated by its national development vision. South Africa's New Growth Path, announced in 2010, identifies the green economy as a government priority and the Green Economy Accord, signed in 2011, was the outcome of social dialogue between government, business and labour. Through the subsequent South African National Development Plan (2012), the government has significantly strengthened its capacity to manage environmental costs and to respond to the increasingly severe impacts of climate change. This enabling policy environment has resulted in innovative, practical, implementable green economy initiatives across the country.

Since launching in South Africa in 2015, PAGE has sought to strengthen the cooperation, coordination and capabilities required to realize the country's vision for its transition to a low-carbon, resource-efficient and pro-employment development path, with a focus on critical issues such as inefficiencies in the water and energy sectors.

PAGE's work in South Africa contributes to Sustainable Development Goals 4, 8, 9, 10, 12, 15 and 17, as well as to South Africa's Nationally Determined Contributions focused on mitigation, adaptation and means of implementation.



STORY OF RESULTS

Supporting the implementation of national green economy policies and processes

South Africa has a longstanding commitment to incorporating green economy principles into national policies, both at the macro-economic and sectoral levels. By the time South Africa joined PAGE in 2015, the country had already put in place a comprehensive policy framework to transition to a greener economy, including the Green Economy Accord and National Development Plan 2030, adopted respectively in 2011 and 2012, and the Medium-Term Strategic Framework (2014-19), which provides an action plan for implementing the country's development vision. PAGE's work with South Africa has therefore been structured around supporting improved collaboration, coordination and implementation of these existing policy frameworks.

One of the first outputs for PAGE was the Green Economy Inventory for South Africa (GEISA), which serves as a platform for enhancing coordination and acts as a tool to guide decision making among policymakers. Insights drawn from the GEISA have been instrumental in understanding how existing green economy actions can be expanded and scaled-up to help realize the SDGs and meet South African's NDCs.

To further support this process, PAGE is engaging with national stakeholders to develop a framework for monitoring the transition to an environmentally sustainable and low-carbon economy. Drawing on the PAGE *Green Economy Progress Measurement Framework*, this work will take the form of a dashboard of green economy and environmental sustainability indicators for South Africa. Once established and adopted, these indicators will support the elaboration and review of green economy policies by identifying areas of success as well as underperforming areas where more attention is needed.

Sectoral and thematic policy reform

To support the development of green industry, PAGE has collaborated with national partners to produce the *Green Economy Industry and Trade Analysis*. The study identified small-scale embedded generation systems, water technology, the biogas-to-transport value chain and bio-composites as areas that offer particular trade opportunities from the perspective of green industrial development. PAGE's work has subsequently informed a sector-specific assessment of opportunities at the nexus of green industry and trade and provided recommendations for policymakers on how to further harness these opportunities.

PAGE has supported several priority interventions

with the aim of strengthening South Africa's transition towards sustainable energy and energy efficiency. In particular, PAGE has supported the development of two discussion papers and a subsequent high-level, multi-stakeholder debate convened under the auspices of the OR Tambo Debate Series, organized by the Wits University School of Governance in partnership with PAGE and the South African government. The debate focused on the theme of renewable energy and industrialization in South Africa and the National Development Plan, which commits the country to diversifying its energy mix and expanding renewables. This work has served to reinforce institutional collaboration and dialogue at the national level for improved green economy analysis and accelerated policy reform in the energy sector.

South Africa is experiencing an ongoing water crisis. This presents an opportunity to re-examine policies that can address water supply, treatment, reuse and leakages. PAGE is collaborating with the Department of Environmental Affairs to update the previously-developed *South Africa Green Economy Modelling (SAGEM)* report, which used system dynamics modelling to assess the impacts of green investments in select economic sectors. In particular, this update includes modelling of the water-biodiversity nexus, with a sub-national focus on the provinces worst affected by the water crisis. This work began with a preliminary stakeholder workshop that identified several priority policy processes, such as the Master Water Plan from Department of Water and Sanitation. At the subnational level, the model will inform the Western Cape Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan and Ecological the Infrastructure Investment Framework, currently under development and planned to conclude toward the end of 2019.

Building national green economy capacity

To build national green economy capacity, PAGE has focused on identifying green economy learning needs and addressing them through innovative, tailored learning solutions. Following the completion of the *Green Economy Learning Assessment* for South Africa, PAGE is working with the Centre for Environmental Management at North-West University (CEM-NWU) to develop a green economy e-learning course, aimed at stakeholders at all levels of the civil administration, to be launched in 2019. To support its development, in 2018 PAGE convened a three-day training of trainers on the design, delivery and evaluation of e-learning, which was attended by 24 participants from government, civil society and the South African academic sector. Going forward, PAGE and CEM-NWU will continue to provide joint methodological and technical support for the scale-up of e-learning in South Africa.

Furthering its engagement with multi-sectoral green economy actors, PAGE held a National Green Economy Academy in 2018. This event sought to build the capacity of key green economy stakeholders and to promote knowledge sharing among South African's nine provinces, eight of which have embarked on drafting provincial green economy or related strategies, notably in renewable energy. Beyond its specific learning objectives, the academy contributed to enhancing institutional capacities for transformative change towards greener economies at the provincial level and created a community of champions that can lead action and spread the message across their networks. Among the follow-up proposed actions, concrete initiatives around developing guidelines for micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises in the renewable energy sector, capacity building on provincial-level public procurement, and the consolidation of an action network to facilitate knowledge exchange were direct outcomes from the Academy.

LOOKING AHEAD: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

South Africa is facing a number of challenges that threaten its green economy transition, including potential job losses in the mining sector and the growing water crisis. To address these challenges, PAGE offers South Africa not only the tools and expertise to demonstrate the viability of a just transition to a greener economy, but also a means of implementing collaborative partnerships, which are central in delivering on our sustainable development visions.

Going forward, initiatives like the ongoing high-level social partner dialogues, which convene key partners from the government, the private sector, civil society and workers organizations alongside broader stakeholder engagement, will be important tools for ensuring a just transition in South Africa. Likewise, leveraging synergies across the activities of PAGE partner agencies, like the ILO's Green Jobs Assessment Institutions Network, and external partners, like the University of Pretoria's Skills for Green Jobs Regional Training Hub, will also be crucial to ensuring the long-term sustainability of this work.



Since its inception in 2013, The Partnership for Action on Green Economy (PAGE) has grown into a prominent alliance of five UN agencies, eight funding partners, and eighteen countries that work together to transform economies into drivers of sustainability.

Thanks to this integrated approach and support of a wide range of partners, PAGE is increasingly recognized as a model to deliver coordinated support to countries for achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and targets

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