



Poverty-Environment Action
for Sustainable Development Goals



The Five Principles of Green Economy

The problem

Humanity faces serious challenges in the coming decades: climate change, biodiversity loss, growing inequality, and more. These systemic global crises cannot be tackled in isolation, because they are all interconnected. But our economic systems are not fit enough to deliver a good balance of environmental and social goals.

Economies are, at heart, a collection of rules and norms that reward some behaviours and punish others. In their current form, our economies incentivise overconsumption, degrade communal bonds, and destroy natural wealth. But this is not inevitable or unavoidable; it is simply how our economies have evolved to operate. To solve these problems, a new economic vision is required.

The vision: a fair, green economic future

Our vision of a green economy is one that provides prosperity for all within the ecological limits of the planet. It is based around five principles:



Well-being: A green economy must create genuine, sustained, shared wellbeing, going beyond mere monetary wealth to prioritise human development, health, happiness, education, and community.



Justice: A green economy emphasises equity, equality, community cohesion, social justice, and supporting human rights – especially the rights of marginalised minorities. It seeks a just transition and serves the interests of all citizens, including those yet to be born.



Planetary boundaries: A green economy recognises that all human flourishing depends upon a healthy natural world. It defends nature's functions and limits, and protects biodiversity, soil, water, air and other ecosystem capitals.



Efficiency & sufficiency: A green economy is low-carbon, diverse and circular. It recognises that our single biggest economic challenge is the need to create prosperity within planetary boundaries, and align economic incentives with true costs to society.



Good governance: A green economy builds institutions that combine dynamic democratic accountability, relevant metrics, sound science, and local knowledge. Civil life prioritises public participation, social dialogue, informed consent, transparency, and accountability.

The green economy is a universal and transformative change to the global status quo. It will require a fundamental shift in government priorities. Achieving this change will not be easy, but it is necessary if we are ever to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.