

Thematic Group
Promoting the Transition to the Green
Economy

1st Meeting

*Brussels, 16th December
2015*

FINAL REPORT

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<p>Presentation</p> <p>Thematic Group on Promoting the Transition to the Green Economy</p> <p>by Paul Soto and John Grieve (ENRD CP)</p>	<h3>Introduction</h3> <p>The TG opened with a presentation setting out the objectives, context and working approach of the ENRD thematic work package and thematic group on ‘Promoting the Transition to the Green Economy’. The main objective is to ‘maximise RDP impact on promoting the transition’, within this improving awareness, developing a working definition and finding practical and novel ways to support the transition are specific priorities.</p> <p><i>Key messages from the presentation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RDPs are a key tool in enabling this transformation, all measures are relevant, how they link is critical, there are already some excellent project examples operating. • The success of the TG depends on the active involvement of well informed participants coming together to actively promote the transition. • The TG is part of the wider range of ENRD activities (ongoing or planned) a number of which contribute to this work stream, the TG and its expected outcomes. • The focus will be on creating practical outputs using Contact Point dissemination channels – Rural Review, a Thematic Group Seminar, Report, Workshops, NRNs and participant outputs
<p>Presentation</p> <p>What is the Green Economy and how is it linked to other, similar concepts? David Baldock (IEEP)</p>	<h3>Keynote Contributions</h3> <p>In his keynote presentation David Baldock set out to clarify the definition of the Green Economy and the way in which it links with other similar concepts such as the Circular Economy and the Bio-economy. This was done through the use of diagrams and models included in the presentation including a model mapping a structured approach to understanding and developing this transition . The relevance of the Green Economy to other policies, and in particular EU policies was explored. He concluded by focusing on the importance of the green economy to rural development and potentially in helping justify the CAP as a whole.</p> <p><i>Key messages from the presentation included:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Economy definitions from the UN and OECD link economic growth, natural asset management, risk management and the environment with human well being, it is not just green or economic.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Circular Economy minimises waste and optimises recovery and reuse resulting in increased income, environmental and climate benefits and resource retention reducing pressure on the environment and climate by comparison with ‘linear’ approaches. • The Commissions Circular Economy package appears to have little impact on RDPs. • The bio-economy involves the invention, development, production and use of biological products and processes. It has substantial economic potential, especially through utilisation of waste based resources. • The bio-economy results in resource efficiency through reduced fossil resource use and reduced waste. It leads to new markets and high quality jobs and improved energy security. • Although linked to the circular economy and bio-economy the Green Economy is wider and can best be seen in terms of achieving economic growth sustainably. It requires greater integration between sectors which often work separately. • A structured transition involves a progression from ‘business as usual’ through active environmental management to pursuing environmental sustainability. • Green economy approaches through RDPs can contribute significantly to address climate change challenges, this may help justify ongoing CAP investment.
<p>Presentation</p> <p>Advancing the transition to the Green Economy, - the role of RDPs.</p> <p>Clunie Keenlyside (IEEP)</p>	<p>In this presentation the main focus was on the realistic opportunities for those involved in rural development to use RDP measures and interventions to make practical changes. Four main aspects were addressed;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The types of green economy activities that RDPs could support • Some illustrative examples from 2007-13 RDPs • An analysis of some of the 2014-20 RDP proposals • A brief consideration of what this means for the Green Economy <p><i>Key points from the presentation included:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wide range of activities have the potential to be supported by RDPs which contribute to different aspects of the green economy. These aspects include low carbon, energy and resource efficiencies, biodiversity and ecosystem services and social equity. • Project examples contributing to these aspects were identified from across Member States from the previous RDPs, these may not have been designed as ‘Green Economy’ projects but clearly contributed.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• An initial analysis of Priority 5 Focus Areas had been undertaken to illustrate what is proposed under 2014 – 2020 RDPs. This looked at share of budget per measure and the number of RDPs activating the measures.• Measure 4 accounted for circa 95% of budget for Focus Areas 5A and 5B, Measures 6, 7 and 8 had a significant share each under 5C.• The analysis also identified specific activities proposed in those RDPs with the highest budgetary allocations to each of the three Focus Areas.• Achieving green economy benefits requires awareness of the associated needs and opportunities leading to the definition of clear project objectives. Projects should incorporate imaginative design and implementation together with effective use of funding.
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Working Session 1: Group Scope and Focus

Group discussion

What should be the scope and focus of the group's work?

The Thematic Group was divided into working groups with membership arranged to ensure a spread of participant type. The subgroups were then invited to consider a series of six questions through facilitated discussion and shared feedback. The questions were addressed as two groups of three.

The first group of questions was:

- How do we get people interested and involved in the Green Economy?
- What is being done on the green economy at the moment?
- In examining the contribution that can be made by RDPs, what should we look at?

The second group was:

- What aspects of RDP implementation should the group seek to influence?
- What should the work of the group concentrate on? What outputs would be most useful for you and for others?
- Which topics do you need to know more about?

The main points emerging from the first round of discussion (Q 1-3) included:

- Incentives are needed to motivate involvement, quick wins will help. Think short term, medium, term and long term.
- A lot is happening but may not be recognised as such. Illustrate the scope, biomass, transport, climate, renewables, low carbon, forestry, water, biodiversity etc. Show that RDPs are a key part of the toolbox.
- Raise awareness, explain benefits for them and complementarity especially at local level. Demonstrate the relevance to farmers, politicians, LAGs, advisors, EIP groups etc by e.g. linking to an existing interest.
- Focus on involving the young, (NRN priority)
- Better information and Knowledge Transfer from the successes is needed, demonstrate on the ground success, capitalise on this, look for multipliers, use the early adopters (as champions) to lead. The examples are out there e.g. Spanish LAGs GE LDS. Networks are critical in informing decision makers.

- Good technical advice and guidance needed too. Move from 'pilot projects' to a system. A new advisory role, link to EIP?
- Think rural, not just agriculture. Innovative integrated or holistic approaches are needed, challenge existing practices. Strengthen links between economic, social and environment and the different actors.
- Connecting and combining different interests, measures, programmes, funds and funding are all required, Networks and LEADER CLLD can be key here.
- Map and assess measures that contribute, and that detract, life cycle assessment and how measures can be combined.

The main points emerging from the second round of discussion included:

- The TG members need to take ownership and lead the work. Build ambitious communities to significantly contribute to the objectives.
- Explain the added value, get the messages to farmers, politicians (Key), decision makers etc, use intermediaries, especially LAGs and plan and support the involvement of NRNs carefully (and link).
- Organise exchanges, practitioners to research and vice versa, politicians to countryside. Communicate real experience.
- Provide accessible knowledge and examples, a database of projects, new tools, video etc. Analyse projects, schemes, innovations etc, what works and doesn't, explain and communicate these e.g. in discussions.
- Although innovation is a priority not everything has to be new, innovative, also build on what works.
- Approach needs to be pan RDP, not Measure or FA specific. Adapt RDPs to incentivise GE, support with instruments and tools, support rates, schemes, put system in place and communicate.
- Use of criteria, standards and certification e.g. in procurement (implies indicators needed). Carrot and stick approaches are both needed, with incentives for multipliers. Should all support be conditional on GE criteria?
- Don't just look ahead, act now.

Working Session 2: What should we do and how should we do it?

Presentation:

What should we do and how should we do it?

John Grieve and Ed Thorpe (ENRD CP)

The session opened with a short presentation which drew together and summarised the main points which emerged from the previous discussion. The main elements of this were:

The importance of **making the Green Economy real** for those we seek to involve is the first priority:

- We need to demonstrate the benefits
- Identify and provide good practices, in strands e.g.
 - Examples
 - Methods
 - Approaches
 - Programme implementation and tools
 - Lost opportunities

The second main priority is **making it work**:

- We need to communicate, credibly
 - The green economy alternative
 - The opportunities
 - How it can be done
 - Greening what is being done
 - The quick gain that can be made
- How this is done is critically important
- A systematic approach is needed, long and short term
- Some form of strategic lead or brand is needed as a central focus.

This was followed by a brief input on the different CP tools through which this could be addressed and specifically the opportunities for participants to make use of their experience and CP resources e.g. in contributing to scoping papers, good practice and project identification leading to Rural Review articles, the projects database and other ENRD publications.

Group discussion

Developing the focus

The working groups were asked to reflect briefly on a series of questions on what the group should do and how it should work to help develop

What should the TG do and how should we do it? Reflecting on the outcomes from Session 1.

*Kaley Hart (IEEP)
and John Grieve
(ENRD CP)*

the focus for its future activity. After this brief reflection the whole group took part in a facilitated discussion around these main questions. The following questions formed the basis of the discussion, this focused mainly on the first three questions:

- Where does the TG achieve the greatest added value?
- Who should the TG mainly seek to influence?
- What outputs are needed?
- What do we already have?
- How are these best deployed, what support is needed?
- Would you like to help?
- Who else should be involved?

Main Points

Focus

- The group need to show the added value of G.E. by bringing in the experience and examples. The information should be targeted at specific groups. In particular we need to demonstrate to farmers what is the added value for them.
- In doing so it will also be interesting and important to look at the relevance of the examples and assess whether the examples we have picked are the right ones.
- As part of this the TG should establish a process for bringing in experience from LAGs working on the topic. In the longer term providing them with training and information, explaining the issue and helping them to mobilise local actors will be important.
- It was stressed that the examples must be as well articulated as possible in order to be able to see in detail not only what is done but how they do it. We therefore need more in depth information on the examples to see the dynamics, how we do things, the costs, to flesh the examples out and learn from each other.
- It is very important that we have a representative spectrum of actors within this thematic group to allow our recommendations to influence actors at policy making level.
- The cross-sectoral aspect of the work is important. We need to identify various RDP examples, bring them in and discuss them within the group next time. (COPA volunteered to ask its members to provide examples to see what the farmers are doing.)

- The ENRD should use the group as a hub to send out the results and demonstrate how issues have been addressed by others.

Influence

The TG should seek to influence the following:

- Politicians, Ministers, local authorities, MAs, NGOs, NRNs, EU level actors etc.
- Regional MAs should also be invited to participate in the work of the group.

It was noted that it is not necessary to involve everyone in the group but at least some representatives from each category so that they can act as relays.

Outputs

The TG identified the following potential outputs which they could work towards:

- Sharing good practices in a way which makes them accessible to everyone. Ideally this should illustrate the personal perspective as a means of communicating inspirational experience and messages which is an effective approach for good practices.
- It will be very important also to tackle the language issue as the information needs to be accessible to as many people as possible.
- Short videos, podcasts and all types of social media are effective approaches.
- Some form of source book or resource? Something with stories, photos, tools, checklists etc. We tend to have formalistic documents but we actually need something softer.
- The group members also expressed their interest in long term cooperation within this group - beyond the one year mandate.

Meeting in NL: It was proposed that one of the group's meeting should take place in the Netherlands in order to see also some concrete examples through field trips. The meeting could be for the group members in the morning and then include other actors. It was agreed to explore this possibility for the second meeting.

Intervention

Paul DSoto (ENRD CP)

Concluding Session:

In a brief concluding session Paul Soto drew together the key points from the days discussions.

We have to become more circular in how we work within the group. There is a need to think about the process of how we work and interact between our meetings, focusing on where most interest is.

There are two main blocks of work to focus on which came out from this meeting:

- Communication of good practices to help make the Green Economy 'real' e.g. by articulating the benefits of making the shift and helping others communicate this.
- Looking at programme implementation, analysing different approaches, designs, tools, criteria, indicators etc suggesting different tools for the different levels to make the Green Economy 'work'.

The TG and CP needs to plan a series of activities to support these two blocks of work. Key actions proposed include:

- Good practices – make a call to group members, find them and make them explicit.
- Follow these up with more detailed questions to individuals.
- Carry out 5-10 more in depth case studies in countries/regions where good green economy initiatives are already being implemented to investigate what they are doing and how.
- Share and discuss the examples before the next meeting.
- Progress and deepen the analysis of the programmes in different Members States.
- Identify the types of useful resources available and needed and how these can be made available to support NRNs, MAs, LAGs, NGOs, farming organisations and others.

There is also a need to build a critical mass of NRNs to get them informed and involved.

Initially the TG was envisaged to include three meetings and one seminar. As this will be too much to do by June it is suggested to have two further meetings and one seminar. The seminar will be used to disseminate (communicate) the groups findings.

The next TG meeting envisaged for some point in March, the seminar in June with the third meeting of the group held sometime between these. The two meetings will focus on one of the major blocks identified.

The Rural Review will be used to scope the themes but further thought is needed on this.

The website can be used to progressively develop a resource or repository of tools, a reference point of information and materials (good practices, communication ideas, tools from which the TG members can feed in and out.). This could ultimately include sections tailored for MAs, NRNs, advisors, farmers etc.

Ensuring complementarity with the work of the EIP Agri is an important consideration, the bio and circular economy have already been addressed by the EIP workshops. This TG should use their material and roll it out, the ENRD should promote their material and vice versa. Ideally the TG can use the reports from their workshops.

It was noted that during the Dutch presidency an event on the bio-economy will be organised in Utrecht next April.