

Knowledge Week 2011

Key issues arising from day one

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Greening Infrastructure Programmes in South Africa

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Day one agenda

- Opening and Welcome address: Ravindra Naidoo (DBSA)
- Keynote address: Lawrence Agbemabiese (UNEP)
- Panel: Conceptualising the Greening of Infrastructure in South Africa:
 - The Presidency (PME), CSIR, WWF, ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability
- Panel: Greening Infrastructure: key considerations
 - SABS, SANBI, CSIR, NALEDI

Day One developed the framework for in-depth sectoral and implementation discussions today and tomorrow.

Framing the issue

1. Current infrastructure delivery paradigms cannot cope with the requirements of urbanisation and a growing economy. Current economic growth model is unsustainable and infrastructure is embedded in this economy – we need new paradigms
2. International examples and South African success stories for greening infrastructure exist – we need to learn from these lessons – e.g. Working for Water/ Wetlands, Indian Guaranteed Employment Scheme, City strategies (e.g. Portland and Edmonton).
3. This growing evidence base disproves the perception that we have to choose between development or the environment - a false dichotomy
4. Greening infrastructure is an opportunity - stepping stone to a Green Economy
5. **What is greening infrastructure** – it is the integration of sustainability, resilience and ecological infrastructure into infrastructure planning and delivery, reducing its environmental impact and increasing resource efficiency and social inclusivity

Getting the enabling environment right

1. Set goals and targets – the transition to green infrastructure needs to be mapped and sequenced
2. The transition needs to be aware of ‘lock-in’ and how to avoid it
3. Knowledge Infrastructure required that is system wide (e.g. Impact mapping and breaking down inter-disciplinary silos)
4. Enabling environments need to be developed on the basis of sufficient planning – planning must be adaptable and able to cope with change
5. Planning institutions and systems must have sufficient capacity and resources (e.g. for land use planning)
6. Full-life-cycle costing and asset management policies are required if we are to move beyond short term objectives (e.g. budget cycles) to long-term, sustainable development (as per example of wetland protection vs dam building)
7. Monitoring and evaluation of programmes is necessary – this requires monitoring systems and data collection

In SA there is a need for policy and institutional coherence to facilitate transition

Implementation considerations (to be taken forward today)

1. Sectors that lend themselves to greening of infrastructure include: energy, transport, buildings and construction, waste, human settlements, water and sanitation and social infrastructure
2. A just transition is a necessity. Need to substantially increase the number of employed people - and increases the tax revenue base and the ability of people to pay for services (thus critical to a sustainable funding model for infrastructure).
3. Need to scale up successful projects to sustainable programmes. Job opportunities are immediately apparent in programmes such as environmental monitoring (standards enforcement) and upscaling of *Working For* programmes
4. Enhance public-private partnerships as well as build a structured public-public partnership between DFIs and SOEs
5. Need to build capacity to deliver, especially within local government
6. Need to develop green infrastructure approaches and toolkits that focus on issues such as procurement and standards