

## Executive Summary

# Green Economy Learning Assessment: Mauritius

## Competencies to Enable a Green Transition



## Background

Green policies, strategies and initiatives that have been implemented in Mauritius clearly show the determination and commitment of policymakers and stakeholders to make the transition toward a greener economy. A green economy transition for Mauritius involves actions to promote growth in income and employment through public and private investments that reduce carbon emissions and pollution, enhance energy and resources efficiency, and prevent the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services. It implies more investment shifted into sectors such as green agriculture, energy efficient enterprises, renewable energy, low-carbon transport and improved water management.

The development and implementation of green projects and actions require a range of skills and competencies. Public awareness of green economy issues is essential but not sufficient. Indeed, applied knowledge and capacities for Inclusive Green Economy (IGE) are needed at all levels in the private and public sector.

## Purpose of the Green Economy Learning Assessment

The purpose of this Green Economy Learning Assessment is to evaluate to what extent key stakeholders in Mauritius possess the competences necessary to enable green development of key economic sectors, in accordance with national goals and strategies. Based on the key findings a set of recommendations are distilled that form a tailored response to bridging the gap between learning needs and desired capacities.

The Assessment has been carried out by Civil Service College Mauritius (CSCM), with the support of the Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reform (MCSAR), and within the framework of the Partnership for Action on Green Economy (PAGE). Four thematic areas forming the pillars for the green economy actions in Mauritius are considered:

- \* *Sustainable Agriculture*
- \* *Sustainable Tourism*
- \* *Sustainable Manufacturing, and*
- \* *Climate Change Adaptation.*

## The Competency Framework

The study adopts the competency framework for a green economy developed by PAGE and revolves around four aspects of competencies development and is applied to three level of interventions, namely agenda-setting, organisational and operational.

### Transformational competencies

- For example:
- Ability to analyse complex systems across different domains and scales.
- Long-term/future-oriented planning that take into account future generations.

### Technical competencies

- For example:
- Technical knowledge and skills are required in specific thematic areas, e.g. renewable energy

### Management competencies

- For example:
- Ability to plan, coordinate, and evaluate the implementation of green economy measures

### Participatory competencies

- For example:
- Ability to bring people and organisations together, encourage individuals to express diverse views, create consensus and build ownership over decisions made.

## Key Findings

The Green Economy Learning Assessment for Mauritius concludes that although some awareness on green economy issues and climate change exist among policy-makers, economic and social partners, this is far from being sufficient to allow a systematic shift towards an inclusive, green, and climate resilient economy.

### ◆ Strategic Vision and Planning

**The main areas of competencies, which are most deficient in Mauritius, are the transformational and technical across the four areas.** Policy-makers are expected to be fully acquainted with green economy issues and climate change solutions which can be mainstreamed in development policies. At the transformational level (*i.e. ability to set priorities, and define strategic action*), the desired competencies would include a clear understanding of the economic, social and environment implications of green economy actions, together with the associated challenges and opportunities that they offer. The Assessment found that transformational competencies of policy-makers in the public sector and corporate managers in the private sector on green economy and climate change issues should be enhanced.

### ◆ Systematic Approach to Professional/Life-long Learning for Green Economy

Public officers at organisational and operational level are expected to implement green economy measures and policies and assess their economic, social and environmental impacts. The assessment clearly demonstrates that a certain **degree of awareness exists on green economy issues, but it is insufficient for public sector officials to effectively conceptualise, implement and monitor** green programmes and projects. While green economic actions have to contribute and fit in to an overall objective of greening the economy, projects in Mauritius are designed and implemented in disconnect and on a rather ad-hoc basis. A more **systematic approach to develop competencies** of public officials should allow them to continuously and systematically improve their knowledge on best practices around the world, the state-of-the art solutions to greening and the challenges that could be observed during their implementation. **Workshops, conferences and life-long learning/training opportunities** that could lead to such transformational competencies are warranted in the rather immediate future.

- ◆ No common understanding/public consensus on green economy

The assessment revealed that **there is currently an absence of a systematic learning initiative for public officials** from Ministries to keep pace with current development in the field of green projects at sectoral level. Officers from the Ministries and related departments have to conduct their own learning and research, which leads to **fragmentation of capacities and disparities in the understanding** of what is green economy, how it is beneficial for Mauritius, and how to achieve it. Universal, foundational training, available for public officials as well as the general public would help develop a common understanding and consensus in government and in society.

- ◆ Use of analytical tools for modelling and assessment

**At the technical level, a strong competency gap is felt at the level of impact assessment in the social, economic and environmental domain.** It is highly recommended that the green learning actions caters for the competencies of public officials and private sector operators to assess projects, measure their impacts in a quantitative manner, and monitor progress over time. Public officials have a deficient competency on modelling tools of impacts assessment as well as response measures. In all the four areas, there a strong need to introduce a diverse set of modelling tools, train lead persons within departments, and ensure transfer of knowledge over time. Impact assessment tools at project level such as cost-benefit analysis, life cycle costing, life cycle assessment, carbon footprint, or economy-level such as input-output analysis, system analysis and computable general equilibrium are almost absence in policy analysis.

- ◆ Capacities for climate resilience

The assessment found that at level of project management and coordination many officers do not have formal experience/training in managing projects. Continuous learning does not exist. In areas that require a lot of cross-ministerial coordination and interdisciplinary approach, such as climate change adaptation and resilience, the lack of adequate skills can pose major threat. **In the field of greening and climate change actions, new set of management competencies are required**, including for vulnerability assessment appraisal, climate budgeting and planning, and urban management. Improving climate awareness and preparedness of local businesses will greatly increase the resilience of Mauritius economy, natural ecosystems and people to climate change and extreme weather.

- ◆ Capacities for collaborative action

In all focus areas, the assessment reviews that both **businesses and public officials acquire communication skills on the job**. This hampered cross-ministerial collaboration and outreach to the general public and relevant stakeholders to adapt a participatory and inclusive approach to green economy.

- ◆ Resources of national learning institutions exist but are underutilized and underfunded

The assessment reveals that **education and training institutions, especially universities, in Mauritius, have a pool of resources and human capacities** and are well-versed on green economy issues. However, **the mechanisms, and most importantly, the financial resources to develop training programmes for public officers are very limited**. This is an important gap in the current learning system in Mauritius.

## Recommendations

The Assessment proposes a number of learning actions and policy initiatives that can support the creation of human capital to advance the transition to an inclusive green economy in Mauritius. The actions are organised in 3 groups according to their time and efforts required to fulfil them.

### Short-term actions

- ◆ **Create opportunities for foundational learning and training for policy makers, teachers and lecturers, as well as the general public.** One way to promote foundational training is by adapting the PAGE introductory e-course on green economy to the Mauritius context and making it available for free to the general public. Targeted promotion among education professionals, policy makers and business managers can scale up impact. The foundation training can be an entry conditions for specialized trainings on agriculture, tourism, green industry etc.
- ◆ **Make available entrepreneurship trainings, manuals and guides** that help corporate managers increase resource efficiency, productivity, and maximize market benefits from the transition to an inclusive green economy. This work can be linked to effort by SME Mauritius, International Labour Organization and other bodies in Mauritius to promote entrepreneurship trainings for green business development.
- ◆ Design and offer on regular basis a training programme on **Strategic Planning for Green Economy**. This training will help develop the transformational competencies of policy makers and foster cross-ministerial and inter-disciplinary approach to policy making with view of advancing sustainable economic development in the country. The training would build on real life situation from key sector for Mauritius, such as agro-systems, climate-resilience, coastal adaptation, energy transition, and waste management.
- ◆ Set up **‘training of trainers programmes’** for educators and corporate change agents to gradually promote behavioral change and a culture of green entrepreneurship in the public and private sector.
- ◆ Design and offer a multi-disciplinary training programme on **“Planning for climate resilience in urban and rural areas”**. The training would be useful for all civil servants working on land planning issues and increase the capacity of the Government to cope with advice effects from climate change through policy planning and budgeting instruments.

## Mid-term actions

- ◆ Develop **sector specific trainings** for entrepreneurs and business communities, including on: bio-farming and green agricultural certification (as a driver for sustainable agriculture), on sustainable innovation, energy efficiency and use of renewable energy (to foster a green manufacturing sector), and the development of eco-tourism and sustainable value chain with due recognition of cultural heritage (in the tourism sector). Trainings should be integrated into a coherent system (online platform or catalogue) and promoted accordingly.
- ◆ Develop training programmes on **economic modelling, impact assessment, and other evidence-based** policy planning tools (such as cost-benefit analyses, life cycle costing, multi criteria analysis, vulnerability assessments, and others).
- ◆ Identify and plan for **learning needs and skill development gaps, when developing new policy** programmes related to green economy.
- ◆ Improve **mechanism for collaboration** 1) across learning institutions; 2) between public institutions and learning institutions, and 3) between private sector and learning institutions (universities and TVET centres). This would ensure that universities provide relevant training in line with market demand and government priorities. It would also ensure that potential learners are aware of the existing opportunities. Support the collaborative mechanism with suitable instruments and incentives (i.e. fiscal, regulatory, career development).
- ◆ Develop a **strategy for public awareness** and information on inclusive green economy, climate change and the sustainable development agenda, involving the media and key stakeholders.
- ◆ Engage key stakeholders from the public and private sector in Mauritius in **South-South Triangular Cooperation** to ensure sharing of best practices, knowledge exchange and collaboration on approaches to advancing green economy.

## Long-term actions

- ◆ Integrate inclusive green economy in the **educational and training curriculum** of learning institutions (on all levels) in Mauritius. One way to promote systematic integration is by collaborating with regulators (such as Tertiary Education Commission and Mauritius Qualification Authority) and university administration to integrate IGE principles into the **accreditation/quality control criteria** for existing and new courses and programmes.
- ◆ Establish a strategic approach to green economy, and to the building of human capital for the green economy. A **green economy learning strategy** approved by the Government could help structure and guide efforts. A **green economy focal point** institution/person **at the central government level** (e.g. preferably at the Prime Minister Office) can coordinate, consolidate, and promote work.
- ◆ Promote a **culture for life-long learning** for inclusive green economy. This can be achieved by ensuring varied and regular offer of learning opportunities that is available to public and private sector representatives, educators, the media and the public. This may include: formal face-to-face courses, accredited formal education, public lectures, on-the-job training and mentoring, or e-learning, community workshops, study visits and field trips, and many more.

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