GREEN GROWTH AS A GLOBAL CHALLENGE

Significant development has been detected over the last few years despite the short history of the green growth strategy. Awareness of the strategy has been growing as international organizations (OECD, UNEP, EU and others) have supported the whole concept. It is no coincidence that support for the green growth strategy strengthened in a period of economic crisis when ways to achieve sustained economic growth and an increase in employment opportunities were intensively sought. Although only a short period of time has passed, the green growth strategy can be evaluated positively for its potential to encourage economic growth again with a view to supporting sustainable development. Increasing awareness of the green growth strategy at the international level shows that this strategy is becoming an important and solid basis for decision making in many states.

This international co-operation is very important to achieve positive synergies. It is focused on discussing and sharing best practices among countries. The green growth strategy has become a priority for the G20, which gives an unequivocal message to the international community. The OECD delivered a joint report with the World Bank and the UN to the G20 meeting in St. Petersburg, Russia, in September 2013. The report was focused on energy and on integrating green growth and sustainable development into structural reforms. The OECD also plays an important role by contributing to the revision of the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting and cooperating with UNEP as part of the Green Economy Initiative.

Recently, the Green Growth Knowledge Platform (GGKP) has been established that brings together with the Global Green Growth Institute, OECD, UNEP, and the World Bank. This is a global network of expert institutions that helps countries to make advances on measurement, design and implementation of green growth policies. These four leading international organizations have a shared vision for a set of indicators that can help communicate the central elements of green growth and a green economy. While there is no single green growth model, and green growth strategies need to be tailored to individual country conditions, the following areas are identified as central to monitoring progress towards green growth: Environmental and resource productivity and innovation, natural assets (including biodiversity) and their cost-effective management, environmental quality of life (including access to basic services such as clean water), related green growth policies, economic opportunities, and the social context of green growth and monitoring the sustainability of overall economic developments, for example through comprehensive wealth accounting.

The green growth measurement framework gives countries flexibility to incorporate the concept into their national development plans and to monitor progress on tackling their main environmental, economic and social concerns. Countries like the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Korea, the Netherlands and the Slovak Republic have already applied and adjusted the framework and indicators. They have specific national contexts to assess their state of green growth.

With the support of the OECD, the Latin America Development Bank, the Latin American and the Caribbean Economic System and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, work is underway in Mexico, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Paraguay and Peru to apply the OECD indicators as a way to identify key areas of national concern and the scope for improving the design, choice and performance of policy instruments. The Latin American and Caribbean area is one of the regions in the world that largely depends on the exploitation of natural resources. A Pilot Project for six Latin American Countries will identify the applicability of the indicators in the Latin American Region. The pilot project is based from agreed OECD green growth indicators

and fifteen UNEP (Latin America Counties) indicators. The proposed indicators are divided into six parts: Biological diversity, water resource management, vulnerability, human settlements and sustainable cities, social issues, economic aspects and institutional issues. The main features of the indicators support policy making at the country level, reflect national characteristics, do not use benchmarking (indicators are individually tailored for each country) and reporting has a standard and simple structure.

For example, Korea's Green Growth Strategy was established in 2008 and uses 23 indicators from the OECD framework. Mexico has developed 33 indicators: 8 indicators for socioeconomic context and growth (6 original indicators and 2 proposed indicators) and 25 indicators for environmental assessment and policy action (17 original indicators and 8 proposed indicators). In the case of Peru, 520 indicators were analyzed and 30 indicators were chosen. It is expected that following the results and experience gained in the pilot project, green growth indicators will also be implemented in other Latin American states.