

Editorial

Taking Care of “Green” Business

A year from now, we hope to be looking back to review the successful completion of the *Green Business Africa Summit and Expo* (GBASE2010) scheduled for June 2 – 4, 2010 in Nairobi Kenya (<http://www.greenbusinessafricaexpo.com/>). At the grassroots level, business is quintessentially “green” in Africa – dominated by subsistence agriculture, animal husbandry, coastal fishing, pottery making, fabric and leather manufacturing, and seasonal marketing. But Africa is also a major player in global business, with international exchange of natural resources associated with mining operations, including oil, gold, diamond, coltan, and other precious commodities. More recently, investments in telecommunications have transformed the infrastructure for conducting business. These developments have introduced new risks and the redistribution of old risks for environmental quality and public health.

In most parts of the world, the argument about whether profitable business can be simultaneously “green” or environmentally “friendly” is over. But in Africa, the debate is still being framed by multiple stakeholders competing for political clout regarding the direction of national development, in part because of the dependence of a large proportion of the population on dwindling raw materials such as firewood that can no longer be obtained without incurring the wrath of global environmental activists. The Green Business Africa Summit and Expo promises to provide an opportunity to finally put the doubter’s argument to rest. This event is Africa’s first to focus on the mainstream issues surrounding environmental sustainability of business pursuits and corporate responsibility for the environment, no matter where their headquarters are located or where they obtain the raw materials and human resources to maintain their business.

The combined Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for African countries is \$774 billion. There are no reliable data to suggest how much of the business associated with this GDP can be considered “green.” Given that the economies of South Africa and Nigeria comprise of 56% of sub-Saharan Africa’s GDP, it is likely that the green business is negligible, because these two countries are notorious for sacrificing environmental quality in the mining of commercial energy resources and minerals. This is an opportune time to change the trajectory of business investments and industrial development in favor of environmental conscientiousness, as the average GDP per capita growth in Sub-Saharan Africa was 2.0% in the period between 2000 and 2006, up from –0.7% in preceding decade (The World Bank. <http://go.worldbank.org/VJ7PSXVTP0>). This is very welcome growth that should have positive impact on the well-being of present-day Africans without compromising the conservation of environmental quality necessary to secure the well-being of future generations.

As we move forward to GBASE 2010, the African Journal of Environmental Science and Technology will seek to publish original research articles and reviews that emphasize the summit’s thematic areas:

- ❖ **Climate Change Mitigation/ Adaptation**
- ❖ **CDMs and other Financial Mechanisms**
- ❖ **Green Computing/ Mobile Technologies**
- ❖ **Environmental Sustainability & Compliance**
- ❖ **Eco-labelling and Sustainable Production**
- ❖ **Sustainable Water and Sanitation**
- ❖ **Sustainable Urbanization and Ecocities**
- ❖ **Green Manufacturing and Energy Efficiency**
- ❖ **Waste Treatment and Management**
- ❖ **Green Building and Sustainable Habitats**
- ❖ **Green Revolution and Sustainable Agriculture**
- ❖ **Renewable Energy**
- ❖ **Sustainable Tourism**
- ❖ **Clean Technologies**
- ❖ **Sustainable Supply Chain Management**

These are all topics of certain urgency in many parts of Africa. We welcome your contributions to this important knowledge base.

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