

A Guideline for Green Economy Implementation in the Agriculture Sector

Green economy implementation in the agriculture sector can unlock social, economic and environmental benefits

The CSIR has developed a guideline for implementing green economy projects in the agriculture sector. The guideline is available for use by agricultural practitioners; and is a tool for translating the principles of a green economy into tangible benefits for people through agricultural projects.

Context

A green economy is aimed at improving human well-being and social equity, while protecting the environment. South Africa has adopted the principle of a green economy and is in the process of transitioning to such an economy. A green economy is well-aligned with South Africa's sustainable development trajectory as articulated in strategies such as the National Development Plan (NDP), the National Strategy for Sustainable Development (NSSD) and others. Agriculture has been identified as one of the key sectors for driving a green economy, both in South Africa and Africa as a whole. Following a green economy approach improves the sustainability of agriculture and can yield sustained social, economic and environmental benefits.

The need

Although the potential benefits of a green economy for South Africa are well articulated in several national and local strategies, the green economy is still a theoretical concept which is yet to be broadly implemented. Currently most of the documented information on the green economy in South Africa is theoretical; with little information on actual green economy practice. Thus, although South Africa has chosen the green economy development trajectory with agriculture as one of the key driving sectors, the country finds itself in a situation where there is an information gap between green economy theory and practice. Currently there are no guidelines providing information on planning and implementing green economy projects in agriculture and other sectors. While there is a lot of emphasis on transitioning to a green economy (for example in the NDP and other strategies), stakeholders in the agriculture sector do not have information on what is needed to truly follow a green economy approach.

The CSIR's response

The CSIR has been engaged in research to generate the requisite information and tools to facilitate green economy implementation in South Africa's agriculture sector. CSIR's research found that South Africa requires project level procedures and information to enable agricultural practitioners to translate green economy principles into tangible benefits. Such

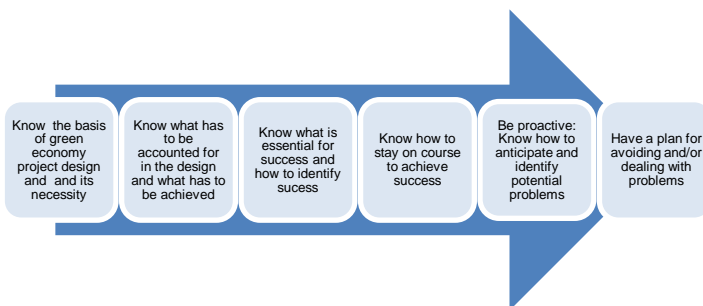


translation occurs at the project level. The CSIR has compiled this information in the form of a user-friendly guideline for green economy project design and implementation in the agriculture sector.



The guideline

The guideline developed by CSIR is aimed at providing information both for (i) optimising existing agricultural projects for the green economy; and (ii) for designing and implementing new agricultural green economy projects. It is specifically designed to help the user move from the theoretical concept of a green economy to project implementation. It takes the user through a conceptualization process which enables them to understand the green economy concept and to apply it to their specific context.



The conceptualization is followed by a clear step by step process that enables the user to innovate, plan and implement agricultural initiatives in a way that aligns with green economy principles.

The guideline is illustrated using the specific example of vegetable production; but is applicable to crop production in general; and is intended for use by:

- Crop farmers and managers of crop production projects;
- Funders of green economy and agricultural projects; in particular those who provide technical information to recipients of their funding;
- Providers of agricultural guidance and support, e.g. agricultural extension services (government, civil society and private sector).

Unlocking Green Economy Opportunities in the Agriculture sector

The CSIR guideline can be an effective tool for unlocking green economy opportunities in the agriculture sector and for ensuring the sustainability of agriculture projects. The CSIR seeks to partner with interested parties to leverage resources to:

- Disseminate the guideline to potential users throughout South Africa;
- Assist users to effectively utilise and benefit from the guideline through provision of green economy implementation support;
- Conduct research and develop green economy information products including modifying the guideline to meet the specific needs of users whose requirements are not met by the available guideline;
- Conduct analysis of agricultural enterprises to identify green economy opportunities and threats and to design appropriate green economy implementation strategies including guidelines.



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