



WRITING ASSIGNMENT 2

RIO+20 AND THE GREEN ECONOMY

« *If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.* »

– African proverb

Background

In June 2012, many of the world's leaders, top negotiators and diplomats came together in Rio de Janeiro for the largest UN conference ever, 20 years after the Earth Summit (1992). Also present were a plethora of organisations and other interest groups, from NGO's, to think-tanks, journalists and protestors. The key outcome from the meeting was the document "*The Future We Want*", adopted by the participating nations, to reaffirm their commitment to Sustainable Development.

Central to the document, and the emerging rhetoric from recent years is the concept of a 'Green Economy' (See part III of *The Future We Want*). The term has become somewhat of a catchphrase since the early days of the global financial crisis, as a way to restore the world's economies to a path of green, economic growth. One of the continuing challenges with the term however is that - as with Sustainable Development - a Green Economy can mean different things to different actors.

General Goals and Instructions

This assignment will focus around an investigation into the discourse surrounding the Green Economy, which looks likely to shape action and intervention in the Global Economy¹ in the coming years. This will be done using a role-play exercise in groups (which will be assigned to you). Your group must put itself in the shoes of the organisation you represent, and ultimately present to the class what a Green Economy means to you, and how this differs from the rhetoric used within UN and national planning documents. The class will be divided into 10 groups, representing 10 different actors (governmental, non-governmental, corporate) with diverse hopes and interests in regard to UN negotiations.

¹ The 'real' Global Economy, not only this course (as important as it also is).



There are three small components to Assignment 2:

- A written group assignment
- A short, individual reflection (written)
- Role-play during Seminar 2 (14th November)

Key Learning Outcomes Assessed

- *analyze the global economic system and its institutions, actors and trends from a transdisciplinary perspective;*
- *from a multidisciplinary perspective compare and critically analyze the basic assumptions, explanatory models and proposed solutions of different economical theories in relation to the present sustainability challenge.*

PART 1: GROUP ASSIGNMENT (3-4 pages of text)

Working together in your assigned group, your task is to investigate the Rio+20 conference in regards to its relevance to economic policy (globally, regionally, locally). In particular, this exercise centres around the formulation of a working definition for the term '*Green Economy*', and what it means to your group's assigned organisation. It is important that, regardless of your personal views, for this task you must aim to understand and promote the interests of the organisation that you represent. In more detail, you should;

- Review the literature relating to the idea of a green economy, and find documents that shed light on your organisation's viewpoints. Summarise the most important points from these documents, using references as required.
- Write a section on how you (your organisation) would like to see the green economy defined. What are the key components of a green economy according to you? Provide a structured argument to back up your case.
- Try to analyse or assess the outcomes (written commitments, probable implications) and determine to what degree your group is pleased with the outcome of Rio+20.

You can go beyond these questions in order to highlight aspects that you discover, in order to lobby for the interests of your group, perhaps in other important concepts within the documents you review. Whatever line of reasoning you take, it should be in the interest of the organisation you represent. Note, that this written part is really intended as a summary of your group discussion ; the main goal being for your group to understand your actor's perspective in relation to others.



PART 2: INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION (about 1 page)

Submit a brief individual reflection on the following two points;

- What are your own views on a Green Economy? Is it another weakly defined catchphrase to maintain the status quo? Can it be a meaningful and valuable concept to alter the course of the Global Economy? Is it a term worth promoting, criticizing, or forgetting?
- Reflect on the group process. How well did you manage to work together, and was it easy/hard to step into the shoes of your assigned organisation?

No references are required for the reflection task.

PART 3: ACTING ON BEHALF OF YOUR ORGANISATION

More detailed instructions for this task will be given for the Block 2 Seminar (14th November). As long as you understand the views you have read and written for the above tasks, then little preparation time is likely to be needed for this task. Just be prepared to clearly share with the other groups in the class what your viewpoints are, and work with other groups to try to come to agreement on how a green economy should be defined in practice.

Practicalities

- Size: 12. Spacing: 1.5. Font: Times New Roman. Margins: 25mm
- Include a cover page with your organisation's name and the active group members
- Use page numbers
- Name the group document according to your organisation (ex: WWF.doc)
- Name the individual reflection in the following way : firstname.lastname2 (ex: john.galt2.doc)
- Choose one member to upload the group report on Studentportalen (file area '*Writing Assignment 2 (group)*'), while each individual should upload your own reflection (file area '*Writing Assignment 2 (individual)*').
- **Deadline: 13th November 2012, 23:59**



KEY DOCUMENTS

- *The Future We Want: Outcome Document* - the outcome of Rio+20. A green economy is referred to in various places, while in part III (page 8-12) it takes a central focus. Available for download at; <http://www.un.org/en/sustainablefuture/>
- *Surveying the 'Green Economy' and the 'Green Growth' Landscape* - This draft document will point you in the direction of key groups and publications relevant to you (but it may not be exhaustive). Further information may be found at the *Green Economy Coalition's* website. Report available for download at; <http://www.greeneconomycoalition.org/updates/background-paper-surveying-green-economy-landscape-post-rio20>

REFERENCES

- There is no set minimum number of references that you need for this assignment, however some will be required to accurately complete the task. There are likely to be various publications, press releases, interviews that help shed light on your organisations views, and you are expected to make use of these, and reference where needed.
- You must use the [Harvard Referencing System](#) and include page numbers; for example, (Smith, 1776, p.245).

GRADING CRITERIAS

1. **Clarity**; the language must be clear, understandable and at a sufficiently high university standard. The questions must be entirely answered.
 2. **Argumentation**; if argumentation is part of the assignment, the arguments must be relevant, important and adequate.
 3. **Academic**; research methods and resources must be anchored in scientific and analytical sources.
 4. **References**; references must be properly used and done according to the instructions above throughout the paper.
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