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TECHNICAL BASELINE REPORT

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DG	Directorate-general
EaP	Eastern Partnership
EC	European Commission
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
EEA	European Environment Agency
EECCA	Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia
ENPI	European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument
EU	European Union
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GHG	Green House Gas
ISO	International Organisation of Standardisation
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MNREP	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NSSD	National Strategy for Sustainable Development
OECD	Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development
PAGE	UN Partnership Action for Green Economy
PPP	Public Private Partnership
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
SCP	Sustainable Consumption and Production
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme

EXTENDED SUMMARY

BACKGROUND AND CONTENT OF THE REPORT: This report was elaborated as a result of the sub-activity A.2.1. Assistance in elaboration of national principles of green economy and preparation of a draft regulatory act, integrating them into the national legislation, rationale and justification for the need to adopt it, prepared according to the requirements of the legislation of the Republic of Belarus in accordance with:

- Term of reference of the project;
- Methodology provided in the Technical proposal and Inception report;

This Report aims to help reaching the overall objective of the project - the promotion of green economy mechanisms in Belarus through supporting decision makers and planners in preparing, adopting and implementing green economy policies and mechanisms that leads toward wider socio-economic-environmental progress and sustainable development of the Republic of Belarus. When preparing this report the Consultant reviewed more than 20 national related documents. After presenting the project objectives and requirements context the report is structured as follows:

- A description of the green economy concept and approach at EU and international level.
- A presentation and short explanation of the green economy principles.
- Current situation regarding “green” approach in Belarus.
- Conclusions and recommendations for improving the GE concept in Belarus Green economy related topics.

The concept of green economy is based on the interdependence between human societies and the natural environment. What should be emphasized and understood is that the vision of a green economy is no longer an abstract one for many governments. The UN Partnership Action for a Green Economy (PAGE) is scaling up their efforts to support and connect governments to make that transition.

On the basis of the assessment a first overview of Green Economy Principles in accordance to prior sectors and policy measures as a proposal for discussion with representatives of the MNREP and stakeholders is presented (Table 2).

Attention is given to knowledge and competences of authorities in the context of green economy, with recommendations for Belarus.

BELARUS – STARTING POINTS FOR GREENING ECNOMY: Green economy could become an important factor in social and economic growth of Belarus. In 2012 the Ministry of Economy produced “The National Report on the Sustainable Development of the Republic of Belarus based on green economy principles”, which identifies the Belarusian sustainable development model and the directions of greening the economy. It was elaborated in collaboration with preparation for the ‘Rio+20’ conference. The following priorities still have a strong nexus among social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, because green economy aims to generate multiple benefits along all these dimensions:

- Energy safety (supported by increased energy efficiency);
- Food safety;
- Adaptation to climate change (water sector, agriculture);
- Improvement of waste management (esp. household waste is still a big challenge);

- Increased exports (supported by innovation);
- Development of the SME sector;
- Increased FDIs (manufacturing industry, agriculture);
- Approximation of standards and legislation with those of the EU;
- Rehabilitation of areas affected by the Chernobyl disaster and their use (the Belarus authorities are considering solar electricity units or planting energy crops).

Further some general country specific recommendations are given to be implemented in close dialogue with Partner countries taking into account joint priorities and the availability of resources: [1]

- Attracting FDIs with emphasis on advanced clean technologies during the privatization process;
- Support to the introduction of best available techniques in the state owned companies;
- Establishment of "centres of expertise" (use of high research potential of the country);
- Support to the development of SME sector, which might play an important role in innovation/eco innovation business;
- Support the City of Minsk and other big cities to sign the 'Covenant of Mayors'.

There are plenty of opportunities for greening the growth in Belarus The legislation of Belarus is developing towards harmonisation with EU legislation and certain important provisions have been adopted or will be adopted soon. Furthermore, environmental infrastructure investments, particularly water supply and sanitation but also waste management, are considered to be a crucial element of economic development.

At a strategic level, the system of policies, programmes and plans are well developed in Belarus. The problems are arising with the start of its implementation and bring it into force. To implement all the mentioned priorities at the same time, needs big amount of capacities and seems to be very ambitious (see also Annex 2).

FOCUS - KNOWLEDGE AND COMPETENCES OF AUTHORITIES IN THE CONTEXT OF THE GREEN ECONOMY:
Green growth is both a challenge and an opportunity for the labour market and skills which, in turn, are key factors for enabling green growth. *Policy responses dynamic* and well-functioning labour markets have a key role to play in facilitating the transition to a green and resource efficient economy. Transformation towards a sustainability economy involves changes, some of them very deep, in the structures of employment and in the professional profiles of the workers. The creation/destruction of employment will have as a consequence an increase in worker's mobility both between and within sectors, and new qualification needs for the professionals and workers will appear[2]. The transition towards a sustainable/green economy anticipates an increase in jobs in the green economy sector; for instance, those jobs related to waste collection and recycling, renewable energies, or the management of natural resources. On the other hand, this transition will imply that professionals currently holding traditional jobs will need to update themselves to acquire the new competencies necessary in the context of sustainable development.

[1] Report on the opportunities and options for promoting a Green Economy in the Eastern Partnership countries , June 2011

[2] Á. Murga-Menoyo, Learning for a Sustainable Economy: Teaching of Green Competencies in the University, Sustainability, 6, 2974-2992 (2014)

The transition will bring in Belarus transformations across the entire economy and across a wide range of sectors: additional employment will be created, some jobs will be replaced and others redefined. In this context, better targeting and coordination of labour market measures and tools are essential to create the necessary conditions to support green employment, bridge skill gaps and labour shortages, and anticipate change in human capital needs[3].

Up-skilling across all sectors and occupations will be necessary to acquire new skills and knowledge. For authorities in Belarus, skills associated with the green economy are not always entirely new or "unique" skills[4]. In this report, presented and recommended policy responses towards green economy in Belarus, provide a good framework for identification of knowledge and competencies of authorities in the context of the green economy.

It should also not be overlooked that the overall population—potential recipients of green products and production processes—likewise need to possess competencies in sustainability to be able to value the advantages offered by the new economic model. Belarus needs to raise awareness in the field of green economy amongst all target groups (state administration, business community, academia, NGOs, general public). Education and training of the population consistent with the principles of sustainable development and environmental culture is also a key tool in successfully implementing the green economy. The most common forms of «green» education in all types of educational institutions are environmental education lessons in schools, high schools, associations and eco-clubs, as well as extra-curricular courses.

CONCLUSIONS

The following conclusions/findings for fostering GE principles were drawn for Belarus:

- The biggest environmental challenges facing Belarus today, relate to water quality, waste management, nature protection, soil degradation, industrial pollution and radioactive contamination from the Chernobyl accident in 1986. The law on environmental protection and the law on state ecological expertise contain provisions for environmental impact assessment but access to information and public participation needs to be improved, including support for civil society. Even though, environment legislation is in place in many areas they need to be further developed, especially with regard to implementing legislation and under the principle of equity and fairness, both within and between generations.
- Belarus argues that prevention of a threat to human life and health as a result of environmental pollution is the priority, then secondly, prevention of degradation of natural resources potential and gene pool, as well as the destruction of natural and cultural monuments. Prevention of accidents at risk sites comes on third place followed by minimisation of socio economic and ecological consequences in case of an emergency situation.
- Climate change is not an explicit part of the cooperation area, it is increasingly understood that human rights and governance aspects have a strong effect on environmental actions and outcomes.

3 COM(2014) 446 final COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS Green Employment Initiative: Tapping into the job creation potential of the green economy

4 This requires reviewing and updating of qualifications and corresponding education and training curricula

- Current impacts on human health are four key environmental factors – air pollution (focusing on premature deaths from exposure to outdoor airborne particulate matter, or PM, and ground-level ozone as well as indoor air pollution), unsafe water supply and poor sanitation (including in the context of the MDGs), chemicals (chemical hazards, exposure) and climate change.
- In Belarus the environment is responsible for over 20% of the total burden of disease, which makes preventing disease and injury at the heart of the public health and health systems; The legislation that addresses environment and health risks is quite comprehensive, but according to WHO it is too general and not action oriented and needs to be accompanied by clearly stated targets and indicators.
- For the EaP countries, trade integration is an important driving force for approximation with EU environmental legislation.
- Further environmental challenges are also being presented by climate change in such areas as agriculture, forestry and water resources and ecosystems, especially management, and it has been recognized that production in Belarus remains very energy intensive by international standards, with many inefficient and environmentally unfriendly technologies still in use, despite investment in modernisation of sustainable and efficient resource use, consumption and production and structural economic shift towards services.
- Sector-specific legislation has been adopted, including on air quality, waste management and nature protection as well as Environmental impacts from energy production and transportation are many and significant: air pollution, including emission of greenhouse gases (GHG), land and water contamination, unsustainable extraction of various energy resources, and inadequate waste disposal
- Environmental impacts from energy production and transportation are many and significant: air pollution, including emission of greenhouse gases (GHG), land and water contamination, unsustainable extraction of various energy resources, and inadequate waste disposal.
- Huge potential for improving energy efficiency, particularly for district heating. Belarus has already reduced energy consumption by 50% between 1996 and 2008, as a result of an effectively implemented energy efficiency strategy aimed at reducing import dependency.
- Correlation between existing macroeconomic goals, through the creation of green jobs, poverty eradication, increased competitiveness and growth in key sectors.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are proposed to foster GE principles in Belarus:

- Belarus will need to put forward adaptation measures to protect its social, environmental and economic systems for changing climatic conditions.
- Taxes and market-based instruments can be powerful tools to promote green investments and innovations.
- Municipal infrastructure should be reformed and increase incentives for greater energy efficiency. Cost recovery of municipal tariffs paid by households should be increased. Incentives for improving energy efficiency need to be strengthened through market pricing of energy and the establishment of a clear framework for renewable energy.

- Incentives for improvements in energy efficiency need to be strengthened through appropriate policies, including market pricing of energy and establishment of a clear framework for renewable energy.
- UNFCCC and Kyoto Protocol - the Programme includes the system of legal, financial, economic and organizational measures, support to national monitoring and assessment, wide implementation of renewable energy sources and energy-saving technologies that have to be taken into consideration in the process of fulfillment. (The same methods should be used for the planned implementation of the Gothenburg Protocol.)
- Belarus is to a large extent dependent on external natural resources and energy. A priority for Belarus is energy efficiency and to develop adequate institutional and incentive structures to adjust to a more sustainable path of energy use.
- Strengthened sector cooperation includes cooperation in the areas of energy, transport, regional development, agriculture and rural development, environment and climate change.
- Until 2020 Belarus will need to invest between USD 10–30 bn in its electricity sector. Under the current strategy only USD 675 m are to be invested annually in the entire energy industry (including heating).
- Macro-economic policy framework should be oriented to reduce external imbalances; the central bank should be charged primarily with stabilising inflation.
- Efficient private sector is an important precondition for the green economy. Therefore deep institutional reforms are needed in Belarus to encourage private sector development. Privatisation of enterprises must be encouraged and new private owners should be allowed to manage them on a commercial basis. State-owned banks should progressively increase the proportion of loans offered on a commercial basis, and directed lending should be reduced.
- Sustainable agriculture, including organic farming is identified as providing opportunities for green job creation and should thus be enhanced.

1 INTRODUCTION

The first United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development or "Earth Summit", was held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. The main outcomes of the landmark conference included seminal documents on Agenda 21, the Rio Declaration and the Statement of Forest Principles, as well as two legally binding conventions; the United Nations Convention on Climate Change and the United Nations Convention on Biodiversity. These documents have shaped and guided sustainable development policies and actions at international, regional, national and local levels in the intervening two decades. The Earth Summit highlighted environmental and development issues at an international level, emphasizing the importance of sustainability principles for social well-being and the economic systems they support.

There have been extensive efforts since 1992, at local, national, regional and international levels, to implement sustainable development. The United Nations Millennium Summit in 2000 agreed on a set of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), setting time-bound targets for addressing extreme poverty in line with the objectives of Agenda 21. Concrete steps to turn words into action were then agreed upon at the Johannesburg Summit, 2002, in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. At EU level the sustainable development process has been advanced through a suite of policies and actions following on from the adoption of the EU Sustainable Development Strategy in 2001 which was subsequently renewed in 2006. Comprehensive framework Directives and other legislative instruments on waste management, air, water and biodiversity have been put in place. We have also seen the introduction of a cap and trade system, the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) and the setting of binding targets on greenhouse gas emissions.

Rio +20 presents an opportunity to revisit agreements and commitments made in 1992 and to consider how we will deliver on these, both collectively and individually.

In order to support Partner countries towards the green growth objective, the European Commission is urged to:

- Increase the importance of green economy issues in ongoing projects
- Prepare a new 'umbrella' project on Green Economy Governance
- Increase the importance of green economy relevant issues in existing financing mechanisms
- Increase coordination of activities with international organisations active in the region in the field of green economy

In the Belarus context, significant steps have been taken since the Earth Summit in Rio in 1992. Belarus has made considerable progress in environmental performance, developing environmental policies and adopting measures to promote an innovation-based, low carbon, green economy. The National Strategy for Sustainable Development (NSSD) for the period to 2020 of the Republic of Belarus serves to take into consideration domestic and foreign developments and changes of recent years, as well as the essential policy documents adopted by Belarus, new international agreements, including the UN Millennium Declaration, adopted by the UN General Assembly on September 8, 2000, Political Declaration and Action Plan of the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg (September 2002). NSDS2020 primarily focuses on the peculiarities and patterns of the forecast period, follow up to the "Agenda 21", harmonization of social, economic and ecological development as equipollent and complementary elements in the "man environment economy" balanced system.

Belarus will adapt the GE concept to the specific conditions but this should be consistent with the sustainable development concept, principles and framework, and care should be taken that it does not detract or distract from “sustainable development”.

Thus the “value added” to the Green Economy as contrasted to sustainable development should be identified. Care has to be taken to ensure that the “green economy” term and concept is also understood to include the social, equity and development dimensions, including the need for international provision of finance and technology and accompanying global economic reforms and that the risks of the misuse of the term are adequately addressed.

When drawing up the policy for the implementation of GE concept policy makers need reliable, comparable and up-to-date information about economy, social situation, the state of the environment and about persisting or emerging trends, etc.

2 POLICY CONTEXT, PROBLEM, DEFINITION AND BASELINE

2.1 GREEN ECONOMY – IN THE CONTEXT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) defines the **green economy** as one which 'results in improved human well-being and social equity, while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities. In its simplest expression, a green economy can be thought of as one which is low carbon, resource efficient and socially inclusive. According to UNEP's Green Economy Report, *"in the green economy, growth in income and employments are driven by public and private investments that reduce carbon emissions and pollution, enhance energy and resource efficiency, and prevent the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services."*

The **concept** has received significant international attention over the past few years both as a **tool** to address the 2008 financial crisis as well as one of the two themes for the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20).

Importantly, when the concept was first adopted as a theme for Rio+20, there was also a lack of clarity around the relationship between **green economy** and internationally agreed objectives such as **sustainable development** and poverty eradication, as well as a lack of understanding regarding the potential challenges, risks, costs and benefits of implementing green economy policies. To clarify, the green economy is conceptually different in that it focuses specifically on the sustainability of the economic pillar. It does not aim to replace the sustainable development concept but rather complement it by emphasizing the importance of improving the sustainability of the global economy. The concerns raised early on by a number of governments included the need for any outcome on green economy to address the three dimensions of sustainable development in a balanced manner and fully respect all of the previously agreed Rio Principles.

The important links between green economy and sustainable development are well recognised:

The concept of a 'green economy' does not replace sustainable development, but there is a growing recognition that achieving sustainability rests almost entirely on getting the economic right.

Decades of creating new wealth through a 'brown economy' model based on fossil fuels have not substantially addressed social marginalisation, environmental degradation and resource depletion. In addition, the world is still far from delivering on the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. (UNEP 2011)

During the Rio+20 Conference it was agreed to launch a process to develop a set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which will build upon the Millennium Development Goals and provide a new development agenda post-2015. The SDGs will be global in nature and universally applicable to all countries. They are envisioned to take an integrated approach to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of global development challenges, while taking into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development. The goals are currently being established and will be agreed upon during the UN General Assembly in September 2015. The SDG targets and indicators will form a new framework for monitoring sustainable and equitable development outcomes.[5]

5 https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/topics/sustainabledevelopmentgoals

2.1.1 Green Economy and Green Growth

The OECD has developed and introduced the concept of "green growth" defined as maximizing economic growth and development while avoiding unsustainable pressure on the quantity and quality of natural assets and harnessing the growth potential that arises from transiting toward a green economy . In a nutshell, green growth is GDP growth which is subject to green conditions as well as focusing on green sectors as new growth engines.

Following the industrial and information revolutions, the "green economy revolution" is another catalyst that could transform the global economy. The financial crisis of 2009 has accelerated a wide disillusionment with the conventional "black" or "brown" economic development model that has relied heavily on resource depletion and utilisation of fossil fuels, leading to serious environmental pollution and ecological crisis.

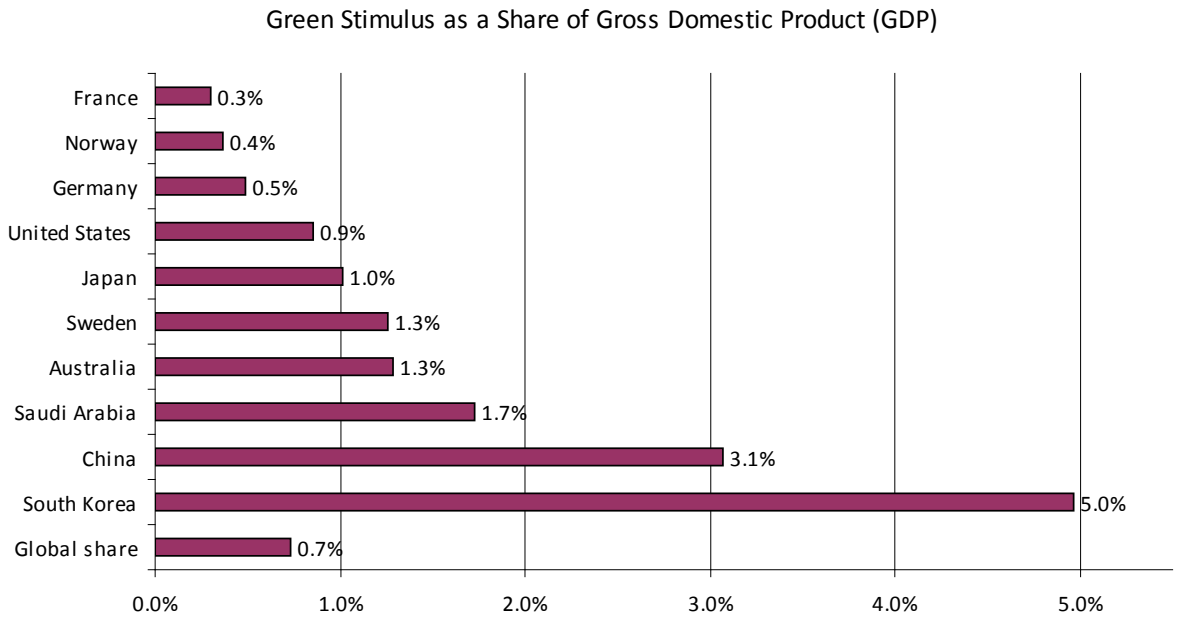
During the 2008-09 recessions, some governments included a sizable "*green fiscal*" component in their efforts to boost aggregate demand. Almost all was by G20 governments. Globally, green spending amounted to just under 16% of total fiscal stimulus and 0.7% of world GDP.

There are three broad categories of support:

- *Energy efficiency* - Support for energy conservation in buildings; fuel efficient vehicles; public transport and rail; and improving electrical grid transmission.
- *Low carbon power* - Support for renewable energy (geothermal, hydro, wind and solar), nuclear power, and carbon capture and sequestration.
- *Water, waste and pollution control* – Support for water, waste and pollution management and control, including water conservation, treatment and supply.

In other words, the global recession has opened up new opportunities for governments to address the economic crisis and kick-start a move toward low-carbon "green" economies. The stimulus packages being rolled out in many countries are supporting the greening of industries through direct public spending on public transport, energy efficiency, alternative energy supply, water supply and sanitation systems, and pollution control.

Figure 2-1. Green Stimulus as a share of GDP



Source: Barbier, E.B. 2010. A Global Green New Deal: Rethinking the Economic Recovery. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge and New York

Global efforts towards Green Economy

Green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication was one of the two themes for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20). In June 2012 in Rio de Janeiro governments agreed to frame green economy as an important tool for achieving sustainable development. Governments agreed to *general principles* and *priority areas* which will guide implementation of the green economy at all levels as well as cooperation between all the Stakeholders.

A green economy covers all stages of economic activities (e.g. mineral extraction, production, distribution, utilisation and end-of-life management) and needs to be an integrated and coordinated development at the national, regional, sectorial and enterprise levels.

HSBC Global Research [6]forecasts that the global market for clean energy and energy efficiency investments will triple to US$ 2.2 trillion by 2020. The expansion will be led by low-carbon vehicles, such as plug-in hybrids and full electric vehicles, China's growing clean energy market and the need for upfront capital for the new green technologies.

But relying on *green stimulus* alone is not enough to instigate a global "green" recovery. Fossil fuel subsidies and other market distortions, as well as the lack of effective environmental pricing policies, carbon markets and regulations, will diminish the impacts of G20 *green stimulus* investments on long-term investment and job creation in green sectors.

6 HSBC, one of the largest banking and financial services institutions in the world, serves millions of customers through its four Global Businesses.

There may also be a trade-off between short-run and long-run growth, environmental and employment impacts of green stimulus programs. Most poor economies will not be direct beneficiaries of the "clean energy" boom, unless they receive urgent assistance.

A **transition to a green economy** can contribute to poverty eradication. A number of sectors with green economic potential are particularly important for the poor, such as agriculture, forestry, fishery, and water management. Enabling the poor to access micro-insurance coverage against natural disasters and catastrophes is also important.

Investments in *renewable energy* can be targeted to improve clean and affordable energy for the "energy poor", the 2.4 billion people, who rely on traditional biomass fuels for cooking and heating and the 1.6 billion people who do not have access to electricity. Payments for ecosystem services, such as carbon sequestration in forests, will need to focus more on poor forest communities as the primary beneficiaries.

Investments in *clean water and sanitation* can overcome child mortality, water-borne disease, save time and costs of poor households.

Funding priorities:

- EU estimates that net additional investment worldwide in low-carbon technologies will need to rise to around $245 billion by 2020, more than half in developing economies.
- UNDP estimates that developing economies will require an additional $86 billion in adaptation financing by 2015
  - $44 billion for climate-proofing development investment
  - $40 billion for adapting poverty reduction to climate change
  - $2 billion for strengthening disaster response
- Uncertainty over a future global carbon market inhibits private capital flows and public policies, especially investments and technology transfers to developing economies.
- Low-carbon investments are also inhibited by energy subsidies, which amount to $300 bn worldwide (0.7% of world GDP).
- EU estimates that net additional investment worldwide in low-carbon technologies will need to rise to around $245 billion by 2020, more than half in developing economies.

EU Policy

The foundations of the green economy in the EU's strategic orientations can be found at different levels with focus and explicit commitment across a mix of high level strategic documents and sectorial policies.

Europe 2020 is the **EU's growth strategy** for the current decade. The strategy aims to have by 2020 an economy in Europe that is smart, sustainable and inclusive, and delivers high levels of employment, productivity and social cohesion.

In eight of the ten sectors identified as key for a transition to a green economy (agriculture, buildings, energy supply, fisheries, forestry, industry, tourism, transport, waste management, water), the EU already has a policy framework in place which would provide a basis for measures to make these sectors more sustainable.

The Flagship initiative for a resource-efficient Europe under the Europe 2020 Strategy supports the shift toward a resource-efficient, low-carbon economy to achieve sustainable growth. One of the building blocks of the above flagship initiative is the EC's Roadmap for a resource-efficient Europe, adopted on 20 September 2011. The Roadmap builds upon and complements the other initiatives under the resource efficiency flagship, in particular the policy achievements toward a low-carbon economy.

The Roadmap represents a comprehensive and multidisciplinary effort to clarify and frame the concept of 'green economy' and promote a more common understanding. The Roadmap highlights the essential role of business in bringing solutions to common global challenges and opportunities associated with sustainable development, involving economic, social and environmental concerns.

The current "Green Economy in Belarus" project will address the *needs of the country toward greening the economy and provide support in legislative and institutional matters* to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection.

2.1.2 Green economy principles worldwide

"A Guidebook to the Green Economy"[7], which was published in September 2012 has provided a *brief overview of several sets of green economy principles* that were published in the lead up to Rio+20, along with a comparison of these principles against what was agreed by governments in the Rio+20 outcome document (see also Annex 1).

From this overview, it can be seen that stakeholders and governments are interpreting the green economy concept in a fairly balanced way across all three dimensions of sustainable development.

Principles for a green, fair and inclusive economy are:

1) *Equity and fairness, both within and between generations;*

7 https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/743GE%20Issue%20nr%202.pdf

Inter-generational equity in economic and sociological contexts, is the concept or idea of fairness or justice in relationships between generations, particularly in terms of treatment and interactions. It has been studied in environmental and sociological settings.

From the perspective of green economy approach, the answer seems clear: The consumption of material goods and services satisfies people's preferences and contributes to their happiness, and higher levels of consumption should — all else equal — contribute positively to social welfare.

However, in the long run, the growth of material production and consumption is limited by natural resource constraints. To achieve a sustainable future will require policies and institutions that maintain the economy within the bounds set by nature. Significant growth of GDP, as a measure of the subjective value of goods and services, can nonetheless be achieved in the interim through a move to technologies and consumption patterns sufficient to sharply reduce the economy's 'ecological footprint'.

2) *Consistency with the principles of sustainable development;*

The concept of a 'green economy' is direct linked with sustainable development, but there is a growing recognition that achieving sustainability rests almost entirely on getting the economic right.

3) *A precautionary approach to social and environmental impacts;*

A precautionary as well as the sustainability approach are the basics in the understanding of the green economy concept. With regards to environmental and public health decision-making includes these specific components:

4) *An appreciation of natural and social capital, though, for example, the internalisation of external costs, green accounting, whole-life costing and improved governance;*

The global situation about resource availability and changing population demographics needs an improved understanding of their impacts and dependencies on environment, society at the whole and esp. the production and consumption.

Fiscal policies are important on the way to a green economy. The role of the government is to use the variety of fiscal instruments:

- taxing fossil fuel use or emissions in different sectors;
- reforming energy subsidies that promote wasteful and environmentally harmful economic activity;
- supporting clean technology and sustainable production with the help of fiscal incentives;
- to consider the potential social impact (for low income households, pensioners etc.);
- to reflect environmental externalities through full cost pricing of energy and transportation services.

5) *Sustainable and efficient resource use, consumption and production; and*

Sustainable consumption and production (SCP) is defined as the use of services and related products, which respond to basic needs and bring a better quality of life while minimising the use of natural resources and toxic materials as well as the emissions of waste and pollutants over the life cycle of the service or product so as not to jeopardise the needs of future generations SCP aims at "doing more and better with less," increasing net welfare gains from economic activities by reducing resource use, degradation and pollution along the whole lifecycle, while increasing quality of life.

Sustainable consumption has been recognized as an integral element of sustainable development and an issue of paramount importance.

6) *A need to fit with existing macroeconomic goals, through the creation of green jobs, poverty eradication, increased competitiveness and growth in key sectors.*

The concept of green economy is based on the interdependence between human societies and the natural environment.

Current patterns of economic and social development are placing pressures upon natural resources, and may threaten the continued health and prosperity of human societies. In recognition of these concerns, the EC articulated a growing interest in understanding the importance of the relationship between humans and the environment and this is manifested in the EU 2020 and related strategic documents.

Economic growth/green growth should lead to shared prosperity.

Innovation and investment in sustainable and resilient infrastructure, large companies and SME, energy and technology can all support the generation of employment and remedy negative environmental trends. A properly regulated, responsible and profitable private sector is critical for employment, living wages, growth and revenues for public programmes. Transforming business models for creating shared value is vital for growing green economies.

2.2 GREEN ECONOMY PRINCIPLES IN BELARUS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

2.2.1 Current situation in Belarus

The Republic of Belarus considers the "green economy" to be an important instrument for sustainable development and environmental safety, and has begun to take sustained measures to implement "green" (ecological) principles in the national economy. The implementation of the main objectives of economic policy in the transition to «green» principles will create conditions for economic growth, enhancing welfare and health with the rational use of natural resources, preserving the ecological balance and preventing imbalances in the ecosystem.

This is especially important, as Belarus has substantial opportunities for green economy/green growth in energy efficiency, organic agriculture and food industry, transport and tourism (valuable natural areas, historical places, potential for ecotourism and eco-agro tourism, especially in combination with organic agriculture) as well as potential for renewable energy.

In recognition of its national, regional and global contributions to sustainable growth, the Republic of Belarus is a party to numerous European and international environmental conventions and protocols, international treaties - bilateral and multilateral - in the field of environmental protection. In order to fulfil the commitments made in this respect, a relatively well-developed system of policies, programmes and plans has been adopted and a range of these policy documents are currently under implementation.

Important steps have been made as environmental principles have been introduced into the national economy, reducing environmental risks and creating conditions for better living of the population.

***Two important tools** are developed to support the sustainable development of the country: the legal framework and the institutional and organizational infrastructure.*

Legislation is developing towards harmonisation with EU legislation and certain important provisions have been adopted or will be adopted soon. Examples are: technology-based emission limits for water and air. A new law on waste management was adopted in 2007. In December 2010 a new law on renewable energy was adopted and the law on state environmental expertise has been updated substantially. A new law on public private partnership (PPP) has also been drafted.

Environmental permitting is almost entirely based on the former Soviet practice. Now the first steps towards integrated permitting and the introduction of technology based environmental requirements are being made with the National Strategy on the Introduction of Integrated Environmental Permits for 2009–2020.

Economic instruments (air and water pollution charges, industrial and household waste disposal charges, compensation for environmental damage, fees for reprocessing of plastic packaging waste; and pollution fines) are not very efficient under the current non-market economy conditions. The main polluting industries are still stated owned.

First voluntary instruments are in place, namely ISO-14000, but also certificates for renewable fuel. Cross-subsidies in the energy sector still pertain, but plans for their removal are foreseen in the next five years.

In order to achieve the sustainable development goals, the National Strategy (NSSD-2020) identified the development areas for key components of the Belarusian model: economy, environment and social sphere.

Table 2-1. Main macroeconomic indicators of Belarus (%)[8]

	2010	*2011*	*2012*	*2013*	*2014 (projected)*
GDP growth	7.7	5.5	1.7	0.9	0.7
Inflation (average)	7.7	53.2	59.2	18.3	18.9
Government balance/GDP	-4.3	-2.9	0.5	-0.8	-3.3
Current account balance/GDP	-15.0	-8.5	-2.9	-10.1	-8.5
Net FDI/GDP	2.4	6.5	2.1	2.9	2.6
External debt/GDP	52.1	57.7	54.2	54.1	n.a.
Gross reserves/GDP	6.3	10.2	9.2	7.0	n.a.
Credit to private sector/GDP	44.1	38.6	21.5	22.6	n.a.

8 Resource: http://tr.ebrd.com/tr14/belarus/

Note: Government balance refers to augmented general government balance

It is important to note that green economy needs to be interpreted and applied by national governments as a *set of policy measures* selected and designed in accordance with *national priorities and circumstances.*

For example, governments may choose to focus their green economy policies on creating decent work and green jobs, the promotion of resource and energy efficiency, using metrics and indicators to measure progress beyond GDP, implementing measures to drive innovation, and facilitating the necessary skills development and education. They may also wish to consider the broader recognition of planetary boundaries or ecological limits and the importance of ensuring environmental, social and economic resilience in the face of growing risks and uncertainties.

In line with this fundamental norm, the Belarusian authorities in consultation with other stakeholders in the country have established to date green economy priorities based on which the country will further develop.

The following priorities still have a strong nexus among the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, because green economy aims to generate multiple benefits along all these dimensions:

- Energy safety (supported by increased energy efficiency)
- Food safety
- Adaptation to climate change (water sector, agriculture)
- Improvement of waste management (esp. household waste is still a big challenge)
- **I**ncreased exports (supported by innovation)
- Development of the SME sector
- Increased FDIs (manufacturing industry, agriculture)
- Approximation of standards and legislation with those of the EU
- Rehabilitation of areas affected by the Chernobyl disaster and their use (the Belarus authorities are considering solar electricity units or planting energy crops).

Further some general country specific recommendations are given to be implemented in close dialogue with the Partner countries taking into account joint priorities and the availability of resources: [9]

- Attracting FDIs with emphasis on advanced clean technologies during the privatization process,
- Support to the introduction of best available techniques in the state owned companies,
- Establishment of “centres of expertise” (use of high research potential of the country),
- Support to the development of SME sector, which might play an important role in innovation/eco innovation business,
- Support the City of Minsk and other big cities to sign the ‘Covenant of Mayors’.

To implement all the mentioned priorities at the same time, needs significant amount of capacities and seems to be very ambitious.

To get a clear overview about the foreseen priorities, the real tasks and related incentives, indicators and last but not least the costs of the measures has to be clarified in more detail.

An important example could be the *Investment in the energy sector of Belarus*.

9 Report on the opportunities and options for promoting a Green Economy in the Eastern Partnership countries , June 2011

According to the Belarus Thermal and Power Institute (2007) electricity consumption in Belarus is expected to increase by 35% until 2020. Therefore until 2020 Belarus will need to invest between USD 10–30 bn in its electricity sector, but under the current strategy ca. USD 675 m are to be invested annually in the entire energy industry (including heating). In conclusion, different modes of financing investments in the Belarus electricity should be compared und find the best solution. This can be done in a very close cooperation with the representatives of the Ministry of Energy and their experiences in this field.

2.2.2 Policy options and assumptions

With regard to specific policy measures, the Rio+20 outcome document provides limited guidance for governments apart from acknowledging that a mix of policy measures, including "regulatory, voluntary and others applied at the national level" could promote green economy (paragraph 63).

When defining the green economy policy, this should:

- Be consistent with international law, esp. with EU legal framework;
- Respect the national sovereignty over the natural resources taking into account the national circumstances, objectives, responsibilities, priorities and policy space with regard to the three dimensions of sustainable development;
- Be supported by an enabling environment and well-functioning institutions at all levels with a leading role for governments and with the participation of all relevant stakeholders, including civil society;
- Promote sustained and inclusive economic growth, foster innovation and provide opportunities, benefits and empowerment for all and respect of all human rights;
- Strengthen international cooperation, including the provision of financial resources, capacity building and technology transfer to developing countries;
- Mobilize the full potential and ensure the equal contribution of both women and men;
- Promote sustainable consumption and production patterns;
- Continue efforts to strive for inclusive, equitable development approaches to overcome poverty and inequality.

On the basis of the assessment Table 2-2 gives a first overview of Green Economy Principles in accordance to priority sectors and policy measures as a proposal for discussion with representatives of the MNREP and stakeholders. The Government will need to take into account the ***various costs, risks, benefits and opportunities of different policy options in accordance with their institutional and governance arrangements, level of development, and social, economic and environmental priorities.***

Table 2-2. Overview of GE Principles, prior sectors and policy measures

GE Principles	*Priority Sectors/Policy Measures*
Equity and fairness, both within and between generations	The biggest *environmental challenges facing Belarus* today, relate to *water quality, waste management, nature protection, soil degradation, industrial pollution and radioactive contamination from the Chernobyl accident in 1986.* The law on environmental protection and the law on state ecological expertise contain provisions for environmental impact assessment but access to information and public participation needs to be improved, including support for civil society. Even though, environment legislation is in place in many areas they need to be further developed, especially with regard to implementing legislation and under the principle of equity and fairness, both within and between generations.
Consistency with the principles of sustainable development;	Belarus argues that prevention of a threat to human life and health as a result of environmental pollution is the priority, then secondly, prevention of degradation of natural resources potential and gene pool, as well as the destruction of natural and cultural monuments. Prevention of accidents at risk sites comes on third place followed by minimisation of socio economic and ecological consequences in case of an emergency situation. Climate change is not an explicit part of the cooperation area, it is increasingly understood that *human rights and governance* aspects have a strong effect on environmental actions and outcomes.
Precautionary approach to social and environmental impacts;	Current impacts on human health are four key environmental factors – air pollution (focusing on premature deaths from exposure to outdoor airborne particulate matter, or PM, and ground-level ozone as well as indoor air pollution), unsafe water supply and poor sanitation (including in the context of the MDGs), chemicals (chemical hazards, exposure) and climate change. In Belarus the environment is responsible for over 20% of the total burden of disease, which makes preventing disease and injury at the heart of the public health and health systems. The legislation that addresses environment and health risks is quite comprehensive, but according to *WHO it is too general and not action oriented and needs to be accompanied by clearly stated targets and indicators.*

GE Principles	*Priority Sectors/Policy Measures*
Appreciation of natural and social capital, though, for example, the internalisation of external costs, green accounting, whole-life costing and improved governance	*Belarus* will need to *put forward adaptation measures to protect its social, environmental and economic systems for changing climatic conditions.* *Taxes and market-based instruments are powerful tools to promote green investments and innovations.* *Nature and social capital accounting,* as process of considering value of the environment and society in business decision making, have a material impact on a financial decision. Municipal infrastructure should be reformed and increase incentives for greater energy efficiency. Cost recovery of municipal tariffs paid by households should be increased. Incentives for improving energy efficiency need to be strengthened through market pricing of energy and the establishment of a clear framework for renewable energy. The pricing of energy remains inadequate to incentivise efficient use and the non-price barriers to energy efficiency persist. Incentives for improvements in energy efficiency need to be strengthened through appropriate policies, including market pricing of energy and establishment of a clear framework for renewable energy. UNFCCC and Kyoto Protocol - the Programme includes the system of legal, financial, economic and organizational measures, support to national monitoring and assessment, wide implementation of renewable energy sources and energy-saving technologies what has to take into consideration in the process of its fulfillment. (The same methods should be used for the planned implementation of the Gothenburg Protocol. Accountability mechanisms, such as ensuring the rights to access information, public participation and access to an impartial justice system, are essential for enabling these constituencies to demand environmental improvements. *For the EaP countries, trade integration is an important driving force for approximation with EU environmental legislation*

GE Principles	*Priority Sectors/Policy Measures*
Sustainable and efficient resource use, consumption and production	The *industrial sector in Belarus* is large and of key importance for the national economy, including *chemical and petrochemical industries, construction materials, wood and paper* enterprises, but it also *contributes to pollution*. *Waste management*, *including prevention, collection, treatment, recovery and final disposal of waste,* is identified by the ENPI as another *difficult challenge*. The problems are still huge in regards to the radioactive fallout, especially serious environmental problems caused by radioactive contamination, water pollution and soil degradation and of course *critical human health effects.* Further environmental challenges are also being presented by *climate change* in such areas as *agriculture, forestry and water resources and ecosystem management*, and it has been recognized that Production in Belarus remains very energy intensive by international standards, with many *inefficient and environmentally unfriendly technologies* still in use, despite investment in modernisation of production and structural economic shift towards services. *Belarus* is to a large extent dependent on external natural resources and energy. A priority for Belarus is energy efficiency and to develop the adequate institutional and incentive structures to adjust to a more sustainable path of energy use. *Sector-specific legislation has been adopted, including on air quality, waste management and nature protection as well as Environmental impacts from energy production and transportation are many and significant: air pollution, including emission of greenhouse gases (GHG), land and water contamination, unsustainable extraction of various energy resources, and inadequate waste disposal* Strengthened sector cooperation includes cooperation in the areas of energy, transport, regional development, agriculture and rural development, environment and climate change. Environmental impacts from *energy production and transportation* are many and significant: air pollution, including emission of greenhouse gases (GHG), land and water contamination, unsustainable extraction of various energy resources, and inadequate waste disposal. Until 2020 Belarus will need to invest between USD 10–30 bn in its electricity sector. Under the current strategy only USD 675 m are to be invested annually in the entire energy industry (including heating). *Huge potential for improving energy efficiency, particularly for district heating*. Belarus has already reduced energy consumption by 50% between 1996 and 2008, as a result of an effectively implemented energy efficiency strategy aimed at reducing import dependency.

GE Principles	*Priority Sectors/Policy Measures*
Correlation between existing macroeconomic goals, through the creation of green jobs, poverty eradication, increased competitiveness and growth in key sectors	Macro-economic policy framework should be oriented to reduce external imbalances. The central bank should be charged primarily with stabilising inflation. Wage growth should reflect productivity developments, and the use of output targets should be phased out. Efficient private sector is an important precondition for the green economy. Therefore deep institutional reforms are needed in Belarus to encourage private sector development. Privatisation of enterprises must be encouraged and new private owners should be allowed to manage them on a commercial basis. State-owned banks should progressively increase the proportion of loans offered on a commercial basis, and directed lending should be reduced. The main source for wealth creation in the EECCA has been natural resource abundance. Transparency of how revenues from resource extraction are collected and spent is important. *Sustainable agriculture*, including organic farming is identified as providing opportunities for *green job creation*

2.2.3 Recommendations

Good governance has the potential to regulate and enforce environmentally sound policies and steer individuals and societies into productive outcomes and sustainable use of the environmental resources. Therefore, improving governance and institutional capacities could provide important synergies to the other more targeted infrastructure investment support. It could provide incentives for 'greener' decisions and improve implementation of environmental policies, which would be positive also in terms of the EU approximation process.

In this context the legal system and especially the regulatory instrument mix (permitting system, economic instruments, elimination of harmful subsidies) should also be reviewed, to support gradual change of both production and consumption patterns. Harmonisation of legislation will support the improvement of not only production patterns (technology based environmental requirements, product standards), but also consumption patterns (e.g. Eco labelling).

The implementation of the concept of conservation of energy and resources, energy and renewable energy will also be maintained and developed as a priority within science and innovation sector towards a sustainable development. Belarus should further support an approach which will contribute to increasing availability of environmental "green" technologies, will introduce best available techniques for integrated environment pollution prevention and control thus opening up new market opportunities.

The private sector, SME and civil society should be invited to a deeper participation in the design of policies and policy instruments, but also be involved in monitoring of compliance.

Belarus needs to raise awareness in the field of green economy amongst all target groups (state administration, business community, academia, NGOs, general public). Education and training of the population consistent with the principles of sustainable development and environmental culture is also a key tool in successfully implementing the green economy. The most common forms of «green» education in all

types of educational institutions are environmental education lessons in schools, high schools, associations and eco-clubs, as well as extra-curricular courses.

Environmental authorities will continue to be central for promoting the environmental agenda, and their role and capacities need to be strengthened.

Environment and climate change also need to be kept on the political and economic priorities and an adequate budget allocations and providing incentives for environmental improvements should be considered. Areas of importance include integration of environmental and climate change concerns in development and investment plans, increasing budget allocations to environmental protection, improved capacities for permitting/licensing/ monitoring and promote the green growth agenda are all examples of areas that need to be improved. However, in order to fully integrate environmental and climate change aspects into core development priorities, also other key ministries (e.g. finance, economy, energy) are playing a crucial role, strong evidence in support to benefits of environmental protection and greening the economy will help environmental authorities to get support, as well as in order to generate such evidence, environmental authorities may need to start utilizing tools for economic and social analysis of policies and reform processes.

Government of Belarus have a significant role in establishing:

- sound regulatory frameworks (like the authorities must establish a macroeconomic policy framework to reduce external imbalances, deep institutional reforms are needed to encourage private sector development, and the authorities should reform municipal infrastructure and increase incentives for greater energy efficiency)
- prioritising government investment and spending in areas that stimulate the greening of economic sectors
- limiting government spending in areas that deplete natural capital
- employing taxes and market-based instruments to promote green investment and innovation
- investing in capacity building, training and education
- strengthen international governance.

Based on the above mentioned analyses the project team would like to propose for further consideration by the Ministry of Natural resources and Environmental protection the following GE principles to be streamlined among the legislation and policy development.

Green economy principles for Belarus

1. Further development of environmental legislation and applying of best practices in management of air, water, soil, wastes.

2. Enabling widening of organic farming sector, introduction of organic certification in the country and expanding the import of organic production

3. Promotion of eco-innovation solutions, based on high research potential of Republic of Belarus

4. Mitigation the consequences of climate change and providing support of adaptation measures using legislative and economic tools

5. Introduction of energy efficiency measures in urban areas of Republic of Belarus

6. Attracting foreign direct investments and promoting creation of green job.

Green growth is both a challenge and an opportunity for the labour market and skills which, in turn, are key factors for enabling green growth. *Policy responses dynamic* and well-functioning labour markets have a key role to play in facilitating the transition to a green and resource efficient economy. Transformation towards a sustainability economy involves changes, some of them very deep, in the structures of employment and in the professional profiles of the workers. The creation/destruction of employment will have as a consequence an increase in worker's mobility both between and within sectors, and new qualification needs for the professionals and workers will appear[10]. The transition towards a sustainable/green economy anticipates an increase in jobs in the green economy sector; for instance, those jobs related to waste collection and recycling, renewable energies, or the management of natural resources. On the other hand, this transition will imply that professionals currently holding traditional jobs will need to update themselves to acquire the new competencies necessary in the context of sustainable development.

Up-skilling across all sectors and occupations will be necessary to acquire new skills and knowledge. For authorities in Belarus, skills associated with the green economy are not always entirely new or "unique" skills[11]. In this study, presented and recommended policy responses towards green economy in Belarus, provide good framework for identification of knowledge and competencies of authorities in the context of the green economy.

10 Á. Murga-Menoyo, Learning for a Sustainable Economy: Teaching of Green Competencies in the University, Sustainability, 6, 2974-2992 (2014)

11 This requires reviewing and updating of qualifications and corresponding education and training curricula

ANNEX 1. GREEN ECONOMY OVERVIEW

GREEN ECONOMY DEFINITIONS	
UNEP	Green economy" as that which results in improved human well-being and social equity, while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities
OECD	"Green economy" is an economy – or an economic development model – based on sustainable development and knowledge of environmental economics
EU	No common definition

GREEN ECONOMY PRINCIPLES	
UNEP	1. It delivers sustainable development 2. It delivers equity - The Justice Principle 3. It creates genuine prosperity and wellbeing for all - The Dignity Principle 4. It improves the natural world - The Earth Integrity, Planetary Boundaries and Precautionary Principle 5. It is inclusive and participatory in decision making – The Inclusion Principle 6. It is accountable - The Governance Principle 7. It builds economic, social and environmental resilience - The Resilience Principle 8. It delivers sustainable consumption and production – The Efficiency Principle 9 It invests for the future – The Intergenerational Principle.
Stakeholder Forum, BioRegional and the Earth Charter Initiative, 15 principles	1. Equitable distribution of wealth 2. Economic equity and fairness guided by the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, 3. Intergenerational Equity 4. Precautionary Approach 5. The Right to Development 6. Internalization of Externalities 7. International Cooperation 8. International liability 9. Information, participation and accountability 10. Sustainable Consumption and Production 11. Strategic, coordinated and integrated planning to deliver sustainable development, the green economy and poverty alleviation 12. Just Transition 13. Redefine Well-being 14. Gender Equality 15. Safeguard biodiversity and prevent pollution of any part of the environment.

GREEN ECONOMY PRINCIPLES	
United Nations Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Global Sustainability	1. It is a potential engine for sustainable development and stimulates economic growth needed for poverty eradication. It can provide a comprehensive approach to sustainable development when tailored for different countries, localities or regions based on their needs and situation and complemented with social protection to ensure inclusivity and stability. 2. It takes a long-term perspective and is a resilient growth model capable of withstanding external shocks. 3. It measures progress beyond GDP. 4. It promotes employment, fosters green business and generates green jobs. 5. It emphasizes technology and innovation, cooperation, and institutions. 6. It sends accurate price signals by including social and environmental costs in pricing mechanisms. It ensures that finance is used to lay the foundations for higher sustainable development performance where financial returns are satisfactory. 7. It promotes energy from low-carbon and renewable sources and energy efficiency. 8. It addresses resource scarcity and improves the environment and natural assets, including ecosystems and biodiversity, through improved and enhanced natural asset and resource management. 9. It can facilitate stakeholder involvement, participation and cooperation.
Danish 92 Group, 5 principles:	1. The equitable Green Economy, in its ambition, links to policies specifying clear goals for key crosscutting pre-requisites (enabling conditions) to address systemic distortions and dis-functionalities in order to establish the foundation for equitable transformation and achieving sustainable development. 2. The equitable Green Economy establishes clear objectives for the necessary means for action to be mobilised (technology, capacity, finance) and defines the approach, nature and profile of these means, e.g. the role of technology within the context of building an equitable Green Economy. 3. The equitable Green Economy creates the necessary aligned framework of institutions at all levels with clearly defined roles and mandates to enable them to actively advance an equitable Green Economy. 4. The equitable Green Economy is transparent and engages all involved and affected actors, with powerful actors having clearly defined responsibilities and forms of accountability, while making sure other stakeholders are empowered to act both as beneficiaries of and contributors to the Green Economy. 5. Decisions on the equitable Green Economy include clear timelines for action to achieve objectives, introduce new systems for measuring progression and success, and integrate the tracking of the well-being of people, places, and the planet.

WHAT WE PROPOSE	
Republic of Belarus	1. Further development of environmental legislation and applying of best practices in management of air, water, soil, wastes. 2. Enabling widening of organic farming sector, introduction of organic certification in the country and expanding the import of organic production 3. Promotion of eco-innovation solutions, based on high research potential of Republic of Belarus 4. Mitigation the consequences of climate change and providing support of adaptation measures using legislative and economic tools 5. Introduction of energy efficiency measures in urban areas of Republic of Belarus 6. Attracting foreign direct investments and promoting creation of green job.