

EDITORIAL - GREEN ECONOMY AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT: TOWARDS RESOURCE EFFICIENT AND CLIMATE RESPONSIVE AFRICAN SETTLEMENTS

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The multi-disciplinary nature of Public Administration is an important platform for the scholarly engagement on issues of multi-, inter- and trans-disciplinarity (MIT). Common problems confronting modern governments worldwide require scholars to facilitate high level engagements on these issues to consider their different dimensions. This MIT focus therefore could serve as a necessary dimension for enriching scholarly discourse on pertinent issues. This edition of the journal focuses on one of these discourses, climate change in the context of green economy transition, and the manner in which municipalities need to weigh their options in their regulatory function.

Municipalities remain major players in the green economy transition space. Within their jurisdiction, municipalities establish conditions for investments and inform both private and public sector behaviour that result in innovative ideas and the scaling up of technologies that emerge therefrom. To this end, municipalities the world over have taken decisions shaping the rules of engagement in the green economy transition agenda as informed, especially, by the need to mitigate against the negative impacts of climate change through low carbon policies and to enhance settlement resilience by instituting climate adaptation policies. While cities take up a small percentage of the world's surface area, they consume the bulk of its resources resulting in severe greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, leading to global warming and climate change extreme events such as floods, droughts, wild fires and extreme snow, which lead to the destruction of livelihoods. Mainstreaming green economy, therefore, remains an inevitable concern for all responsible and responsive municipalities.

Put in simple terms, the green economy agenda focuses on moving global economies from being resource intensive to being resource efficient and responsible environmental stewards. This is an aspect municipalities are well placed to positively influence. Energy and water efficiency, appropriate management of waste streams, as well as movement towards sustainable development that leads to poverty eradication and job creation therefore become part of municipal mandates in transitioning to greener, low carbon and climate resilient economies.

Given the forgone, this issue focuses on and asks a single major question: To what extent have municipalities globally, and in Africa specifically, engaged the emerging green economy transition agenda? This question is paramount given that all projects, including green economy projects, are implemented at the local government level. In addition to the lead question highlighted, subsidiary questions are raised: How are national green economy policies being scaled down to the local government level? How are municipalities dealing with climate change adaptation and mitigation issues under the green economy dispensation? To what extent have municipalities embraced green procurement policies and strategies? To what extent have municipalities mainstreamed green economy into planning and building by-laws including those aimed at protecting wetlands? How many green jobs are being created and what are the current debates associated with green jobs creation? What political and social contestations exist in response to the green economy transition agenda? These are some of the questions papers in this special issue attempt to answer.

Understanding of the current practices, challenges and opportunities of the green economy in the Limpopo Province of South Africa is the key message in Nhemachena, Jonas and Karuaihe's paper. The paper, drawn from a baseline study, establishes that there is generally significant awareness of the green economy concept across the province, district and local municipalities. However, there remain gaps in terms of information gathering, storage and sharing of green economy activities across the municipalities, as well as at the provincial and national departments. The main barriers to the implementation of green economy initiatives in the municipalities include the lack of information; shortage of workers with full knowledge on green economy; shortage of training programmes on green economy; and costs of implementation. The main recommendations from the research include the need to improve awareness of green economy activities across all spatial levels in the province, especially within communities; a need for evidence-based research to demonstrate the potential of green economy activities' contribution to job creation and poverty reduction; and training of officials on how the green economy can contribute to addressing developmental challenges such as service delivery, job creation, local economic development and poverty reduction.

The concept of green infrastructure (GI) has emerged internationally as an approach for cities to start rethinking sustainable development strategies in urban areas, and providing more resource efficient infrastructure options. The GI concept is investigated in Bobbins and Culwick's paper, which focuses on the Gauteng City-Region (GCR) of South Africa. The GI concept is presented first as a set of natural and man-made ecological systems that provide services to society, such as flood attenuation, water and air filtration, and microclimate regulation, which can be used as an alternative or as partner to traditional infrastructure. As infrastructure policies are central to the implementation of a successful green growth strategy, GI offers a new approach to providing cost-effective and efficient infrastructure,

while meeting green growth objectives. The paper explores the potential for GI to meet green growth commitments in the GCR. These concepts have been unpacked through a GI CityLab – a platform of engagement that draws together insights from government officials and academics – that collaboratively explores how GI can be applied to government planning in the GCR. The CityLab findings highlight that while there is potential for GI to help deliver infrastructure and services in a more sustainable and cost-effective way, there are significant barriers to the uptake of this approach. The paper concludes by positing that to overcome these barriers, local case studies and suitable Geographical Information System (GIS) databases need to be developed to facilitate the incorporation of GI into policy and planning in the GCR.

Owusu Agyepong and Nhamo's work sought to determine the extent to which green procurement is practised in the South African metropolitan municipalities. The study found that there are mainly two categories of metropolitan municipalities, namely, older and younger ones. The older metropolitans use different policies to convey the green procurement discourse. Such policies include the Supply Chain Management Policies of the City of Cape Town and eThekweni; the Environmental Policy from the City of Cape Town, City of Tshwane and Ekurhuleni; Waste Management Policy of the City of Cape Town and the Energy and Climate Change Policy from Ekurhuleni. Whereas the older metropolitans have made efforts to include green procurement in selected policies, the younger metropolitans are yet to do so. Regardless of the policy status accorded to green procurement by the older metropolitans, the study found that the implementation of green procurement through tender decision, call for tender and the actual procurement is not imminent as evidenced by over 70% of the respondents. This indicates a gap that exists between policies and implementation.

Similarly, local government and green jobs creation potential in South Africa is the subject matter of Moyo's paper. Metropolitan municipalities are the focus of the study because of their central role both as contributors to the climate change problem as well as their potential in providing solutions to the challenge. Since most of the nation's industrial activities are also located in these metros, they are largely responsible for the high carbon emissions that contribute to climate change. The paper explores how four metropolitan municipalities have responded to the government's green economy agenda and further makes attempts to identify opportunities for green jobs creation. Based on a desktop study, the paper finds that although most of the selected metropolitans have already developed visions and strategic plans that integrate the green economy agenda into their integrated development and spatial planning processes, and scored some significant successes on aspects of those plans, implementation of their green strategies largely remains limited. However, the green activities that they have embarked on indicate that there are prospects for the creation of green jobs. The work recommends institutional, technical and financial support to metropolitans in order to improve

the implementation of their green strategies. They also need to improve reporting on progress on green job creation.

Mukonza and Mukonza explore the implementation of green economy policies and initiatives in the City of Tshwane, South Africa. The authors contend that the advent of climate change and green economy has created a need to have policies that address these issues, and subsequently such policies have been enacted. In South Africa, the national government and some municipalities have taken steps to ensure a smooth transition into a green economy. As a result, policies and regulations have been enacted and promoted. The article examines the implementation of green economy policies using a case study approach. The 5-C framework used in the paper recognises five variables in the implementation process, namely, context, content, commitment, capacity, clients and coalitions that act together, often simultaneously and synergistically, but always in a complex fashion, to create both opportunities and challenges for policy implementation. The results reveal that a number of initiatives, such as green buildings, green transport and green procurement, have been implemented. However, the authors argue that although there is demonstrable capacity by the city to transition to a green economy, more still needs to be done to ensure significant change is attained.

In their article, Mutisi and Nhamo focus on the blue in the green economy. The article addresses an emerging term that speaks of the importance of water and wetlands in the green economy. The research sought to assess the extent of wetland degradation with respect to land use change, particularly housing and agriculture developments in Belvedere North and Epworth in Harare, Zimbabwe. The article established that wetlands have been severely degraded by anthropogenic activities with housing developments and urban agriculture as the major contributors to this degradation. The article concludes that an integrated land use approach has the potential of minimising wetland loss and degradation in the said locations and possibly other similar localities in the country.

Joshua, *et al.* explore rural-urban linkages in order to address temporal and spatial dynamics of vulnerability to climate change using Blantyre city as a case study. The study sought to assess how different groupings of urban consumers access their food and how they are impacted by climate change risks. The study established that food consumed in Blantyre city largely originates from rural areas of the Blantyre district (e.g. 80% maize), some districts in the southern region, other parts of Malawi, and other countries. The food is mostly accessed through market purchase and partially own production in surrounding rural areas. The study also established that household food security assessment at the local government level mostly links quantities of food in markets with household stocks, regardless of variations in the purchasing power of different categories of urban food consumers. Based on these findings, the authors recommend that the local government should recognise the significance of urban people's vulnerability to climate change and variability linked to rural-urban agricultural and food flows,

and that city development policies should cushion food insecurity at local levels.

A pro-poor strategy for the emerging green economy is addressed through a case study of Marubini Multi-Purpose Women's Co-operative in Maila, Limpopo, South Africa. This article by Musyoki and Tinarwo commences by providing a theoretical underpinning of what comprises a green economy. In their view, a green economy is envisaged to bring about changes in the patterns of production and consumption, in order to lower damaging environmental consequences while addressing poverty and inequality. Firstly, the article reviews green economy-related policy to show the extent of social development considerations; secondly, using a case study approach from Limpopo, the article illustrates how a pro-poor, socially-inclusive renewable natural resource-driven green economy initiative may be achieved. Reviews of the policies reflect a commitment towards a socially responsive green economy. It is, however, argued in this article that the policy interpretation and implementation may fail to address the poverty and inequality that the poor and especially many rural women face. The case study demonstrates that through targeted interventions driven by the women themselves it is possible to take advantage of the emerging green economy to address social development issues through renewable energy programmes.

Kalanzi considers wetlands in Uganda. These resources in Uganda are estimated to occupy 10% of the total area of the country and the government is a contracting party to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands. In order to ensure effective conservation of all environment resources, local governments in Uganda are mandated to protect and regulate the environment resources within their jurisdiction. This article seeks to examine the contribution of local governments to the conservation of wetlands in Uganda using Wakiso District local government as a case study. The article further investigates challenges faced by local governments in the management of wetlands. The findings revealed the following contributions made by Wakiso of local government in the conservation of wetlands: screening of development projects, training in natural resource management, community sensitisation, establishment of wetland management committees, and the formation of wetland user groups. The challenges faced in the conservation of wetlands in Wakiso included the question of wetland ownership, policy failure, population pressure, and demand for agricultural land. The article recommends the following strategies: strict enforcement of laws and policies, continuous environmental education at community level, vigorous appraisal of technical proposals on wetlands, harmonisation of the tenure system on wetlands, and demarcating of wetland.