

**Kingdom of Morocco
Royal Institute of Strategic Studies**

SEMINAR

**Strategic Option of Green Economy:
Opportunities and Challenges for morocco**

Introduction by

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Ladies and Gentlemen

It is with great pleasure that we welcome you today at the Royal Institute for Strategic Studies (IRES) for today's seminar, which we devote to an issue that lies at the heart of debate on development models worldwide. It is the option of a green economy which will be tackled in terms of opportunities and challenges it raises for Morocco.

Let me first emphasize that the thematic discussed today is an essential component of the study program "Global competitiveness and positioning of Morocco in globalized system," taking into consideration the direct effects of the green economy in terms of competitive advantages, including all that concerns energy efficiency, optimal use of scarce resources such as water, not to mention its compatibility with the increasing consumers' requirement of green products in major export markets.

In addition, this theme is an extension of several studies conducted by the IRES relative to its study program "Climate Change Impacts on Morocco and comprehensive adaptation options". This theme highlighted the importance of using modes of production and consumption, while in the mean time promoting the maintenance of a very fragile environment balance (ecosystem productive base of agriculture, air quality, urbanization and coastal development, etc.).

Studies conducted by the IRES and the International Meeting organized by the Institute in October 2009 on this subject have identified country's vulnerability factors to climate change and identified the strategic options to adapt the Moroccan development trajectory to the new environmental data.

Ladies and Gentlemen

The international financial and economic crisis has returned the issue of the environment to the political and economic agenda. The global crisis has revealed that the growth systems are far from sustainable. This is evident if we take into consideration the many negative externalities generated by the strong alteration of the environmental equilibrium.

To this end, the "green" economy is now seen as one of the ways out from the current crisis and a possible answer to the imbalances caused by the economic classic growth model. This option appears therefore as a pathway for the future and an integral part of the economic competitiveness.

As an illustration, we mention the renewable energy sector, which already employs 2.3 million workers worldwide, and which will employ 20 million by 2030 (ILO, 2008). The global market of "Environmental goods and services" could reach more than 2740 billion in 2020, accounting for a growth of 10% per year.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Although it is a country of low greenhouse gas emission, Morocco has included the option of a green economy as an option to take advantage of the strategic opportunities that are associated with it in terms of growth and jobs opportunities, preserving the sustainability of its development model and preparing for new imperatives of "green competitiveness".

In this perspective, several sectors give us real opportunities to generate additional revenue and create new jobs, while respecting the environmental requirements. Besides renewable

energy, we have the economic activities related to biodiversity, agriculture, forestry, marine activities and eco-tourism; activities related to the management of chemicals and waste, cities, constructions and low-carbon transport.

In sum, to anchor the green economy we need:

- To strengthen the skills needed to develop the green economy.
- To raise awareness of the opportunities that can be derived from green economy to promote responsible citizenship, while thinking of what actions we can take to involve environmental education from the early years of schooling.
- To rethink the modes of production (including agriculture) to ensure the country's food security and thus position the country as a key producer into the organic agricultural sectors.
- To develop clean technologies (renewable energy, biomass, wastewater reuse, biological control, ways of adaptation to farming techniques, genetic adaptation of cultivated species biological cycles to the expected climate cycles, etc.) and products with low carbon content.
- To anticipate the emergence of new international trade restrictions brought about by measures taken to fight against climate change. It is in this case "obstacles of substitution", caused by the transfer of tariff barriers and the quota to health, social and climate barriers, etc.
- To establish, possibly, tax and / or financial incentives to support the green economy.

Ladies and Gentlemen

To be able to have a thorough examination of various aspects of issues related to Moroccan sustainable development model, including the various options anchoring the green economy, the elements of response have to be made according to the following questions:

- What are the expected benefits from the green economy for the Kingdom? What are the capabilities gained by the country and those required in this area?
- What lessons should we infer from the best international practices in terms of converting to green economy?
- What public policy measures should be adopted in order to transform into opportunities the environmental constraints and create an adaptation framework to the economic, social and institutional plan?

Those are some questions that will lead our discussion. The presence today of a panel of national and international experts, composed of representatives of government departments, international organizations, private sector, civil society and academics is an opportunity for us to discuss opportunities brought about to Morocco from the green economy and an opportunity for the country to strengthen its global competitiveness at the international level.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Before I sum up, I would like to express my sincere thanks to the presenters and all participants for accepting our invitation.