CONCEPT NOTE

Investing Natural Capital:
A Three-part Series of Events at Rio +20

Hosted by the African Development Bank, Asian Development Bank,
Inter-American Development Bank and WWF

When: June 16 – 22, 2012

Where: Rio Conventions Pavilion and RioCentro
Rio +20 Conference, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Drafted by WWF US
(May 30, 2012)

I. Objective:

The Rio +20 UN Conference on Sustainable Development will bring the world together to update our global vision of how to achieve a better future founded on social equity and economic and environmental sustainability. In the course of two weeks, Rio participants will deliberate policies, witness concrete commitments for change and share in a global ‘marketplace of ideas’ on how we can set a new course for sustainable development in a changing world. During the global preparations for Rio, long-term, stable and equitable access to food, water and energy has emerged as a top priority, and with it, the recognition that this can only be achieved through “best practice” management of the natural capital and ecosystems services upon which humanity depends — those natural assets embodied in the world’s forests, watersheds and oceans.

In a sequence of collaborative events to be held during the Rio +20 Conference, the Asian Development Bank (ADB), African Development Bank (AfDB) and Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and WWF will help showcase some of the most important ‘Natural Capital Partnerships’ making a difference in the world today. The events will provide a range of nations and their partners with an opportunity to highlight their extraordinary initiatives and increase global awareness of how best practices in securing and enhancing vital natural capital are currently evolving across Africa, Asia and Latin America today. The events will facilitate a south-south exchange of knowledge, methodologies and ideas that can help generate the kinds of integrated frameworks, innovative approaches, and collaborative strategies needed to secure natural capital and ecosystem services for our sustainable future.

II. General Concept:

Global economic and social development depends on the continued productivity of inter-connected ecological systems. Intact, healthy and diverse natural ecosystems provide water, energy, food, and livelihoods to human populations, especially the rural poor — who are generally left with no other sustainable recourse. These ecosystems also provide resilience against the increasingly evident and powerful impacts of climate change. Maintaining and enhancing the integrity and productivity of these ecological systems requires deeper and more ambitious collaboration in diverse partnerships coordinated through a range of institutional frameworks, and across multiple landscapes and countries.
Countries around the globe have found Rio+20 to be a catalyst for change, inspiring many to reframe their development strategies to identify, protect and invest in their natural capital and the ecological functionality that drives nature’s productivity. This vision of natural ecosystems as a core source of wealth and development represents a change in our articulation of sustainable development. Countries, civil society and the private sector are reassessing the environmental pillars that support societies and economic prospects. They are making the tough decisions on trade-offs that will need to take place as countries invest in and secure the natural capital and ecosystem services that support the well-being of billions of people around the world.

The Regional Development Banks and WWF will coordinate a series of events profiling key initiatives from each continent that bring to life the UNSCD themes. They take place in regions endowed with some of each continent’s most strategic natural assets – the wealth inherited from nature that underpins the health, security and the well-being of its population. These initiatives demonstrate leadership and a commitment to action on the ground while at the same time highlighting the importance of developing integrated approaches to building the green economies of tomorrow while addressing the complex challenges of today.

III. Description of Events:

The series of events will take place within both the Rio Conventions Pavilion in the ‘Athletes’ Park’ and RioCentro during the final week of the Conference. It will provide a variety of platforms for nations and their partners to showcase some of the most significant and inspiring milestones in their transitions to green economies, and to announce their specific commitments for change and innovation. These countries are experiencing first hand the challenges caused by global economic aspirations – challenges faced both by people and the environment they depend on. They are beginning to deploy ingenious solutions adapted to their unique combination of cultures, natural assets and socio-economic aspirations.

The series will consist of a targeted selection of presentations and dialogues, each reaching out to priority audiences in both the conference center and the Rio Conventions Pavilion. A multi-media campaign (see below) will tie together a story line for each region and across all three. The events will be organized to include a range of experiential formats, such as exhibitions, panel discussions, presentations, and a presidential-level event and a reception. This will allow a significant number of governments and their partners (development and funding agencies, corporations and other civil society organizations) to make commitments and profile their work within the overarching framework of food, water and energy security for all.

IV. Audience and Participants:

VIPs and Key Participants
- Heads of State
- Ministers of partner governments
- Heads of regional development banks and other international financial organizations
- Heads of civil society organizations

Target Audience
- Priority partner governments within globally outstanding landscapes/seascapes
- Regional Development Banks and other international financial organizations
- Civil society organizations working with the Regional Banks, WWF and other partners
- Key corporate sector organizations, particularly those involved in resource use/extraction within the landscapes/seascapes
- Media
V. Information Sharing

A brochure in electronic form will be produced and made available for each continent characterizing the natural capital and ecosystems services at the foundation of the region’s future development. A ‘menu’ of the event series describing the stream of events at Rio and the partners involved will be made available using our various information dissemination outlets. It will map out their content, speakers, time, venue and features of the Rio Conventions Pavilion. We will also extensively employ social media such as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and blogs both to drive people to the sessions, and share information and inspiration as widely as possible.

VI. Series of Events

A. RioCentro

Session 1: Panel Event, June 18, 2012, 11:30-13:00


This global event is the first in a two-part series on investing in Natural Capital. It will profile some of the most innovative sustainable development partnerships investing in natural capital today as they pave the way toward green growth and green economies on three continents. Governments from Africa, Asia and Latin America will profile integrated, collaborative and large-scale approaches at the cutting edge of a new wave of policies and practices aimed at maintaining and enhancing natural capital and ecosystem services - the essential building blocks of a sustainable future.

The event will be articulated around the following case studies:

1. Greater Mekong Subregion Program Framework: Recently approved by countries from the Mekong River basin (Cambodia, China, Laos PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, Viet Nam), this collaborative regional program lays the foundation for a Green Economy for the sub-region. Based on over 20 years of cooperation, the GMS countries have tested and embraced a wide range of green economy principles. They will describe their new comprehensive program for securing the rich biodiversity and ecosystem services of key economic corridors across the region.

2. Mexico water conservation management plan will be detailed by representatives of the Government of Mexico. Mexico’s National Water Commission (CONAGUA), the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) and WWF have established a water reserves initiative in Mexico for environmental security. It will secure the resources necessary to maintain adequate ecosystem functions across the nation. Establishing a water sources protection framework based on a water reserves strategy is a key action in the implementation of Mexico’s long-term sustainable and adaptive water policy vision; the recently launched Water Agenda 2030.

3. Eastern Africa collaboration to secure common marine and coastal forest resources. The three countries, Kenya, Tanzania and Mozambique, are embarking on a new of regional cooperation to develop a coalition for a Coastal East Africa Green Economy Initiative.
B. Rio Conventions Pavilion

Session 2: Panel Event, June 19, 2012, 15:15-16:45

Investing in Natural Capital in Africa, Asia and Latin America: Partnerships, Policies and Investments

Global economic and social development depends on the continued productivity of inter-connected ecological systems. Intact, healthy and diverse natural ecosystems provide water, energy, food, livelihoods, and resilience to climate change – the essential building blocks of our sustainable future. Maintaining and enhancing the integrity and productivity of this natural capital requires collaboration at many scales and through a range of institutional frameworks.

This event is the second in a two-part Rio +20 series profiling some of the world’s most innovative partnerships at the forefront of the movement to restore, maintain and enhance natural capital. Speakers from governments in Mexico, Coastal Eastern Africa, and the Heart of Borneo region in Asia will profile significant and inspiring milestones in this process, highlighting comprehensive strategies, new policies, and best practices currently being planned and implemented at national and multi-national levels. International development partners will join the speakers to discuss trends in financing the transition to Green Economies in a closing panel discussion.

1. Greening the Economies of Three Coastal Nations of Eastern Africa: Three nations of Coastal Eastern Africa have initiated a process of integration and collaboration necessary to realize shared ambitions towards a Green Economy and effective use of their rich natural capital for sustainable development.

2. Green Economy and Natural Capital Partnership in the Heart of Borneo. The Green Economy Corridor is an example of a Natural Capital Partnership in the Heart of Borneo, as well as an innovative partnership approach to using economic valuation of natural capital and REDD+ financing to incentivize the transition towards a Green Economy in Kalimantan, Indonesia.

3. State-of-the-Art Water Resources and Environmental Management in Mexico. Mexico’s National Water Commission (CONAGUA) has established a water reserves initiative in Mexico for environmental security. It will secure the resources necessary to maintain adequate ecosystem functions across the nation. Establishing a water sources protection framework based on a water reserves strategy is a key action in the implementation of Mexico’s long-term sustainable and adaptive water policy vision; the recently launched Water Agenda 2030.

C. Rio Conventions Pavilion

Evening Reception: June 19, 2012, 17:15 – 19:00


President Armando Guebuza of Mozambique will be the keynote speaker at the panel event and reception on June 19th where he will announce the launch of Mozambique’s Roadmap to a Green Economy. The plan will cover national strategies to apply green economy principles to the development of cities, agriculture, and energy
sources, and to invest in maintaining and enhancing their natural capital, including a fully representative terrestrial and marine multi-use protected area network. The plan will be developed and implemented in collaboration with key partners around the world, such as the host government of the conference, Brazil. Mozambique will continue working with its neighbors to coordinate measures that secure shared natural capital and ecosystem services in the marine and terrestrial realms.

The panel discussion will be moderated by Jim Leape, Director General of WWF. Congratulatory speeches will be made by senior representatives from the Government of Brazil, French Development Agency, GEF, UNEP, etc.

Guests: Approximately 100 high-level invitees, including representatives from the African Development Bank, Asian Development Bank and Inter-American Development Bank, the Governments of Brazil, Tanzania and Kenya are expected to attend. Other institutions represented will include the major development partner organizations involved in Mozambique’s green economy plan moving forward, NGOs involved in the region, and private sector actors such as the Coca-Cola Company actively working with the governments of the region and their citizens on maintaining healthy productive ecosystems.