



Wednesday, 19 October 2011

Cross Cutting Session 3

Green Jobs: Investing in Green Employment: Strategy behind green jobs initiatives

Synopsis: With 205 million people unemployed worldwide, and 1.5 billion more jobs vulnerable, countries across the globe are introducing measures for job creation. Many of these initiatives highlight green jobs as a main prerogative in generating employment in order to build a strong, sustainable economic future. These initiatives need substantial investment and targeted strategies in order to be realized to their full potential and North America is looking to lead the way. By 2020 there will be a skill mismatch as worker training will be an issue to clean energy. The aim is to create jobs in the US by doing better in creating distinctive advantages. Therefore an economic motivation of looking at what constitutes a green job as defined by BLS and OED.

During this session, speakers discussed the importance of investing in Green Employment and the strategy behind green job initiatives. According to moderator **Margareta Strand Ranges**, Deputy Director of BlueGreen Alliance, investing in environmental solution is the fastest and most efficient way to strengthen the US economy, put people back to work and reduce our emission in the process. With a recession hitting hard the US and the global economy, Strand Ranges remarked, questions sticking out have been whether the clean energy economy and the so-called green jobs can be a way out and provide the economic and employment growth needed; what are green jobs; how to support emerging industries and what is role of the government? From international perspective, another pending question has been how does a global competitiveness model encourage a clean energy economy, said the moderator.

Meanwhile, Speaker **Jon Creyts**, Principal of McKinsey & Company, stressed that jobs are the most pressing economic challenge for America with over 4 millions people having been unemployed for over a year. Creyts cited a recent report by think tank McKinsey Global Institute, according to which the US economy needs to create 21 million jobs in order to regain full employment by 2020. In the context of this challenge the prospect of recreating US energy and resources infrastructures stands as a compelling job creation opportunity, said Creyts. As the US nation

migrates towards an efficient and emission free alternatives, three opportunities are particularly relevant to the scale of unemployment faced today, said Creyts – namely energy efficiency, distribution infrastructure and clean energy generation. Energy efficiency is a compelling focus for green jobs creation because it is an investment with a clear return, said Creyts, again quoting the McKinsey Global Institute, which suggests that capturing all attractive energy efficiency options in the US by 2020 would cost roughly USD \$500 billion while yielding approximately USD \$1.2 trillion in profits, while also achieving to create up to half a million direct and indirect jobs over the next 10 years.

Speaker **Jonathan Rothwell**, Senior Research Analyst, Metropolitan Policy Program, The Brookings Institution, meanwhile, reminded that the US Bureau of Labour Statistics has recently made public definitions for the notions of “green economy” and “green jobs.” These definitions focus on the production mode, said Rothwell, making a green job one that adds value to a product benefitting the environment.