
GREEN GROWTH OFFERS COMMERCIALY VIABLE OPPORTUNITIES FOR FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND SMES IN AFRICA #GREENFINANCEGHANA

Accra, Ghana 21st November 2017

In a continent where Green Finance has been unreachable for numerous SMEs, the conversation on the opportunities in the region could not have come at a better time. Issues around the commercialisation of green projects and solutions available, the role of Financial institutions in promoting green finance as well as the need to create a conducive environment for the growth of Green finance and green energy are centre to the future of Africa's sustainability.

The African Guarantee Fund (AGF), the International Trade Centre (ITC) and the Nordic Development Fund (NDF) held the Green Finance Conference on 21 November 2017 at the Mövenpick Ambassador Hotel in Accra, Ghana. Key discussions zeroed in on creating a conducive environment for green finance; the role of commercial and development finance institutions, products and services in the sector and challenges and opportunities in undertaking green energy projects.

"At the African Guarantee Fund, we believe the development of SMEs is one of the principle solutions to fostering environmental sustainability and more inclusive growth in African countries. This conference aims to highlight the positive financial and environmental benefits to be gained through opportunities in the Green Economy," said Mr. David Ekabouma, AGF's Head of Business Development.

Being a member of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) the Government of Ghana has acknowledged its vulnerability to climate risks and the challenges of climate change present for economic development. Mr. Fimpong Kwarteng Amaning the Director, Real Sector Division from the Ministry of Finance, represented the Honorable Minister of Finance at the event.

He said, "We are witnesses to impact of erratic rainfall on our agriculture sector, its impact on generation of hydroelectric power; we are aware of the occurrences of seasonal flooding that affect our cities and villages and the toll on life and property, and the destruction of our physical infrastructure; we have witnessed how coastal villages and coastal urban communities are gradually being washed away. These challenges have negative implication for economic growth, fiscal management, and macroeconomic stability, and if no action is taken now, the cost of doing it in future will be prohibitive and counterproductive to our quest for [rapid] socio-economic development."

This Green Finance Conference builds on the 2016 launch of a green guarantee product by AGF and joint work by all three organizing institutions to expand access to finance for green growth-focused small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Africa.

"We are behind this event 100%. This green finance partnership with AGF and ITC sends a strong signal to the financial sector that the green investment opportunity in Africa is real and growing," said Mr. Pasi Hellman, Managing Director, Nordic Development Fund. He added, "We will continue to support this work, leveraging NDF's mix of financing instruments for maximum impact toward the growth of a vibrant green economy in the region."

Also present during the conference was Anders Aeroe, Director, DEI, International Trade Centre who said:

"The Government of Ghana has repeatedly noted in its many policy directives that economic

growth can only be meaningful if it is inclusive and sustainable. Based on today's knowledge and technologies, we can create profitable innovative opportunities while mitigating greenhouse gas emissions, adapting to climate change, and reducing waste and pollution. That's why promoting green business models and green trade must be at the heart of all we do and why access to the financing required for green projects is so important at this time.

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ABOUT US:

African Guarantee Fund Officially launched on 1 June 2012, the African Guarantee Fund is a pan-African non-bank financial institution established by the African Development Bank (AfDB), the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA) and the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID). It was later joined by the French Development Agency (AFD) and Nordic Development Fund (NDF). AGF's primary mandate is to assist financial institutions in Africa to scale up their SME financing through the provision of partial loan guarantees and capacity development assistance. In 2016, AGF launched a green guarantee facility aimed at unlocking finance for SMEs investing in low carbon, green growth and climate resilient development.

Nordic Development Fund Established by Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden in 1989, NDF is a joint Nordic finance institution focusing exclusively on climate change and development in low income countries. It supports public and private sector led climate finance operations across Africa, Asia and Latin America and became an AGF shareholder in 2016 with the launch of the green guarantee facility.

International Trade Centre ITC is the joint agency of the World Trade Organization and the United Nations. ITC assists small and medium-sized enterprises in developing and transition economies to become more competitive in global markets, thereby contributing to sustainable economic development within the frameworks of the Aid-for-Trade agenda and the Global Goals for Sustainable Development.