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## 基調講演 2 / -Key Lecture 2-

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### Green Economy in a Blue World

#### - Implementing sustainable development in Wetlands of Southeast Asia-

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Over the last decade or so, the idea of “greening the economy” has gained traction among many governments, civil society and even the private sector. Often lead by UN agencies such as ESCAP and UNEP, countries formulated “green-growth strategies” to foster human-well-being and social equity while simultaneously reducing environmental risk and ecological degradation.

While the provision of clean and safe water was identified as a key-issue early on, many of the the key strategy papers and read-maps aiming to provide guidance in the process of greening the economies fail to mention the critical role of wetlands in this. Only very recently there is a growing understanding of the importance to recognize the value of ecosystem services provided by wetlands in development planning and decision making in public and private investment planning. The recognition of wetland functions in managing the availability of water, supporting climate change mitigation and adaptation, protecting coasts and contributing to local development and livelihoods has given rise to ideas such as green and blue infrastructure. Attempts in assessing the potential contribution of wetlands to the economy has lead to estimates of wetlands values of over one million US-dollar per hectare per year. With these tremendous values, maintaining and restoring wetlands are seen as opportunities to save costs as compared to man-made infrastructure solutions. The ensuing paradigm that the ecological well-being of wetlands is critical for ensuring sustained human well-being is somewhat challenged by the fact, that some of the poorest and most marginalized people and communities are living in and around wetland areas and depend on the resources provided by wetlands for their livelihoods. Conservation and rehabilitation of wetlands and their integration into local economies as green infrastructure thus raises questions of social and economic equity and the distribution and allocation of benefits arising from wetlands.

In its efforts to improve wetlands management and reverse trends of wetlands degradation, the Wetlands Alliance thus focuses on poverty alleviation first before engaging local communities in conservation and rehabilitation efforts. Diversifying and improving livelihoods of wetland-dependent communities is seen by the Alliance partners as an entry point and key to fostering local sustainable development by balancing human and ecological well-being. The local interventions by Wetlands Alliance partners demonstrate how seemingly disconnected livelihood and conservation initiatives are integrated through implementing an ecosystem approach to local development in selected wetland areas in Southeast Asia.