

URUGUAY

2017-2022

RESULTS FACTSHEET

OVERVIEW

Over the last decade, Uruguay has demonstrated strong economic growth as well as continuous improvements in social development, yet its economy remains vulnerable to oscillations in the global market. Exports rely on primary sectors such as agriculture and livestock, which are intense in the use of natural resources.

The National Constitution recognizes the general importance of environmental protection and the government is committed to sustainable development and green economy in pursuit of higher income, job creation, poverty reduction, equality and bioeconomy. Notably, in 2017, 98% of the electricity consumed in Uruguay came from a combination of renewable energy sources and sustainability governance has been strengthened by creation of the National Secretariat of Environment, Water and Climate Change, an Office of the Presidency.

Currently, Uruguay is immersed in several development planning processes, including the preparation of the Uruguay 2050 Agenda and the National Development Strategy, the National Agenda for Infrastructure, and the National Environmental Plan for Sustainable Development. The partnership with PAGE not only informs these policymaking processes, but also helps to strengthen planning capacities to seize opportunities and build resilience, while embracing the principles of inclusive green economy.

PAGE's work in Uruguay is contributing to Sustainable Development Goals 8, 12, 13 and 17, as well as Uruguay's Nationally Determined Contributions to the Paris Agreement.



STORY OF RESULTS

Mobilizing stakeholders around the National Development Strategy

PAGE was launched in Uruguay in April 2017 at the third Regional Exchange and Practitioner Dialogue Forum on Inclusive Green Economy in Latin America and the Caribbean. This event gathered representatives from over 140 relevant public institutions, academia, the private sector and civil society, as well as from nine countries in the region, and provided a space for dialogue and knowledge-exchange regarding economic transformation and its potential to engender sustainable development. A planning workshop was subsequently held in July 2017 to discuss PAGE's role in catalysing the green economy transition in the country, focusing on clean technologies, healthy ecosystems, qualified green labour and ensuring policy coherence and efficacy. PAGE's work in Uruguay developed from the results of this workshop.

Overall, PAGE has been working with national partners to ensure that green economy and circular economy

at the forefront of development planning. To support this process, PAGE is working closely with the Office of Planning and Budget, an Office of the Presidency, collaborating on the long-term policy *Uruguay 2050 Agenda* and the National Development Strategy. This collaboration is focused on scenario analyses for greening value chains prioritized by the Office of Planning and Budget, starting with forest-wood cellulose. For this value chain, PAGE will focus on quantitative analyses, including environmental and climate change dimensions.

Previous to PAGE's engagement in Uruguay, the analytical study, *Towards a Green Economy in Uruguay: Enabling Conditions and Opportunities*, was conducted by the University of the Republic, the government of Uruguay, UN Environment and GIZ. The study identified several priority areas within green economy, including agriculture, livestock, tourism and transport and provided substantial entry points for PAGE's work in the country.

Evidence-based sectoral and thematic reforms in line with green economy priorities

Uruguay has embraced the concept of circular economy, given its potential to generate new businesses and jobs in an environmentally-conscious way. To contribute to its development, PAGE is engaged at different levels.

First, PAGE has facilitated the mainstreaming of circular economy into the overarching programme Transforma Uruguay, which is focused on promoting a productive transformation of the country's economy with the main goal of increasing competitiveness.

PAGE is actively engaged with the project BioValor, which aims to transform the waste generated from small towns and agricultural and agro-industrial activities into energy and/or raw materials and supplies. The objective of this transformation is to develop a sustainable model of low emissions through the development and transfer of appropriate technologies.

PAGE is also involved with the promotion of sustainable production and services and is collaborating with national partners on the greening of the activities of micro-, small-, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs)— which represent the largest productive activity in terms of employment—and on the promotion of sustainable production and services.

Building individual and institutional capacity for inclusive green economy

Knowledge and skills development can play a major role in creating socially inclusive solutions to

green economy challenges. With this in mind, PAGE has conducted a Green Economy Learning Needs Assessment to identify learning gaps that must be addressed in order to build a critical mass of individuals with green economy knowledge and skills. Building on this, PAGE, in close collaboration with national counterparts, will elaborate the Capacity Strengthening and Formation Plan in Inclusive and Green by the first half of 2019. Going forward, PAGE also plans to institutionalize green economy training into the curricula of the National Institute for Employment and Professional Training, which has a reach of over 100,000 individuals, including labour unions and civil servants.

To build sector-specific green economy capacity that supports the development of Uruguay's circular economy, PAGE is working in three principal areas. First, PAGE Uruguay delivered training to technicians from the public and private sectors on the analysis and identification of waste recovery opportunities in the context of global value chains, followed by the elaboration of four sectoral studies of international markets for repurposed materials and value-added waste. Second, PAGE is working to build the capacity of trainers in Uruguay on cleaner production practices and labour formalization. This work is complemented by an online course on cleaner production and labour formalization for MSMEs, which is contributing to creating a skill base for the inclusive green economy transition. Finally, PAGE has designed and is leading the implementation of software solutions that can have a transformative role in improving the management and energy efficiency of MSMEs in the country.

LOOKING FORWARD: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

To leverage its potential for sustainable, green grown, Uruguay must develop innovative solutions that can keep pace with fast-moving social and technological challenges and provide new, sustainable business opportunities. In particular, Uruguay faces the ongoing challenge of how to incorporate sustainability principles into the development of its industrial and services sectors, while generating decent jobs and producing a skilled workforce. By strengthening multisectoral capacity across different dimensions of inclusive green economy, PAGE can contribute to achieving this goal. There are also many opportunities for PAGE to support knowledge generation and technical exchange, including around resource efficiency in informal activities, which support the achievement of international commitments the SDGs and Uruguay's NDC.

Uruguay has proven itself to be a country with a collaborative and cooperative spirit. Going forward, inter-ministerial coordination and the high level of interest and engagement from the Office of Planning and Budget will provide key opportunities to ensure a sustainable future, for example, by facilitating the adoption and implementation of the Uruguay 2050 Agenda and the National Development Strategy. Its engagement with PAGE also puts Uruguay in contact with a wide range of global green economy initiatives, which can serve both as an inspiration to improve national processes and as a means to showcase Uruguay's green economy transition and exchange experiences.



Since its inception in 2013, The Partnership for Action on Green Economy (PAGE) has grown into a prominent alliance of five UN agencies, eight funding partners, and eighteen countries that work together to transform economies into drivers of sustainability.

Thanks to this integrated approach and support of a wide range of partners, PAGE is increasingly recognized as a model to deliver coordinated support to countries for achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and targets of the Paris Agreement.

MORE INFORMATION ON PAGE URUGUAY:

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