Driving a Green Economy Through Ecopreneurs

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Abstract: As an economic model, the green economy aims to reduce environmental risks while promoting sustainable development. Ecopreneurs are entrepreneurs whose business efforts are not only driven by profit maximization, but also by a concern for environmental sustainability. The aim of the ecoentrepreneur is to establish a successful business that fulfills market needs and secures financial stability by considering sustainability concepts. In this framework, the green economy and ecopreneurship are closely interrelated, as both aim to create environmentally friendly ecosystems. As part of the *Ecopreneurs Project**, this study aims to provide an ecopreneur profile structure, and related competence areas by considering sustainability priorities. In this research, workshop, desk research, focus group, and survey methodologies are performed by the project partnering countries, which are the Netherlands, Spain, Greece, Turkiye, Romania, and Sweden. The results show five ecopreneur profiles based on industry focus: eco-venturing/manufacturing, agro-tourism, eco-hospitality, eco-transportation, and eco-construction. While environmental issues are determined to be relatively the highest priority, it can be said that other sustainability issues—economic, social, short-term, medium-term and long-term—have almost the same level of priority, i.e., medium and high priority. Additionally, the results of the competence matrix show that among the given competences, working in a team and effective problem solving are relatively more important than other competences.

Keywords: ecopreneur, green economy, sustainability