

GreenEcoNet Project Fact Sheet

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PROJECT PARTNERS



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Background

The European Commission (EC), to further contribute to the Rio+20 agenda, undertakes a range of activities to accelerate the transition towards a green economy. An important goal of these activities is to assist business communities in greening their operations. This requires a clear understanding of green business opportunities and associated costs, as well as of how to plan, design and operationalize greening of businesses. Familiarity with these aspects among business communities is often limited, though, for two reasons:

The wider business community is insufficiently familiar with “best-in-class green practice” enterprises, which limits the learning potential from proven practice.

Research often models the benefits and costs of green economic transitions, but insufficiently addresses the everyday business practices.

To address the challenge of spreading green business practices among European enterprises, a consortium of six European organisations has taken the initiative, within the EU FP7 programme, to establish a Green Economy Network – GreenEcoNet - with a particular focus on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

To this purpose, the project is structured in five Work Packages (WPs). WP1 ‘Map the green economy’ aims at developing a taxonomy for all the actors, practices and initiatives which constitute a green economy. The taxonomy will be at the basis of the development of WP2, which will allow all users, among other functions, to share experience, search for different initiatives and case studies and engage in dialogue on some of the barriers and opportunities involved in the transition to green economy. WP3 focuses on the stimulation of debate and engagement by hosting thematic workshops, annual meetings and online forums to engage SMEs, policy-makers and researchers to explore the practical dimensions of the transition. Finally, for SMEs to drive the transition to a green economy, they will need enabling policy and practical support. To address this aspect, WP4 will develop guidance and tools involving all GreenEcoNet stakeholders, including planners, businesses, analysts and decision makers (Figure 1).

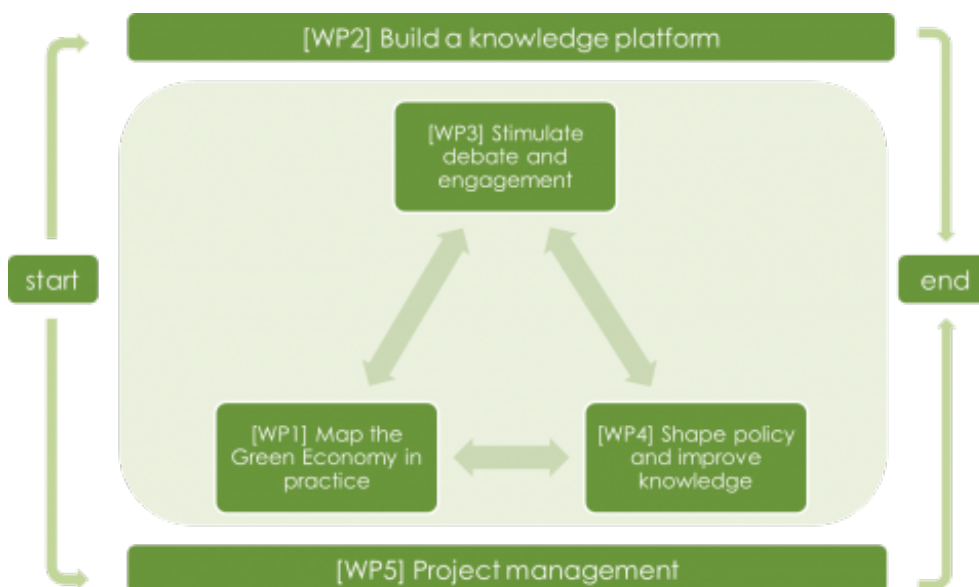


Figure 1 - Work packages interconnections in implementing the GreenEcoNet project

The GreenEcoNet platform

The GreenEcoNet project aims to develop the first European wide platform to strengthen the current dialogues within the private sector, as well as between the private sector, EU and Member State policy makers and the research community on issues related to the green economy.



Figure 2 – The Green Economy Network created by the project

To do so, GreenEcoNet will build a network and an online platform to exchange best practices in greening businesses. These practices will be posted as online case studies showing why a green business practice was undertaken, how this was done in terms of planning, design and operation, what opportunities and barriers were identified, and who was responsible for tasks. In order to optimise learning from proven practice, a user-friendly navigation system will support SMEs search for specific themes, items, locations, etc.

Developing the GreenEcoNet network

This process will involve best in class private enterprises, academic research institutions, business networks and the wider business community, with a special focus on SMEs. The information currently available in literature and in business environments will be gathered together and elaborated with the leading experts in research and business communities to pursue all the knowledge on the topic. In addition, the GreenEcoNet platform will encourage SMEs to share their experience with other SMEs, thereby creating enhanced SME business contacts and community building.

Dialogues involving SME and policy stakeholders will take place in the form of events, such as thematic workshops, training and conferences, but also publications, and the creation or enhancement of tools and instruments, and a framework for best practices in the green economy. A global community of businesses, corporate and SMEs decision makers, policy makers and researchers will be brought together on the subject of green economy practices, enablers of the green economy, and on how to address and overcome soft and hard barriers to a green economy. The outcome of these discussions and all other activities involving the platform stakeholders will be available on the online website of the platform.

Developing the GreenEcoNet web platform

The web platform will be the focal point of the whole dialogue for GreenEcoNet. It will structure and stimulate the debate both through online and offline instruments, while disseminating the project results globally in an accessible and friendly language, between the previously mentioned stakeholders.

The website will not only be an organised repository of the material produced by the network and of relevant background documentation on business practices for promoting the green economy and sustainable production and consumption, but it will also serve the purpose of enhancing the network beyond its physical dimensions (meetings, calendar, workshops), and by promoting and consolidating a virtual forum among all concerned parties. To this end, the website of the GreenEcoNet platform will be organised so as to host solicited and unsolicited comments, suggestions, and criticisms, notably in reaction to the various publications that will be regularly posted on the site. The web platform website will, overall, be seamlessly integrated into a social networking platform, to reach for the widest possible audience.

The GreenEcoNet consortium

The consortium created to achieve GreenEcoNet project objectives involves globally recognised independent research bodies focusing on sustainable development, and a multi-stakeholder network of organisations working on the transition to a green economy. Each of the participants is, therefore, suited and highly committed to the tasks assigned for the successful implementation of the project.

Project partners

Brief description



The **Stockholm Environment Institute – York** centre is an independent, international research organisation committed to the implementation of practices supportive of global sustainable development for more than 20 years, addressing environmental and development issues at different policy levels.

<http://www.sei-international.org/york>



The **University of Piraeus Research Center (UPRC)**, founded in 1989, has significant expertise in the analysis of business practices and has been involved in major EU programmes as well as in national programmes funded by the Greek Ministries, national authorities and other public and private organizations.

http://www.unipi.gr/eng_site



During its 30 years of existence, the **Centre of European Policy Studies (CEPS)** has based its work both on its strong in-house research capacity and on its function as a leading forum for debates between all stakeholders in the EU policy process.

<http://www.ceps.eu/>



The **Joint Implementation Network (JIN)** is a knowledge centre working on climate change and sustainable development issues. JIN has conducted several policy advice projects to support policy decision making at subnational, national and international levels.

<http://jiqweb.org/>



The **Green Economy Coalition (GEC)** is the world's largest multi-stakeholder network of organisations working on the transition to a green economy. Despite our diversity, we are committed to the same vision: a resilient economy that provides a better quality of life for all within the ecological limits of the planet.

<http://greeneconomycoalition.org/>



Ecologic Institute was founded in 1995 as an independent research institute. Since its founding, the Ecologic Institute has built a reputation for excellence in trans-disciplinary and policy-relevant research.

<http://www.ecologic.eu/>

Join the discussion

For more information on the project or the platform, visit the website <http://www.green-economy-network.org>, or contact us through the session 'Contact Us' or through our profile on Twitter: #GreenEcoNet, and on G+ and Facebook: GreenEcoNet.