

Green Economy as a Means of Enhancing Sustainable Local Development: The United Arab Emirates as a Model

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Abstract

The green economy is a modern economic model that aims to achieve sustainable development by balancing economic growth with environmental protection. It relies on technologies and innovations designed to reduce carbon emissions and environmental pollution, and to achieve efficiency in the use of natural resources. This model includes investment in renewable energy sources, improving energy efficiency in construction and transportation, and using sustainable production technologies. Through these policies, the green economy contributes to enhancing individual well-being and achieving long-term sustainable development goals. Despite the challenges that may face in implementing the green economy, such as securing the necessary funding and raising environmental awareness, this economic model offers significant opportunities in the fields of energy, construction, and sustainable agriculture. Countries like the United Arab Emirates are promoting these principles through large-scale renewable energy projects and the development of green infrastructure, making them a model to be emulated. Through cooperation between governments and the private sector, the green economy can be strengthened, achieving a sustainable transformation that enhances economic and environmental sustainability, thus contributing to improving the quality of life for future generations.

Keywords: Green Economy, Sustainable Development, Natural Resources, Economic Growth, Environmental Protection

Introduction

In the contemporary era, one of the most significant challenges facing the global community is how to achieve sustainable development while maintaining a balance between economic progress, environmental protection, and public health. In response to this challenge, the concept of the green economy has emerged as an important framework for building a sustainable future that promotes inclusive development and improves the wellbeing of individuals and societies. The green economy refers to an economic model that seeks to

reduce negative environmental impacts and enhance ecological efficiency through environmentally responsible practices. These practices include investment in renewable energy, the sustainable use of natural resources, and the promotion of development strategies that support environmental health (Abdelwadoud, 2012). Such transformations aim to create a balance between economic growth and environmental sustainability, thereby improving quality of life and reducing environmental degradation.

This article adopts a conceptual and analytical approach based primarily on a review of the relevant literature and policy frameworks related to the green economy and sustainable development. Through this approach, the study analyses the theoretical foundations of the green economy and examines its practical applications, with particular attention to the experience of the United Arab Emirates. By synthesizing existing research and policy documents, the article seeks to clarify the relationship between green economic policies and sustainable development outcomes.

Many countries have therefore attached increasing importance to the implementation of green economy principles as part of their national development strategies. This approach has become one of the central pillars for achieving sustainable development across different economic and social sectors. The United Arab Emirates represents a notable example of this orientation. The country has adopted a wide range of policies and initiatives designed to promote sustainable development through investments in renewable energy and green infrastructure, thereby supporting both environmental sustainability and long-term economic growth (Belajine, 2020). As a result, the UAE is often regarded as a leading example of how environmental challenges can be transformed into developmental opportunities through the strategic adoption of green economy policies.

Despite the progress achieved by several countries in implementing green economy strategies, a number of challenges continue to hinder the full realization of this model. These challenges include limitations related to financing mechanisms, levels of environmental awareness, and the development of advanced technologies necessary to integrate environmental sustainability with economic growth. In Algeria, for instance, the transition toward a green economy in sectors such as construction and public works remains complex and demanding. Achieving such a transformation requires balancing economic expansion with environmental protection (Saleh, 2019). Consequently, this transition necessitates coordinated and forward-looking policies that encourage investment in sustainable projects and initiatives designed to enhance environmental efficiency while meeting development needs without exhausting natural resources.

The Concept of the Green Economy and its Objectives

The green economy represents one of the modern global concepts aimed at achieving sustainable development through the promotion of economic growth while simultaneously preserving environmental quality and public health. This model is based on the optimal use of natural resources and the achievement of resource efficiency within a framework that respects nature and enhances quality of life. The green economy seeks to reduce carbon emissions as well as air and water pollution, while stimulating economic growth through investments in clean technologies and renewable energy sources. This model has emerged as a direct response to major environmental challenges, particularly climate change, which has

increasingly highlighted the urgent need to redirect global economic systems toward environmentally friendly pathways.

In this context, the green economy has been defined by many experts as an economic system that aims to improve human well-being and social equity while reducing environmental risks. It encompasses industrial sectors that adopt environmentally responsible economic patterns designed to protect ecosystems and reduce emissions (Ajroud, 2021). Consequently, the green economy represents part of a broader restructuring of the global economic system to achieve greater sustainability and balance between economic interests and the preservation of environmental resources for future generations.

The objectives of the green economy are diverse, but the fundamental goal is to achieve sustainable development that integrates economic, social, and environmental dimensions. The transition to a green economy emphasizes increased efficiency in the consumption of natural resources, reduction of waste, and greater reliance on renewable energy sources. In addition, the green economy encourages innovation in multiple fields such as renewable energy, sustainable transportation, and green building technologies. It also promotes the development and adoption of technologies capable of minimizing environmental impact while maintaining economic and social stability.

Moreover, the green economy contributes to improving environmental and societal health through the expansion of green employment opportunities that generate new jobs in environmentally sustainable sectors. Thus, the green economy can be understood as a comprehensive economic model that opens new opportunities for countries and companies to pursue innovation and sustainable growth (Abdelhakim & Mandour, 2016).

Many countries have taken practical steps toward implementing green economy principles across various sectors. In the United Arab Emirates, for example, several strategic initiatives have been adopted to support green growth. These initiatives include solar energy projects, expansion in renewable energy usage, and improvements in building efficiency. Such initiatives aim to reduce carbon emissions and enhance the sustainability of natural resources. The UAE has committed itself to the transition toward a green economy as part of the *Clean Energy Strategy 2050*, which aims to transform the national energy sector so that 50 percent of energy production is derived from clean sources. This transformation also includes the development of sustainable infrastructure based on environmentally friendly construction technologies that reduce energy and water consumption. The UAE's adoption of green economy policies therefore represents a model that demonstrates how innovative technologies and supportive government policies can successfully promote sustainable development (Belaidi, 2022).

Challenges Facing the Implementation of the Green Economy

Despite the significant benefits associated with the green economy, numerous challenges hinder its effective implementation in both developing and developed countries. One of the most prominent challenges involves securing adequate financial resources to transform traditional economic policies into environmentally sustainable systems. In addition, many institutions and governmental bodies suffer from insufficient environmental awareness and technological expertise. Another major challenge is the limited public sector support for

innovation in green technologies, which weakens the capacity of companies to adopt environmentally friendly production strategies.

The transition toward a green economy also requires substantial changes in existing industrial and infrastructural systems that were originally established according to traditional standards emphasizing mass production without adequate consideration of environmental consequences. These structural constraints make the transition more difficult, particularly in countries lacking sufficient resources to rapidly implement such changes. As a result, national strategies must be carefully designed to promote a gradual and coordinated transition toward green economic practices (Abdi, 2020).

In environmental terms, certain sectors face additional challenges, particularly the construction sector. In Algeria, for instance, the construction industry is one of the largest consumers of natural resources and contributes significantly to greenhouse gas emissions. Addressing these challenges requires the adoption of sustainable construction practices designed to minimize environmental impact. However, implementing these practices often demands substantial investments in green building technologies. Algeria continues to face obstacles in this regard due to limited awareness of sustainable construction techniques and restricted access to advanced technological solutions.

Nevertheless, some positive developments have emerged through projects focused on the use of sustainable materials and improved thermal insulation technologies, which contribute to reducing energy and water consumption in buildings. Despite existing challenges, investment in the green economy represents an important opportunity for strengthening economic growth while simultaneously promoting sustainable development in Algeria (Ben Saleh, 2020).

At the same time, countries attempting to implement green economy policies in sectors such as energy and natural resource management face additional challenges related to the long-term sustainability of green projects. These difficulties are particularly pronounced in economies heavily dependent on industries that rely on nonrenewable resources. In this regard, the United Arab Emirates offers an example of how national economies can be redirected toward sustainability through renewable energy policies. One notable initiative is the Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Solar Park, a large-scale project designed to reduce dependence on fossil fuels while improving energy efficiency.

The success of such projects requires effective resource management and sustainable financing to ensure long-term environmental and economic benefits. Consequently, overcoming the challenges associated with comprehensive green economy implementation, especially in countries reliant on traditional industries, requires coordinated efforts across policy development, technological innovation, and education systems (Hammadi & Ben Khaldi, 2024).

Opportunities Provided by the Green Economy for Sustainable Development

The green economy offers numerous opportunities to advance sustainable development across economic and social sectors. One of the most significant opportunities lies in its ability to create a balance between environmental protection and economic growth through the

generation of new employment opportunities in green industries. Investments in renewable energy projects such as solar and wind energy, for example, can significantly improve energy infrastructure while generating diverse job opportunities.

Such investments not only stimulate economic growth but also reduce dependence on fossil fuels, thereby lowering harmful emissions and mitigating the effects of climate change. In this context, the green economy functions as a strategic tool for achieving sustainable development goals through continuous investment in environmentally protective sectors (Ismail, 2023).

Beyond economic benefits, the green economy also offers significant potential for improving quality of life. By reducing pollution and enhancing resource efficiency, this economic model contributes to both environmental health and human well-being. Sustainable construction technologies, for example, reduce energy and water consumption, which lowers living costs and enhances citizens' welfare.

In resource dependent economies such as the United Arab Emirates, transitioning toward renewable energy provides an important opportunity to reduce reliance on fossil fuels and ensure long-term sustainability of natural resources. These initiatives also improve living conditions by reducing air pollution, noise pollution, and environmental degradation, thereby enhancing public health and environmental quality (Hammadi & Ben Khaldi, 2024).

Furthermore, the green economy enhances economic competitiveness by improving production efficiency and reducing operational costs. Countries such as Germany and the United Arab Emirates have demonstrated that green industries can play a central role in economic diversification and sustainable growth. Through the adoption of sustainable production practices and clean manufacturing technologies, countries can strengthen their position in global markets where environmental standards are becoming increasingly important.

In addition, demand for environmentally friendly products continues to rise in international markets, creating new export opportunities for countries investing in green innovation. This trend reinforces the role of the green economy in promoting global economic growth while encouraging companies to improve environmental performance and optimize resource utilization (Bouchiche et al., 2021).

Conclusion

In conclusion, the green economy represents one of the most important economic models for achieving a balance between economic growth and environmental protection. It provides innovative solutions for addressing the environmental and economic challenges facing the modern world while promoting sustainable development in the long term. Through sustainable investments in renewable energy, green construction technologies, and sustainable agriculture, societies and governments can strengthen both environmental sustainability and economic resilience.

Although the transition toward a green economy presents significant challenges, including financial constraints and policy adjustments, these challenges should not be viewed as

obstacles but rather as incentives for innovation and collaboration among governments, private sector actors, and civil society. International cooperation in sharing green technologies and sustainable practices remains essential for the success of this economic model.

The United Arab Emirates offers a compelling example of successful green economy implementation through its renewable energy policies and sustainable development initiatives. These efforts demonstrate that transitioning toward a green economy not only improves environmental outcomes but also stimulates economic growth, creates employment opportunities, and reduces social inequalities. Ultimately, effective adoption of the green economy across economic and social sectors can generate profound positive impacts on global sustainability and ensure improved well-being for future generations.

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