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Promoting Green Entrepreneurship in Morocco as a Roadmap to Sustainable Development: A literature Review

La promotion de l'entrepreneuriat vert au Maroc comme feuille de route pour un développement durable : Une revue de littérature

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Abstract

Over the last twenty years, and since the United Nations World Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), the theme of the green economy and its impact on sustainable development has prompted many researchers to reflect in depth on the global movement towards a more equitable and sustainable economy, towards a "green economy", generating a total commitment across the world. Morocco, like several other governments, has often given great importance in its stimulus programmes to green entrepreneurs, through the granting of research credits to stimulate innovation, or loan guarantees, or tax breaks or incentives for business creation.

The choice of this theme fits perfectly into the current context of our country, marked by the debates on the new development model. Today, Morocco is charting its path towards development by putting in place very ambitious strategies characterised by the adoption of new educational, social, economic and financial programmes. Green entrepreneurship is therefore an asset to accompany the country in its economic, technological and environmental transition. It constitutes a new economic and development dynamic in full evolution in a context of awareness of global environmental issues.

Can we therefore consider the promotion of green entrepreneurship in Morocco as an asset for a sustainable territorial development of the country? The aim of our study is to analyse the contribution of green entrepreneurship to the development of the country using the SWOT analytical tool and to draw some conclusions and recommendations.

Keywords: Green economy, green entrepreneurship, sustainable development, literature review.

JEL Classification: Q56

Paper type: Theoretical Research

Résumé :

Au cours de ces vingt dernières années, et depuis la conférence mondiale des Nations Unies sur le développement durable (Rio + 20), la thématique de l'économie verte et son impact sur le développement durable à pousser plusieurs chercheurs à réfléchir en profondeur au mouvement mondial vers une économie plus équitable et plus durable, vers une « économie verte », suscitant un engagement total à travers le monde. Le Maroc, comme plusieurs autres gouvernements, a souvent accordé une grande importance dans ses programmes de relance à vocation des entrepreneurs verts, par l'octroi, de crédits alloués à la recherche pour stimuler l'innovation, ou de garanties d'emprunts, ou encore d'allègements fiscaux ou d'encouragement à la création d'entreprise.

Le choix de cette thématique s'inscrit parfaitement dans le contexte actuel de notre pays, marqué par les débats sur le nouveau modèle de développement. Aujourd'hui, le Maroc est en train de tracer son chemin vers le développement, en mettant en place des stratégies très ambitieuses caractérisées par l'adoption de nouveaux programmes éducatifs, sociaux, économiques et financiers. L'entrepreneuriat vert présente donc un atout pour accompagner le pays dans sa transition économique, technologique et environnementale. Il constitue une nouvelle dynamique économique et de développement en pleine évolution dans un contexte de prise de conscience des enjeux environnementaux planétaires.

Peut-on donc considérer la promotion de l'entrepreneuriat vert au Maroc comme atout pour un développement territorial durable du pays ? Notre étude a donc pour but d'analyser l'apport de l'entrepreneuriat vert dans le développement du pays en faisant appel à l'outil analytique SWOT et à en tirer certaines conclusions et recommandations.

Mots clés : Économie verte, entrepreneuriat vert, développement durable, revue de littérature.

Classification JEL: Q56

Type de papier: recherche théorique

1. Introduction

The exponential increase in human population over the past four decades has come at a higher cost to the natural environment. The traditional economic growth models adopted by governments have improved living standards, but at the expense of exploitation of natural resources, which has had a negative impact on natural resources and resulted in increased greenhouse gas emissions (R. Rostami & Al. 2019).

Over the past four decades, greenhouse gas emissions have more than doubled. In 2019, 65% of greenhouse gas emissions were carbon dioxide emissions, mostly from fossil fuels and industrial processes. These emissions came mainly from electricity generation (25%), agriculture, forestry and other land use (24%), industry (21%) and transport (14%) (IPCC, 2019). The depletion of natural resources, increasing levels of emissions and the continued growth of the human population will only get worse by 2050 if pragmatic measures are not taken to address the situation (A. Mardani & Al. 2018).

The concept of a 'green economy' was officially coined at the Rio+20 conference, about two decades after the UN Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 formally adopted the concept of sustainable development (E. Loiseau & Al. 2016). The aim was, among other things, to address the issues of unsustainable economic development and environmental degradation. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) defines a green economy as "an economy that results in improved human well-being and social equity, while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities" (UNEP 2010).

Following the financial crisis of 2008, the green economy has been integrated into economic debates and is currently seen by international organisations and governments as a paradigm shift in contemporary thinking of development to advance sustainable economic development (World Bank, 2012). The concept is based on a low-carbon economy model that aims to reduce energy consumption, pollution and emissions, while contributing to the improvement of human life. The green economy has been widely applied to address issues related to crises and climate change mitigation. South Korea, China and the European Union have been forerunners in implementing green economy initiatives over the past decade. For example, between 2009 and 2015, South Korea and China respectively implemented five-year development plans that dedicate a significant share of investments in green initiatives (J.A. Mathews, 2012). On the other hand, the European Union has integrated green economy initiatives into the Europe 2020 strategy and the resource efficiency road map (L. Mazza, 2012).

In Africa, several existing policies, strategies and plans in some countries have direct links to the green economy. For example, South Africa is well-known for incorporating green economy strategies into its national agendas (J.K. Musango, 2014). Similarly, Morocco has over the years formulated policies and developed strategies and plans such as renewable energy policies, low-carbon development strategies, national climate change policies, and forestry and wildlife policies, among others, that have direct relevance to green economy transformation. These developments have been largely influenced by the harsh realities of climate change in recent years, as increasing rates of environmental degradation have negatively impacted key sectors of the economy such as agriculture, health, energy and industry.

Similarly, wealth creation, which is the basis of any economic development model, can only be achieved through enterprise. Hence the interest of entrepreneurship in general and green entrepreneurship in particular is to achieve this model. Green entrepreneurship is therefore an asset to accompany the country in its economic, technological and environmental transition. It constitutes a new economic and development dynamic in full evolution in a context of awareness of global environmental issues.

Despite this, no study has assessed the opportunities (internal and external) and challenges (internal and external) that are likely to influence the promotion of green entrepreneurship in

Morocco. This leaves a gap in the literature that this study seeks to fill. Furthermore, despite Morocco's enormous potential in terms of formulating relevant policies, plans and strategies, as well as signing global agreements, with regard to green economy transformation, little has been achieved in terms of actual implementation, which is the most important step in any transformation programme.

This being said, this study aims to answer the questions raised above and to contribute to the existing literature on the state of the art of green entrepreneurship in Morocco. Can we therefore consider the promotion of green entrepreneurship in Morocco as an asset for a sustainable territorial development of the country?

To help answer the central question of our study, we use the SWOT analytical approach to assess the factors that are essential for the promotion of green entrepreneurship in Morocco. The study will base its analysis on existing literature as well as the country's sustainable development policy documents and reports.

2. Conceptual framework

2.1 From sustainable development to sustainable territorial development?

In order to better understand our problematic, we consider it appropriate to start by explaining some key concepts in this work. First of all, we need to define and understand the meaning of certain fundamental concepts, namely "sustainable development" and "green entrepreneurship", whose definitions reflect the perspective of our research.

2.1.1 Concept of sustainable development

Sustainable development (or "sustainable development"¹) is the expression of a realistic policy, of an overcoming of the ecological "utopias" of the 1960s and 1970s. This concept lies at the confluence of several ideas, some of which are reminiscent of the neo-Malthusian theories put forward by the Club of Rome² in the 1960s and 1970s, which predicted the rapid depletion of the main natural resources, particularly energy, while others are in line with the current globalisation of the economy.

The idea of the need for sustainable development is based on the realisation that underdeveloped countries must follow development policies adapted to their needs in order to catch up. The development experiments conducted since the end of the Second World War have shown their limits.

They should be analysed and their shortcomings criticised in order to "invent" new, more effective policies, taking into account the strong constraints of demography, the environment and agricultural production. For example, in the underdeveloped countries of Africa, demography is very dynamic, posing the problem of food security for the population.

The principle of sustainable development aims to reconcile development and conservation so that the needs of future generations can still be met.

¹ Sustainability" means maintaining the value of all the heritage existing in a given society, whether it be human, material, natural or cultural.

² Club of Rome: Founded in 1968, the Club of Rome is an international, non-governmental organisation dedicated to the study of global issues - political, social and cultural, environmental, technological, etc. - in a global, multidisciplinary and long-term perspective. - It brings together scientists, researchers and policy-makers from around the world. It brings together scientists, researchers and professors, business people, women and statesmen from all continents, including Mikhail Gorbachev, former President of the USSR, and Rigoberta Menchú Tum, winner of the 1992 Nobel Peace Prize for her work for social justice and recognition of the rights of indigenous peoples.

In addition to the immediate conjunctural analysis, there is a prospective analysis that puts in place the elements to create the conditions for the development of the countries in this area in the medium and long term (Touhami, 2022).

The concept of sustainable development, which in some respects is similar to the policy advocated by most European environmentalist parties, does not contradict the capitalist conception of economic and industrial development. The 'sustainability' of development even becomes a guarantee of growth generating new needs, and therefore new markets, particularly those linked to environmental protection, water distribution and energy saving (Touhami, 2022).

Indeed, the World Bank, in its 1992 report³, stated that: "there is no difference between development policy objectives and appropriate environmental protection. Both must have (...), an improvement in well-being" (World Bank 1992). This way of posing the problem, which was relatively new at the beginning of the 1990s, eventually overshadowed the utopian side of political ecology.

It also referred to environmental concerns in the area of trade and industrial realism. For example, Article 20 of the World Trade Organisation (WTO, established in 1994) states that there is no "political contradiction between the safeguarding of an open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system and actions, even unilateral ones, to protect the environment".

The main questions to be answered by sustainable development policies are

- Food security. According to the FAO (Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, 2019), some 800 million people in the world are undernourished;
- Access to clean water;
- The overcrowding of rural people driven off their land by poverty or by natural or human disasters in the megacities of the Third World. In fact, of the ten largest megacities in the world, eight in 2001 and nine in 2015 are located in underdeveloped countries and are experiencing poorly controlled growth;
- Air pollution (issues related to hazardous industrial production) which poses a specific problem due to its transboundary nature;
- The protection of endangered animal and plant species, and of Antarctica as a "common natural heritage" for all humanity.

Thirty years have passed between the Stockholm Conference in 1972, which established the principle of "ecodevelopment", and the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002. Since then, this concept has been modified and expanded. Indeed, several international conferences and protocols have emerged. In 1980, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) published a document entitled "World Conservation Strategy" in which the notion of sustainable development appeared for the first time.

The very term "sustainable development" was first defined in 1987 in the Brundtland Report⁴ as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Furthermore, "sustainability" of development does not imply keeping natural resources intact, but reducing environmental damage so that development remains ecologically viable in the long term.

The expression sustainable development was promoted to the rank of world priority in 1992 at the Rio de Janeiro⁵ Summit, which defined the practical modalities of application. This summit,

³ *Development and the environment.*

⁴ *This is the report "Our Common Future" by the World Commission on Environment and Development (1987): in "Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" <http://www.ace.mmu.ac.uk/esd/menu.html>*

⁵ *This Summit was organised at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED).*

called the "Earth Summit", gave rise to the action programme known as "Agenda 21". In 1997, the Kyoto Conference drew up a protocol on climate change. In 1999, the Treaty of Amsterdam reinforced the importance of environmental policy in the European Union by taking into account the principle of sustainable development.

In 2000, the Hague Conference laid down the principle of a policy to regulate greenhouse gases on a global scale, and saw the emergence of a real *current of ideas*, largely based on the principles of sustainable development.

The issue of sustainable development has been the subject of much debate, both on its definition and on the means for its implementation. Today, it is generally agreed that it is "*development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs*". (Brundtland 1987).

Thinking about sustainable development in the territorial approach means understanding that this dimension is inseparable from the place, its history, identity, environment and present territorialities. At the same time, the awareness that the environmental crisis is not a crisis of nature itself, but a crisis of society, of the relationship of man with nature, of the production of territorialities and therefore of the territory.

2.1.2 Sustainable development, an economic analysis of the concept

Sustainable development is a concept emerged in 1987 from a long process of reflection and debate on a development model that is both quantitative and qualitative, and built on three pillars: ecological, economic and social (Lévêque et al., 2008). According to its famous definition, as formulated in the so-called Brundtland Report of the UN World Commission on Environment and Development, "sustainable development is: striving to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".

The concept of sustainable development is designed to correct the shortcomings of the dominant development paradigm, whose main criterion is economic growth. Its concern is to integrate the environmental and social dimensions into the development process in order to mitigate the ecological and social imbalances generated by the liberal or even socialist economic model.

Thus, 'sustainable development' describes development that simultaneously respects 'economic efficiency', 'social equity' and 'respect for the environment'. (Poisson de Haro, 2011). It is based on three pillars:

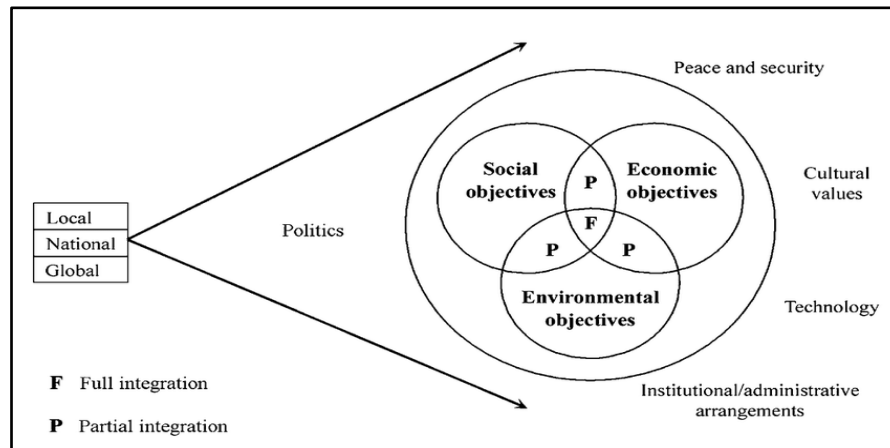
- **An economic pillar**, which aims at economic growth and efficiency objectives;
- **A social pillar**, which aims to satisfy human needs and meet equity and social cohesion objectives encompassing health, housing, consumption, education, employment, culture, etc.
- **An environmental pillar**, which aims to preserve, improve and enhance the environment and natural resources in the long term.

These three pillars are accompanied and complemented by three principles: solidarity, precaution and participation. The first principle refers to the 'solidarity between peoples and generations' with which development would become beneficial to all, now and in the future. Beaumais et al (2001) concur with this principle by noting that to speak of intergenerational equity implies first and foremost the realisation of the intergenerational equity that conditions it. The second principle relates to the prudence that actors in the development field must exercise in order to limit the consequences on the environment. The last principle of participation is that the population should be involved in the decision-making processes.

The concept of sustainable development also involves two underlying concepts. Firstly, there is the "needs concept" which emphasises the basic needs of the poorest, who must be given priority in order to ensure their basic needs. Secondly, it refers to "the idea of the limitations that the state of our technology and social organisation impose on the capacity of the environment to meet present and future needs" (Elmoukhtar & al. 2022).

Today, the notion of sustainable development is at the crossroads of economic development, social progress and environmental preservation.

Figure 1: Scheme of sustainable development developed



Source: Lozano 2012.

Development is often illustrated by three circles, representing the qualitative objectives of environment, economy and society, located on the axes of time and the north-south dimension (Fig. 1). Figure 1 summarises the following findings:

- Economic, societal and ecological processes are interdependent. Both private and public actors must never act in isolation and unilaterally, but must always take into account the interplay of the three dimensions of environment, society and economy;
- Sustainable development is about more than just protecting the environment. To meet our material and immaterial needs, we need a prosperous economy and a caring society;
- Sustainable development requires a long-term structural change in our economic system and society, in order to reduce our consumption of resources and the environment to a level that is sustainable in the long term, while maintaining an efficient economy;
- Global interdependencies must be taken into account (North-South aspect). From an ecological point of view, the lifestyle that currently prevails in the industrial countries cannot be transposed to the global level. In the long term, however, sustainable development is also intended to improve the quality of life of that large part of humanity that lives in extreme poverty (Touhami, 2022).

2.1.3 Sustainable territorial development

The concept of territorial development implicitly includes sustainability. It can therefore be said that the notion of sustainable territorial development is a kind of pleonasm. Local and regional communities are a type of grouping that can be organised according to an individualistic, even selfish logic or according to a logic of solidarity that implies the sharing of resources according to the needs of the different localities and regions for the collective well-being of the greatest number of citizens.

Likewise, the approach of sustainable territorial development seems to be very appropriate to understand how the relationship between territories and sustainability should be constructed today. Certain recent social trends, and more particularly the generalisation of environmental sensitivity, have contributed to making what happens in the countryside of great interest to urban populations and to the whole community. (Jean, 2015).

This allows us to say that traditional urban-rural relations are undergoing a metamorphosis. Some observers go so far as to say that a new social contract between rural producers and urban consumers is emerging. It is therefore imperative to explore ways in which urban and rural people can become partners in a new dynamic of sustainable territorial development, based on

a better understanding of the interdependence of rural and urban economies and sustainable development, and on the recognition of the right of rural communities to develop themselves by making the most of the resources available in their territory. (Jean, 2015).

There must be this transition from a certain territorial egoism to a territorial development in solidarity that makes the discussion of 'royalties', i.e. the reallocation of the rights collected by the State on the exploitation of natural resources according to their region of origin, obsolete. This will allow us to clearly express our responsibility and solidarity for rural areas which provide important services (through the production of public goods) to the whole of society.

2.2 Green entrepreneurship: A step towards the green economy

The terms "green jobs" and "green entrepreneurship" are associated with the concept of the green economy. The Green Economy Initiative, launched in late 2008 under the auspices of UNEP (United Nations Environment Programme), provides countries with analysis and guidance on the reforms and investments needed to green key sectors of the economy. The main output of this initiative is the Green Economy Report, which was released to the UNEP Governing Council in February 2011. So, what is a 'green economy'? And how can it be developed through the promotion of green entrepreneurship?

2.2.1 The green economy: a conceptual analysis of the term

The three dimensions of sustainable development - environmental, social and economic - are integrated into the definition of the green economy. There are multiple definitions of the green economy and green growth. "A green economy is "an economy that provides a better quality of life for everyone within the ecological limits of the planet"⁶. "Green growth is about fostering economic growth and development while ensuring that natural assets continue to provide the environmental resources and services on which our well-being depends" (OECD, 2011).

The main principles that form the meaning of the green economy and green growth are recurrent, although their definitions differ (UNDESA, 2012).

These are environmental/ecological, social and economic. The social aspect of the economy or green growth (GG) is about improving human well-being and social equity, i.e. providing a better quality of life for all. The environmental aspect includes the reduction of environmental risks and ecological scarcity. The economic aspect of EV aims to promote economic growth and development. Therefore, natural resources and the environment must provide services for human well-being (UNEP, 2012).

The concept of green growth can be similar to that of the green economy since green policies are conducive to economic growth and development. However, the green economy concept focuses on the finite limits of the environment (OECD, 2011). The term 'growth' indicates that countries attach great importance to the quantitative expansion of their economies in order to meet the ever-increasing human population, development goals and poverty reduction. From the above, it is clear that the concepts of green economy and green growth are compatible with the achievement of environmental sustainability and economic aspirations/goals (UNDESA, 2012).

As a result, green growth is being promoted around the world. Institutions such as the World Bank, the United Nations Economic Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), the Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), as well as the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), are discussing and implementing the green economy along with or as part of green growth.

⁶ This information was accessed on <http://www.greeneconomycoalition.org/>.

2.2.2 Green entrepreneurship: What is it?

"Green entrepreneurship" or "eco-entrepreneurship" or "sustainable entrepreneurship" is entrepreneurship that, on one hand, (i) integrates environmental, economic and social factors into its business plan and, on the other hand, (ii) proposes innovative solutions and alternatives for so-called responsible production and consumption.

In the words of the OECD (2011) report, several questions remain unanswered to this day:

How can these concepts be measured? What activities can the "green" part of entrepreneurship include? What are the main characteristics of green entrepreneurs?

In the same report, it appears that the twofold definition of green entrepreneurship formulated by Volery (2002) is the most relevant. This definition distinguishes two types of green entrepreneurs or eco-preneurs:

- Environmentally conscious entrepreneurs developing any type of innovation (product, service, process) that can reduce the resources used and the impact on the environment or improve cost effectiveness while aiming for zero waste.

- Green entrepreneurs, aware of environmental issues and operating in an environmental market. They look for environmentally oriented opportunities with attractive profit prospects.

Gerlach (2003) distinguishes three conceptual approaches to eco-entrepreneurship: - *A strategic perspective* creating eco-entrepreneurial activities, which are seen as sources of competitive advantage for organisations. In this perspective, eco-entrepreneurs are actors able to recognise, create and exploit strategic opportunities arising from environmental innovations.

- *A cognitive perspective* on how to identify and encourage environmental opportunities.

- *A socio-historical perspective* arguing that eco-entrepreneurship is a tool for societal change. This approach directly questions the role played by eco-entrepreneurship in society.

According to Isaak (2005), an eco-taker is "*entrepreneurs who found new businesses based on the principle of sustainability*". That is, a person/entrepreneur who has found new businesses based on the principle of sustainability. Pastakia defines them as agents of change (Pastakia, 1998). As Filion (2011) points out, the distinction between the sustainability entrepreneur and the eco-taker is that the former approaches the creation of his or her business more from an economic perspective, with the 'trigger' being a market failure or an obligation to enter the field for profitability reasons. Whereas the latter starts out of conviction and adopts an ethical management perspective, the trigger being the entrepreneur's intrinsic motivation. Venkataraman (1997) also points out this difference: "*traditional entrepreneurs generate social value as a by-product of economic value whereas for social entrepreneurs the reverse is true*" (Venkataraman, 1997).

The definition of green entrepreneurship adopted in our analysis is based on the typology of business production. For the sake of simplicity, the term 'Green Entrepreneurship' (GE) is a concept that represents new economic opportunities, job creation and environmental innovation. The notion of 'innovation' is particularly interesting in this context, as green markets are developing and it is innovation that creates jobs and entrepreneurial opportunities in this context.

From the above, we assume that Morocco's promoting green entrepreneurship as a way to achieve the country's sustainable development goals.

3. Methodological framework

Our study is a theoretical analysis based on the SWOT technique. SWOT⁷ analysis, also called situation analysis, is often used to assess the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of

⁷ Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.

national projects and development programmes. The term was adopted by public administrations in the 1980s after appearing in the business management literature.

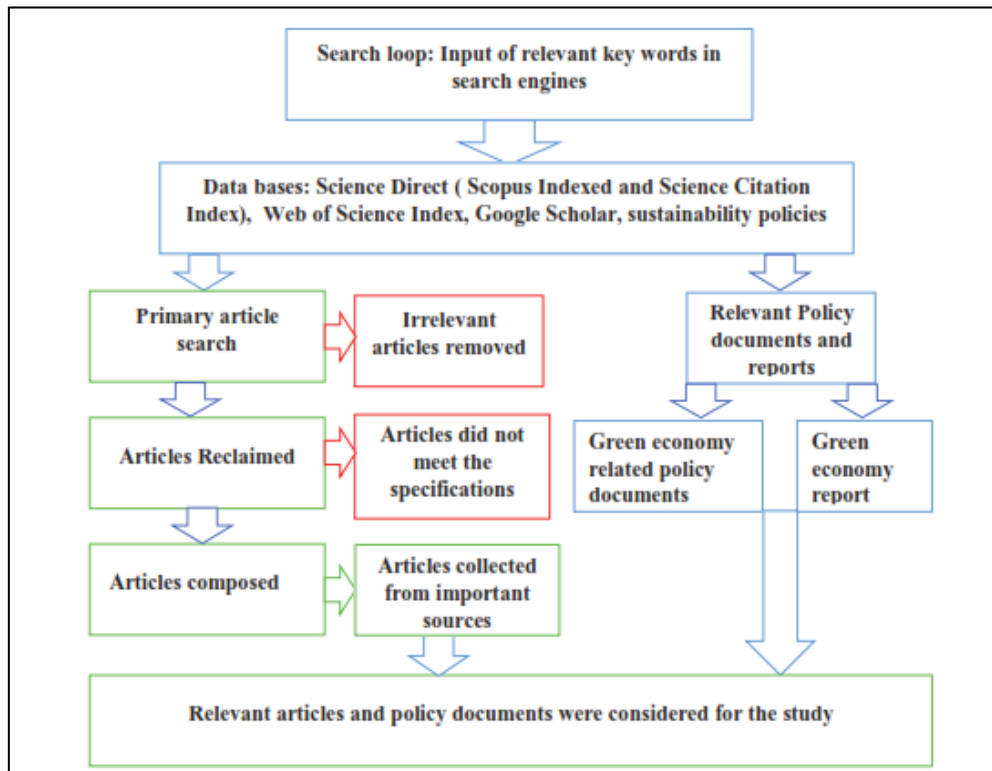
Since then, it has been used by many researchers and academics in different fields. For example, there are several evidences of the use of SWOT in the fields of energy for sustainable development (N. Markovska, 2009), economic systems and climate change (Q. Wang, 2015), low-carbon development pathways (X. Jin, 2012), waste management (P.K. Srivastava, & al., 2005) and forest sustainability (P.M. Falcone, & al., 2019).

The SWOT analysis can be classified into two components, namely internal factors, which consist of strengths and weaknesses influenced by the internal environment, and external factors, which consist of opportunities and threats influenced by the external environment.

In order to carry out this study, we conducted a comprehensive literature review, which we consider relevant, using two approaches

- (i) Data collected from publication databases, including articles and conference proceedings.
- (ii) Information gathered from reports and policy documents related to the green economy and green entrepreneurship such as energy reports, climate change policy documents, forest policy documents, environmental policy documents, among others.

Figure 2: Proposed framework for the analysis.



Source: Authors, 2022

A large number of data was collected by the authors for this review work. In order to categorize the data collected, the following framework is carried out:

First, the articles collected related to green economy sources from the Science Direct (Scopus Indexed and Science Citation Index), Web of science citation index, economic sustainability policies, environmental policies, energy policies etc. We also used Google Scholar with the help of carefully coined key words to identify articles of previous authors who conducted related studies. From the green sustainability and related policies, the authors collected data that help to identify green entrepreneurship related policies in Morocco.

In the second stage, a careful scrutiny of the information collected was carried out that led to the elimination of irrelevant articles. The remaining articles were then reclaimed for the study. Further scrutiny of the reclaimed articles was carried out and articles that were found to fall outside the specifications for the formal analysis were eliminated.

In the final stage, the articles that were deemed relevant to the scope of the study were considered.

4. Results and discussion

This section presents and discusses the SWOT analysis, taking into account the internal and external factors that could positively or negatively influence Morocco's efforts to promote green entrepreneurship, in order to ensure the transition to a green economy.

4.1 Mapping the green entrepreneurship ecosystem in Morocco

The green economy, in general, and green entrepreneurship, in particular, have great potential to address the main environmental challenges facing Morocco, such as desertification, deterioration of biodiversity, water stress, air and water pollution or deforestation.

Eco-entrepreneurship and innovation in Morocco also have great economic potential and are of great interest to the public authorities. A large number of sectors offer important opportunities and potential markets such as eco-construction, water management, eco-tourism or organic food. Green entrepreneurship can also be an effective response to the problem of youth and graduate unemployment in a country where half the population is under 28 years old.

At the public policy level, the green and social economy and the orientation of young people towards entrepreneurship are priorities for the Moroccan state. A large number of legislative instruments and initiatives that support the transition to the green economy have been approved or are in preparation.

Morocco has, among others, the following framework law on the National Charter for the Environment and Sustainable Development; the National Sustainable Development Strategy 2030; the National Framework Plan for Sustainable Consumption and Production; the status of the self-entrepreneur; more facilities for creating businesses online (www.crea.ma); the law on the banning of plastic bags; the law on renewable energies; a reform of the Regional Investment Centres which is underway; a draft law for environmental protection of soils which provides, among other things, for the application of the precautionary and polluter-pays principles; a draft law on Crowdfunding and loans of honor; initiatives to introduce environmental criteria in public procurement that are underway; a draft framework law on social entrepreneurship that is being developed by the Secretary of State for Handicrafts and the Social Economy.

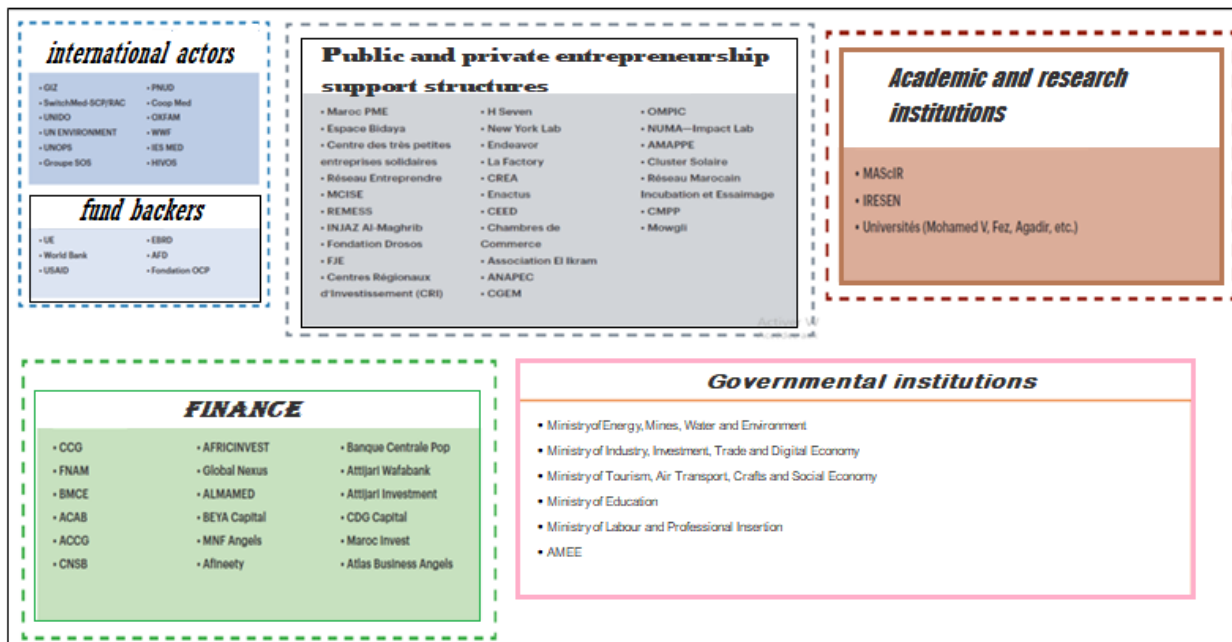
Similarly, there is a significant investment dynamic in the green sectors. The framework law forming the investment charter provides incentives for investment in environmental protection. Many initiatives for green investment are underway, such as the Green Investment Facilities implemented by the IBRD. Currently, among MENA countries, Morocco is the main recipient of climate finance (from EBRD, EIB, IBRD, EU, etc.).

With regard to support structures for entrepreneurship and business creation, Morocco has a rich ecosystem of private, non-profit and public organisations that offer services to project holders.

The ecosystem is very diversified with efficient organisations that have specificities and a high degree of specialisation. The support structures offer entrepreneurs a wide range of support services such as general skill building and training, technical assistance, project financing, administrative support, coaching from volunteer business leaders, incubation, accommodation, market access support, experience sharing, etc. There are some structures in Morocco that have already adopted an environmental and social approach.

Finally, Morocco will count in the coming years with the support of important cooperation programmes that will support the transition to a green economy and the implementation of the National Strategy for Sustainable Development, such as the European Union's "Competitiveness and Green Growth" Programme.

Figure 3: Mapping the green entrepreneurship ecosystem in Morocco.



Source: Authors, 2022.

4.2 Outputs of the SWOT analysis: Presentation and discussion

The SWOT quadrant, adopted by our study, is presented in the table below :

Table 1: Quadrant of the SWOT analysis for the promotion of green entrepreneurship.

	Highlights	Weaknesses
Internal factors	<p>Emerging green markets</p> <p>Effective support and coaching opportunities.</p> <p>Green economy policies.</p> <p>Young and dynamic population.</p> <p>Poverty reduction.</p> <p>Significant efforts to reduce the illiteracy rate.</p> <p>Political stability.</p>	<p>Difficult access to finance, particularly at start-up.</p> <p>Human capital to be strengthened, many ideas and few means to implement them.</p> <p>A culture of entrepreneurship that is not widespread in a changing society.</p>
External factors	Opportunities	Threats
	<p>Encouraging national strategies.</p> <p>Nature and infrastructure: the land of potential.</p> <p>Access to global funds for green initiatives.</p>	<p>The growing threat of climate change.</p> <p>Corruption.</p>

Source: The authors, 2022.

4.2.1 Analysis of internal factors influencing the promotion of green entrepreneurship in Morocco

Water, energy, agri-food, transport/infrastructure, resource management, waste management, ecosystem services, eco-construction, sustainable tourism... the opportunities for green business are endless, especially in Morocco where the "raw materials" of the green economy and green entrepreneurship abound.

The main challenge for any entrepreneur is to find the means to finance his project, and this is not much different for eco-entrepreneurs. **Business angels** are still very rare and private investment in start-ups remains exceptional.

Finally, **crowdfunding**, a popular solution for international start-ups that call for participatory financing (in the form of donations, loans, presales or equity investments) is hampered by Moroccan legislation.

Once the first steps of the business idea have been taken, the eco-entrepreneur is faced with a new challenge: **human resources**. Indeed, recruiting qualified and competent personnel is particularly difficult. The shortcomings of the education system and vocational training that is poorly adapted to the realities of the labor market do not allow for the training of the required workforce. This is particularly the case for green business, which, due to its innovative nature, requires greater adaptability and learning capacity.

With the concerns of a country on the way to emergence and in the context of an uncertain global economic situation, the promotion of green entrepreneurship appears to be an ideal solution to meet the socio-environmental challenges and the problem of unemployment among young graduates, while making the most of the creativity and dynamism of Moroccan youth. However, "entrepreneurship" requires **specific qualities and a particular state of mind that are** still little encouraged and valued by Moroccan society and its educational system: initiative, creativity, audacity, adaptation, a solution-oriented approach, perseverance, autonomy... are all qualities that make the entrepreneur an essential actor of innovation and change.

In addition, green entrepreneurship is commonly considered a niche, risky and not very promising. Themes related to sustainable development, while beginning to be known by the Moroccan population - mainly thanks to the media coverage of COP22 - are rarely associated with the economy, value creation or profit. **The concepts of sustainability and the green economy are extremely poorly understood.**

Support organisations for project leaders, being key players in the ecosystem, are well represented in Morocco: they exist in several forms (thematic clusters, associative sector, private foundations, specialised public agencies, networks of various players, international cooperation programme, etc.) and are aimed at different categories of project leader (micro-enterprises, cooperatives, start-ups, developing enterprises, etc.).

These **support opportunities** often **complement each other** and would be more effective if they were coordinated or federated on a national basis. However, the strong competition for funding prevents fruitful cooperation and dissemination of information.

4.2.2 Analysis of external factors influencing the promotion of green entrepreneurship in Morocco

Morocco has developed a number of government strategies that are in line with international concerns, starting with the National Charter for the Environment and Sustainable Development. Developed by royal impulse in 2011-2012, this has been the real catalyst for policies to promote green sectors and has enabled Morocco to redouble its efforts in favour of the environment and sustainable development.

The implementation of this charter is done through the promulgation of the Framework Law on Environment and Sustainable Development and through the elaboration of a National Strategy for Environment and Sustainable Development with all its economic, social and environmental

aspects. Sustainable development has also been integrated into numerous sectoral plans (waste management plan, Green Morocco Plan for agriculture, Blue Morocco Plan for fisheries, Vision 2030 for tourism, etc.) by considering both environmental and social aspects.

The holding of the COP22 in Marrakech in November 2016 should allow the country to reaffirm its commitment but also its ambition as a pioneer of sustainable development on the African continent, through its major energy projects (hydroelectricity, wind power, solar energy, etc.). However, stakeholders in the ecosystem agree that the lack of transversality between the different sectoral policies and the lack of cooperation between the different ministries is a major obstacle to the development of a green economy and the promotion of a green entrepreneurship ecosystem that would benefit everyone.

As for **the legislative environment**, the existing legal framework is not yet up to the ambitions of the Kingdom, but it offers positive prospects (framework law on the environment and sustainable development, law on renewable energy, crowdfunding, etc. in preparation).

With regard to **fiscal incentive policy**, the Moroccan government has opted to use the parafiscal instrument of the ecotax to finance the development of recovery/recycling channels, starting with plastic packaging waste from household and similar waste. The ecotax was introduced in the 2013 finance law and in 2014 it began to feed the National Environment Fund (FNE) for possible redeployment to support the plastics industry.

Morocco is facing many environmental challenges, the fight against which is becoming a real economic opportunity. It is also rich in raw materials for the green economy (particularly in agriculture and agri-food). While the solar plan has paved the way for development through the production of renewable energy, many resources remain to be exploited.

The business infrastructure is available (transport, logistics, etc.) especially in the coastal areas. The great disparities between the Casablanca-Rabat-Tangiers axis and the rest of the country are sources of deep social and economic inequalities. Some regions are landlocked, and poverty persists and hinders the development of the green economy. And yet it is particularly in the regions better connected to their rurality that certain green projects could be developed and promoted.

5. Conclusion

The transition to a green economy has the potential to offset environmental, economic and social risks and to sustainably improve all sectors of the economy. This transformation is relevant for a country like Morocco, which relies heavily on the natural environment for its livelihoods and is therefore highly vulnerable to the ramifications of climate change.

As Morocco is considered a "beacon of hope" for Africa, it is imperative that the country adopts more sustainable methods to achieve economic, social and environmental improvement.

The main objective of this paper is therefore to analyse the readiness of Morocco to promote green entrepreneurship using the SWOT analytical tool.

The results of the study showed that Morocco has enormous potential in terms of its ability to develop a green business. It is therefore important for policy makers to put in place strategies that can help capitalise on the strengths and opportunities while addressing the weaknesses and threats.

It appears that Morocco's geographical location, natural resources and infrastructure are a great source of opportunities (natural/physical factor). These opportunities are largely supported by an international environment conducive to the development of the green economy, national commitments in this field, as well as a promising legal framework. On the other hand, the lack of awareness of elected representatives and local authorities to sustainable development is a major obstacle to taking initiatives (political, legal factor).

The major problem remains, as elsewhere, access to finance. Although international funds exist to boost certain sectors and green industries in Morocco, startups have difficulty finding the necessary financing to start their activity.

While the ecosystem is diverse and the existing structures could complement each other effectively, there is still a need to develop the necessary synergies and promote better - coordination and coherence between the different services offered to entrepreneurs in order to optimise the available resources and avoid competition and duplication of support actions.

Support structures and services are still too centralised and better coverage of services in all regions of the country is still pending.

In terms of consumption patterns and attitudes, although some Moroccans are aware of the environmental impacts of consumption, the concepts of sustainability and the green economy are still largely unknown, as is the existence of green products and services. Great efforts remain to be made to popularize the concept of sustainable production and consumption, and the role of the education system and the media is essential in this regard.

The state has a major role to play in promoting green innovation (guarantees, dedicated investment funds) as well as in harmonizing policies (roadmap / concerted state actions).

The private sector must be involved in partnerships with startups and banks must be open to innovation. Local and regional authorities need to be more aware and empowered so that they can adopt the national sustainable development strategy at local level and be themselves clients of green products and services.

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