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Green Procurement: Realities and Prospects

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Green Procurement stands as the process by which customers take environmental factors into account when buying products, services or works, in order to reduce the impact on health and the environment. Green Procurement can be defined as a choice-making process whereby buyers aim to procure goods, services and works with a reduced environmental impact throughout their life-cycle, compared to goods, services and works with the same primary function that would otherwise be procured.

In a demand-driven economy green procurement is an important pressure in favor of sustainable development. The environmental consciousness of buying entities is transferred to their suppliers and to the suppliers of their suppliers in a multiplying effect which tends to diffuse throughout the whole economy. The promotion of green procurement and the introduction of environmental protection criteria into the procurement process will improve quality of products and services offered to citizens, make it possible to promote sustainable production and consumption models and will encourage the development and application of environmentally friendly technologies, reducing the amount of waste, greenhouse gas emissions and pollution, ultimately leading to a cleaner environment and encouraging sustainable behavior patterns. Also, an advantage can be provided in terms of innovation and development of leading technologies, thus maintaining the competitiveness of industry and the business environment. At the same time, green public procurement can encourage the use of products / services with the European Union eco-label, which means the purchase of high performance products and services from an environmental protection point of view.

Green procurement is relevant for both the public and private sectors. During the last decade, in public procurement, preoccupation for including environmental criteria in awarding contracts have intensified. For example, by 2017, the Member States of the European Union – except Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Luxembourg and Romania – had adopted national action plans for green and sustainable procurement. In the private sector, many companies are practicing Green Procurement as part of their Social Responsibility policy.

Despite the undeniable progress made in recent years, initiatives in the field of environmental procurement have a more punctual rather than a systematic nature and their degree of expansion and coverage is not yet well known. More research is required to assess economic and social implications of green procurement, the more so as market conditions are changing rapidly providing new solutions and more options. Additionally, researchers' contribution is necessary in assisting policy makers, business leaders and procurement practitioners in making informed decisions and overcoming practical challenges.

Based on these considerations, the Amfiteatru Economic Journal invites those researchers, interested in the field, to propose for publication original research papers that will contribute to a better understanding of the current stage of implementation of Green Procurement principles in the public and private sectors and of the impact of applying these principles on firms, the economy and society.

The article, *The adoption of national green procurement plans from the perspective of circular economy*, makes an analyze of the impact of adopting national green procurement plans on the circular economy in the European Union member states for the period 2007-2018 based on three hypotheses that the impact of adopting these plans is positive on economic growth, on CO2 emissions and on the circular economy.

The adoption of green procurement has implications on the labor market as a result of the changes that occur within the economic structure. The paper, *Green procurement implications on the labor market in Romania in the context of the transition to the green economy*, ensures a better understanding of the concept and policies regarding green procurement as well as the implications on the Romanian labor market within the transition to the green economy through green procurement. The analyses undertaken in the article provide a characterization of the Romanian labor market, an anticipation and a better understanding of how structural changes in the economy through the adoption of green procurement can reconfigure the labor market.

Firms can contribute to achieving sustainability goals through their acquisitions when they opt for green ones. In this paper, the authors focused on purchases of products certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). The fact that there are no publicly available statistics on the value of green procurement per countries, at EU level, nor on the purchase of FSC products, the article *Green procurement through Forest Stewardship Council (fsc) certification in the private sector. Perceptions and willingness to buy of private companies from Romania*, underlines that the only way to understand the market for FSC products is to study the perceptions and intentions of companies to buy such products. The present study refers to the behavior (activities and perceptions) of the Romanian firms related to the purchase of FSC certified products and if the perceptions of those companies can predict the willingness of consumers to replace the conventional products with those certified FSC under equal price conditions.

Starting from the observation that in the last years the preoccupations for the protection of environment and the development of an ecological behavior among the operators in the tourism industry have intensified, the article *Ecological purchases made by managers in hotel industry. An approach of the main determining factors*, approaches the ecological acquisitions from the perspective of hotel managers, by analyzing the relationships between them and the pro-environmental attitude, the environmental problems and the benefits that motivate the managers to make ecological purchases.

Considering the important role of scientific research in the field of ecological procurement regarding the awareness of their importance but also of their effect on sustainable development, in this issue of the journal we have two papers on the subject. One research related to the *Bibliometric analysis of the field of green public procurement*, has as a goal to determine the interest in the scientific research area on ecological public procurement and to explain their evolution, starting with the moment of identifying the first scientific document published in this field. In this regard, the authors have resorted to a quantitative research method that involves the use of a specialized software product in the field of

bibliometrics, VOSviewer. The other paper concerns **Green public procurement in the academic literature**, which presents a review of the specialized literature on green public procurement in the Scopus database, using as a methodology the traditional review together with the structured review of the scientific literature.

Implementing the principles of green procurement in the public and private sectors is an important idea in favor of sustainable development. The paper, *Engagement in green procurement: antecedents and outcomes for manufacturing small- and medium-sized enterprises from Iran*, is a correlational study that sought to identify and analyze the antecedents and outcomes of adopting green procurement practices related to products within small and medium-sized enterprises. The results and suggestions of this study can provide to marketers and managers a perspective to improve the performance of small and medium-sized manufacturing companies. Another paper that also concerns small and medium-sized enterprises is *Management of green procurement in small and medium-sized manufacturing enterprises in developing economies*, which analyzes the problem of managing green procurement at the level of small and medium enterprises in developing countries, highlighting that they should pay attention to the development and implementation of green procurement, as this will have a positive impact on their performance.

The article, *Analysis of the realities, evolution and prospects of urban greening from an international point of view*, points out that there is an increasing concern about the imbalance between urbanization and environmental conservation, given that over half of the world's population lives in the urban environment, stating that urban ecological development has become one of the most innovative and evolved fields in ecology, ecological procurement and the built environment. The purpose of this study is to provide a perspective on the realities, evolution and prospects of urban ecological development at international level.

Even if there is a prejudice of people, according to which green products and services are more expensive than non-ecological ones, this opinion does not take into account their entire life cycle. Although initially expensive, on long term the benefits of purchasing green products are not limited to the environmental impact alone. They also include social and health benefits as well as economic and even political benefits.

The purchase of green products is a necessity and an opportunity of our days, being one of the basic pillars of sustainable development within the society, and the awareness of their necessity implies the creation of a current of thought capable of transforming the mentality of the individual, regardless the community of which he is part.

**Editor in Chief,
Vasile Dinu**