

Green Entrepreneurship

Successful business cases of Green Entrepreneurs in the Mediterranean



Regional Activity Centre
for Cleaner Production



Eco Ser: Tunisian environmental consulting company

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Name:	Eco Ser
City, country:	Béja, Tunisia
Name of entrepreneur/ founder:	Mr. Sami Marrouki, former executive manager of the PROSOL (mechanism to promote the solar water heaters in Tunisia) established by the National Agency for Energy Conservation (Agence Nationale pour la Maîtrise de l'Énergie).
Description	The firm offers several services such as studies, coaching, training, auditing and management in energy and environment sectors (including conception and implementation of Clean Development Mechanism projects).
Investment	<i>Start up capital:</i> DT 5,000. <i>Rate of return on investment:</i> 100 %. The payback time did not exceed 1 year as the energy sector was emerging and the demand in terms of auditing and coaching in the field of energy efficiency was high. <i>Sources of funding:</i> The start up capital was entirely invested by the owner.
Stakeholders	<i>Customers:</i> International agencies, Multilateral banks (World Bank, African Development Bank, ...), private companies in several sectors, UNDP, Agence Française de Développement, Public institutions (ANME, ANGed, CITET), Ministère de l'Industrie et de la Technologi, Ministère de l'Environnement et du Développement Durable. <i>Strategic partners:</i> ALCOR (Tunisian Consulting firm); GWS (Institute of Economic Structures Research, Germany); SEGOR (company working in the field of environmental services (branch of group SUEZ France)). <i>European partnership:</i> GIZ, German Technical Cooperation Agency.
Employment generation	Not available.
Timeline	Date of Start up: 2008 Progresses up to 2011: ECO Ser has extended gradually its services to the field of Climate change and to some strategic aspects such as the electricity mix. In addition, Eco Ser is trying to widen its competencies to other fields such as the economy, employment and projects management.
Feasibility study	In 2007, before launching ECO Ser, the founder carried out a feasibility study, which demonstrated a high demand in terms of training in the fields of environment and particularly in energy efficiency sub-sector. Also, a high demand in launching and accompanying innovation processes was observed.
Geo-social-economic setting	ECO Ser positions itself as a service company working in innovative technologies. It mainly operates in Tunisia but also carries out several short term missions in North Africa (Morocco, Algeria and Egypt), Subsaharian region (Mali) and Middle East (Lebanon and Syria).
Key features	Providing services in strategic sectors of the Tunisian economy (energy and environment) and transferring technologies and specific know-how to public institutions and private companies in innovative fields such as Climate change.

Overall rational and motivation	Not available.
Strenghts	High technical competence in the field of energy conservation (renewable energies and energy efficiency) and environmental management. The founder is an Auditor third party ISO 14000 and ISO 9001 and OHSAS 18001).
Challenges and constraints	The founder intends to become a CDM verifier and a NAMA (National Appropriate Mitigation Action) expert. However, he is facing some constraints related to the access to these specific qualifications because there are no local firms/institutions to qualify experts in these fields. The qualifying training is provided in Europe and it is costly.
Direct activities and Impacts	<i>Social:</i> ECO Ser provided consulting services to improve the Social Corporate Responsibility at strategic level in private firms. <i>Environmental:</i> Several missions have been led by ECO Ser in big companies to improve environmental management and reduce energy consumption. <i>Economic:</i> ECO Ser provides services to industrial companies in energy auditing towards energy conservation measures, leading the concerned companies to reduce their energy consumption and improve their competitiveness.
Use of innovative Technologies	Use of international standards as OHSAS 18001. Introducing Solar Keymark label for Solar Water Heaters program in Tunisia. Development of Qualisol chart (quality requirements) for services related to SWH in Tunisia.
Evidence of a holistic approach/world view	ECO-Ser is working on a global challenge to reduce CO ₂ emissions through the support to CDM projects and in the near future to NAMAs (National Appropriate Mitigation Actions). In addition, ECO-Ser is contributing to the transfer of know-how (North–South and South–South approach).
Scale of benefits	ECO-Ser aims at developing partnerships with several stakeholders through networking activities and participation in international events (CoP, Carbon Expo, Carbon Forum...).
Policies, incentives and regulations needed	In Tunisia, there is no specific regulation allowing private companies to produce electricity from a renewable energy sources. This kind of regulation, once established, will boost the market of consulting services in the energy sector at local but also at European level.

Lessons and recomendations

The success of ECO-Ser relies on motivation and courage to start a green business with particular funds and low investment. Networking has been one of the success key which allowed ECO-Ser to capture some market shares of consulting in the field of energy and environment. The founder of ECO-Ser believes that innovation is a crucial factor for a green company.

References:

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