

УДК 658.5:005:330.3

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DOI: 10.32702/2306-6814.2025.3.57

PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY AND SUSTAINABLE PROJECT MANAGEMENT: KEY CONCEPTS, PRINCIPLES, APPROACHES

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**СТАЛІСТЬ В ПРОЄКТАХ І ПРОЄКТНОМУ МЕНЕДЖМЕНТІ: КЛЮЧОВІ ПОНЯТТЯ,
ПРИНЦИПИ, ПІДХОДИ**

This paper emphasizes the pivotal importance of project sustainability in contemporary societies and explores sustainability across environmental, social, economic, and institutional dimensions, underlining the interdependence between organizations, projects and society. Six sustainability principles advocate for balancing short and long-term interests, as well as local and global perspectives. Sustainable projects are defined by achieving objectives without causing harm, ensuring lasting benefits. Key elements, including stakeholder involvement and impact assessment, contribute to a responsible project management framework.

The study transitions to key concepts in sustainable project management, emphasizing its relevance in aligning with global sustainability goals. Integration expands system boundaries, necessitating a broader perspective beyond traditional methodologies. Shortcomings in standards call for reevaluation to align with contemporary principles. The potential transformation of project management practices due to sustainability integration is discussed, emphasizing holistic approaches and models like the sustainable project management star.

The authors considered two most comprehensive and recognized management frameworks for sustainability incorporation into project management (the PRiSM approach and the P5 Standards). Incorporating sustainability into project management involves examining the entire life cycle of the project, expanding the system boundaries of both project management and the project itself. This encompasses considering the complete project life cycle, from initiation to disposal, for future sustainability considerations.

Key steps to initiate the process of incorporating sustainability into project management, which requires the profound integration of broader social and environmental goals, were presented. These steps include defining sustainability goals, engaging with stakeholders, conducting a sustainability assessment, developing a sustainability management plan, establishing a sustainability breakdown structure, monitoring sustainability during project delivery, and practicing continuous improvement.

В роботі наголошується на ключовій важливості сталості проєктів у сучасному суспільстві та досліджується сталість в екологічному, соціальному, економічному та інституційному вимірах, підкреслюючи взаємозалежність між організаціями, проєктами та суспільством. Шість принципів сталості спрямовані на балансування коротко— та довгострокових інтересів, а також локальних і глобальних перспектив. Сталі проєкти визначаються як такі, що досягають цілей, не завдаючи шкоди та забезпечуючи довготривалі переваги. Основними елементами, що сприяють формуванню системи відповідального управління проєктами, є залучення зацікавлених сторін та оцінка впливу.

Також в статті розглядаються ключові поняття сталого управління проєктами, підкреслюючи актуальність у забезпеченні відповідності глобальним цілям сталого розвитку. Інтеграція сталості розширює межі системи, вимагаючи ширшої перспективи, що виходить за рамки традиційних методологій. Недоліки в існуючих стандартах вимагають їх переоцінки для узгодження із сучасними принципами сталого розвитку. Дискутується потенційна трансформація практик управління проєктами шляхом інтеграції сталості, з акцентом на цілісні підходи та моделі, зокрема, такі як "зірка сталого управління проєктами".

Автори розглянули два найбільш комплексних та поширених управлінських фреймворки для інтеграції сталості в управління проєктами (підхід PRiSM та стандарти P5). Інтеграція сталості в управління проєктами передбачає розгляд усього життєвого циклу проєкту, розширення меж системи як управління проєктами, так і самого проєкту. Це передбачає розгляд повного життєвого циклу проєкту, від ініціювання до закриття, з урахуванням вимірів та принципів сталості на кожному етапі.

В дослідженні представлені ключові кроки щодо початку процесу інтеграції сталості в управління проєктами, що потребує глибокої інтеграції ширших соціальних та екологічних цілей. Ці кроки включають визначення цілей сталості, залучення зацікавлених сторін, проведення оцінки сталості, розробку плану управління сталістю, створення ієрархічної структури сталості, моніторинг сталості під час виконання проєкту та практику постійного вдосконалення.

Key words: project sustainability, sustainability management plan, sustainability principles, sustainable project management, sustainable project management star.

Ключові слова: сталість проєкту, план управління сталістю, принципи сталості, сталість в проєктному менеджменті, зірка сталого управління проєктами.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM IN GENERAL TERMS AND ITS CONNECTION WITH IMPORTANT SCIENTIFIC OR PRACTICAL TASKS

Projects serve as the backbone of a company's evolution and strategic aspirations, underlining the indispen-

sable role of sustainability in achieving success. The multifaceted nature of sustainability, encompassing environmental, social, economic, and institutional dimensions, emphasizes the interconnectedness between companies and the broader society. Sustainable projects, defined by their ability to attain objectives without causing harm to

the environment, society, or economy, highlight the necessity of maintaining intended benefits over the long term.

ANALYSIS OF RECENT RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

Several authors have made significant contributions to the study of project sustainability, providing insights into theoretical frameworks, methodologies, and practical considerations. Here are some key authors in the field of project sustainability and sustainable project management: Silvius G., Sluijs R., Schipper R. [1—3], Magano J. [4], Lazar O. [5], Tharp J. [6], Martens M., Carvalho M. [7]. Researchers, practitioners, and project managers can benefit from these studies to enhance their knowledge and practices in sustainable project management.

FORMULATION OF THE ARTICLE'S GOALS (TASK STATEMENT)

The article aims to provide a theoretical basis for the need to transform scientific approaches and project management practices to integrate the principles of sustainable development, explore their environmental, social, economic, and institutional dimensions, analyze existing frameworks, and propose steps for implementing a holistic approach that aligns with global sustainable development goals.

PRESENTATION OF THE MAIN RESEARCH MATERIAL

The relevance of sustainability to projects and project management is emphasized, aligning with global sustainability goals and reflecting a commitment to responsible and ethical practices. The integration of sustainability expands the system boundaries of project management, necessitating a broader perspective beyond traditional methodologies. The potential transformation brought about by sustainability extends beyond project outcomes, reshaping practices and approaches within the field of project management. A holistic approach advocated for sustainability involves considering environmental, economic, and social aspects throughout the project lifecycle.

This paper is structured into four sections. Following the introduction, section two presents a comprehensive literature review of project sustainability. Section three describes the key concepts in sustainable project management: sustainability's relevance, shortcomings in professional standards, potential transformation and holistic approach and models. Finally, section four discusses the implications of the findings and provides recommendations for future research.

Overview of project sustainability. Projects are how the company evolves, changes, and reaches strategic objectives. It's these actions that are most critical to the company's work, and where sustainability needs to get a toehold [6, p. 5]. Sustainability encompasses various dimensions, including environmental, social, economic, and institutional aspects. A sustainable focus recognizes the interdependence between companies and the broader society and encompasses the following aspects:

1) human rights (non-discrimination of vulnerable groups, civil rights, and fundamental rights and principles at work);

2) labor practices (conditions of work, health and safety, and development and training);

3) the environment (sustainable resource use, pollution prevention, and climate change mitigation);

4) fair operating practices (anti-corruption, fair competition, and respect for property rights);

5) consumer issues (fair contractual practices, dispute resolution, and fair marketing);

6) community involvement and engagement (employee training and skills development, wealth and income creation, and community involvement) [6, p. 1—2].

Researchers concluded six principles of sustainability which provided guidance for the analysis of the impact of the concepts of sustainability in projects and project management:

1) sustainability is about balancing or harmonizing social, environmental and economical interests;

2) sustainability is about both short term and long term orientation;

3) sustainability is about local and global orientation;

4) sustainability is about consuming income, not capital;

5) sustainability is about transparency and accountability;

6) sustainability is about personal values and ethics [1, p. 2—3].

A sustainable project is one that effectively addresses its objectives and continues to deliver positive results without causing harm to the environment, society, or economy. Project sustainability refers to the ability of a project to maintain its intended benefits, outcomes, and impacts over the long term.

Key elements of project sustainability include:

1) environmental sustainability: projects should minimize negative environmental impacts and, whenever possible, contribute to environmental conservation and protection (considerations of resource efficiency, waste reduction, and adherence to environmental regulations);

2) social sustainability: projects should enhance the well-being of individuals and communities (promoting social equity, respecting human rights, and ensuring that the project has positive social impacts without adversely affecting vulnerable groups);

3) economic sustainability: projects should be economically viable and contribute to the economic development of the community or region (considerations on cost-effectiveness, financial stability, and the potential for long-term economic benefits);

4) institutional sustainability: projects should be embedded within existing institutions or create new institutions that can support and maintain project outcomes (involves capacity building, knowledge transfer, and the establishment of structures that can continue project activities beyond its initial implementation);

5) cultural sustainability: in certain contexts, projects need to respect and preserve cultural heritage and practices (ensures that projects do not undermine local traditions or values and, when possible, contribute to the preservation of cultural identity);



Fig. 1. Sustainability: Strategic context for project management

Source: [6, p. 4].

6) stakeholder involvement: engaging and involving stakeholders throughout the project lifecycle is crucial for sustainability (includes understanding and incorporating the needs and perspectives of diverse stakeholders, fostering community participation, and building partnerships for ongoing support);

7) long-term impact: assessing the long-term impact of the project is essential for sustainability (involves considering how the project's benefits and outcomes will endure beyond its initial implementation and identifying strategies to address potential challenges).

Project sustainability is often viewed as a dynamic and iterative process, requiring continuous evaluation, adaptation, and improvement. Sustainable projects are more resilient to changes in the external environment, such as economic fluctuations, social shifts, and environmental challenges. Overall, the concept of project sustainability reflects a commitment to responsible and ethical project management that considers the broader implications of the project beyond its immediate goals.

Achieving sustainability requires both individual and systemic efforts, particularly because sustainability is considered a complex and systemic, wicked problem. A holistic approach, involving a comprehensive understanding of the interconnectedness of all parts and considering various angles of the problem, is essential to address the challenges posed by sustainability [8]. Projects, being highly systematic, have a global impact and are often linked to the aspiration for positive change. However, traditional success criteria like cost, scope, and time may not suffice for sustainability. Recognizing the need for a shift, sustainability should be incorporated as a crucial success factor alongside the conventional triangle of cost, scope, and time, forming a more comprehensive approach to project success [8].

Project managers possess a chance to integrate sustainability throughout the entire project lifecycle,

spanning from design and planning to project delivery. This approach not only ensures the achievement of immediate objectives but also contributes to a sustainable future. After incorporating sustainability as a success factor, the next step involves breaking it down into specific criteria to provide coherence and direction to these efforts. A. Mojtahed proposed 4 main factors that should be prioritized in the delivery of the sustainable project:

1) human factors: impact assessment; underrepresented groups; cultural diversity and inclusion;

2) data and analytics: be honest; set realistic criteria; measure your progress;

3) broader impact: the UN Sustainable Development Goals;

4) indivisibility: we rely on each other; no one is excluded [8].

In the face of pressing global challenges, companies are under increasing pressure to go beyond mere profitability and actively contribute to positive societal and environmental impacts. This shift, driven by a growing focus on environmental, social, and governance (ESG) considerations, necessitates a reevaluation of how project leaders define and measure outcomes. To ensure meaningful return on investment (ROI) aligned with long-term ESG goals, project leaders must develop robust plans for identifying, tracking, and analyzing critical elements [9, p. 3—4]. This involves integrating ESG priorities into planning processes at various project levels, engaging with stakeholders to establish clear goals, and aligning with internal guidelines and legal requirements. Additionally, mapping the intended impact of ESG initiatives early in the planning stage and employing benefits realization and risk management approaches are vital for successfully incorporating sustainability goals into project plans. These efforts not only present opportunities but also elevate the stakes for project leaders quantifying the impact of ESG initiatives [9, p. 6—7].

Project management is not isolated but operates within a strategic framework, affected by internal and external environmental factors that can either enhance or limit options and positively or negatively impact project outcomes. In contrast to past project management approaches, the contextual environment plays a crucial role in determining the success of a project (Fig. 1) [6, p. 3].

Similar to balancing cost, schedule, and scope, project managers must navigate tradeoffs in economic, social, and environmental aspects:

1) economic sustainability involves aligning the project with the organization's overall strategy and long-term fiscal viability;

2) social sustainability requires reflection on organizational culture, human resources, and personnel practices throughout the value chain;

3) environmental sustainability necessitates a mature evaluation of resources, purchasing practices, contract management, and industry standards in project execution [6, p. 4].

The actions of sustainability are limited due to some regulations / laws. Another problem of sustainability is the insufficiency in the knowledge of how it can be integrated into the methodologies of project management [10].

Table 1 presents an overview of the strategies identified from the sample articles grouped in three groups: sustainability strategies adopted by project organizations and sustainability strategies adopted by project hosts as well as mutual strategies [11, p. 1076].

Study [4] explores how project managers perceive the contribution of project management to a more sustainable society. The study identifies four key contributions:

1) "Sustainability by the project": emphasizes the project's contribution to broader sustainability goals following the reasoning that projects are instruments to realize organizational change towards sustainability;

2) "Sustainability of the project": centers on how sustainability shapes project development, planning, execution, management, and governance, evolving into the concept of sustainable project management (SPM);

3) "Sustainability of the organization": focuses on sustainability awareness and governance of the organization;

4) "Project manager's ethics and behavior": underlines that projects drive sustainability, project managers must go beyond traditional roles, acting as advocates, shaping policies, and contributing to sustainable development, highlighting the leadership aspect and underscoring the crucial awareness of their role in fostering sustainability within organizations and society [4].

The study found that project managers are mostly aware of sustainability in the context of the project itself; they pay less attention to other aspects (sustainability by the project, sustainability of the organization, and the project manager's ethics and behavior) [4, p. 8].

Table 1. Eight sustainability strategies identified from literature

#	Strategy	Description
<i>Sustainability strategies adopted by project organizations</i>		
1	Setting strategic and tactical sustainability goals	Focusing explicitly on sustainability issues when developing project strategies, paying special attention to instances where sustainability issues align with other concerns.
2	Developing sustainable supplier practices	Supporting suppliers in implementing sustainable practices such as e.g. use of ecological materials and prefabrication.
3	Emphasizing sustainability in project design	Incorporating sustainability issues in early phases of projects and explicit project design documents. The methods are based on development of performance indicators (that may be used throughout the project life cycle) and appraisal techniques such as lifecycle assessments and value management.
<i>Sustainability strategies adopted by project hosts</i>		
4	Setting sustainability policies	Defining sustainable project policies, that include the development of laws and regulations, norms, plans and guidelines to support sustainability on the project level, and executing governmental and regulatory tasks in a manner that emphasizes and promotes sustainability in projects carried out in the host region.
5	Influencing sustainability of project practices	Supporting the incorporation of sustainability into project practices and technical systems through, e.g., construction tools, prefabrication and waste management systems.
<i>Mutual sustainability strategies</i>		
6	Inclusion of sustainability-promoting actors in project organization	Selection and inclusion of actors that bring sustainability-promoting skills, capabilities and roles to the project (<i>project perspective</i>) Inclusion of different authorities and NGO representatives to act as legitimacy actors in project organization, supporting multidisciplinary in project organization. Facilitation of local decision making and engagement of local stakeholders in the project's decision making through, e.g., guidelines, norms or financial incentives (<i>host perspective</i>)
7	Developing sustainability competencies	Expanding competencies and skill sets of project managers e.g. by investing in formal training programmes (<i>project perspective</i>) Developing sustainability-related competencies of governmental/ regulatory actors as well as the general public (<i>host perspective</i>)
8	Sustainability-emphasis in project portfolio management	This relies on either using a framework for project selection or actively including sustainability as a dimension in early-phase appraisals (<i>project perspective</i>) Emphasizing sustainability issues when deciding which projects to fund and approve (<i>host perspective</i>)

Source: [11, p. 1076].

Some authors proposed new approach for managing sustainability in projects and considered that, although still cross-cutting, sustainability should be a key core aspect of project management. Merely applying traditional management processes to achieve scope, time, cost, and quality objectives is insufficient; there must also be a dedicated focus on sustainability objectives with corresponding management processes. The authors argue for a paradigm shift, advocating that sustainable development should be the primary principle in project management, superseding other objectives. Therefore, the sustainability objective should take precedence over others for the long-term success of the project [12, p. 4—5].

In summary, it is evident that projects play a crucial role in the sustainable development of organizations and society. Sustainability by the project and sustainability of the project are interconnected, as sustainable project management entails projects contributing to sustainable development by linking benefits with the achievement of sustainable processes, deliverables, fostering productivity, competitiveness, and overall sustainability.

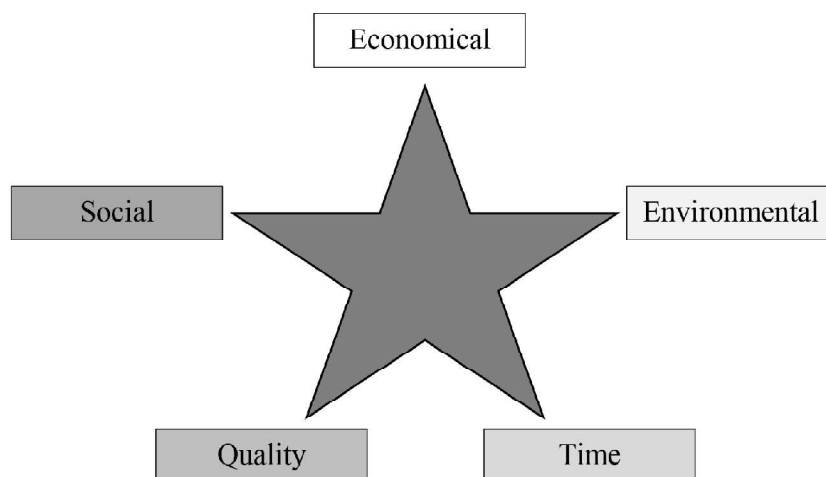


Fig. 2. The sustainable project management star

Source: [13, p. 10].

Key concepts in sustainable project management. Sustainability in project management reflects a commitment to responsible and ethical practices that align with global sustainability goals. It requires a holistic approach that balances economic, social, and environmental considerations throughout the project lifecycle.

G. Silvius et al. present a few conclusions on sustainability in project management from the emerging literature:

- 1) sustainability is relevant to projects and project management;
- 2) integrating sustainability stretches the system boundaries of project management;
- 3) project management standards fail to address sustainability;
- 4) the integration of sustainability may change the project management profession [1].

Sustainability in project management involves incorporating environmental, economic, and social aspects aligned with the triple bottom line. Traditional project management methodologies focusing on time, cost, and quality may not adequately address the three goals of sustainable development. To bridge this gap, in the earlier studies a sustainable project management star, integrating the triple bottom lines and the iron triangle of project management, was created (Fig. 2) [13].

The sustainable project management star emphasized the integration of two basic models to successfully incorporate sustainability into project management. It underscores the importance of balancing six factors — cost, time, quality, social, economic, and environmental aspects — as an imbalance among these elements poses a risk to project success. The factors "cost" and "economic" were combined into one point of the star.

Incorporating sustainability into project management involves examining the entire life cycle of the project, expanding the system boundaries of both project management and the project itself. This encompasses considering the complete project life cycle, from initiation to disposal, for future sustainability considerations. Sustainability should not only be assessed during the project life cycle but should also extend to the life cycles of assets and products, including stages such as initiation, development, execution, testing, and launching. The evaluation of sustainability should address not only the project itself but also its outcomes and impacts [13].

Silvius and Schipper [1; 3] developed a Project management maturity model that assesses the consideration of sustainability aspects in projects and project management. The model is based on two dimensions: the first dimension is that of the aspects, or criteria, of sustain-

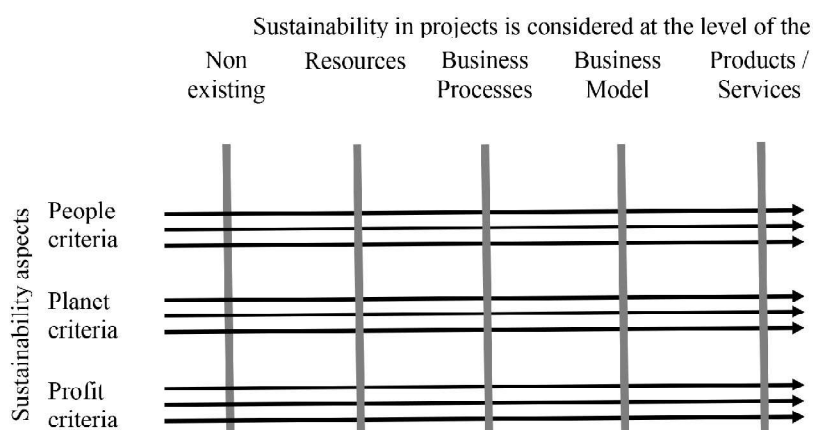


Fig. 3. Conceptual model of the assessment

Source: [3, p. 5].

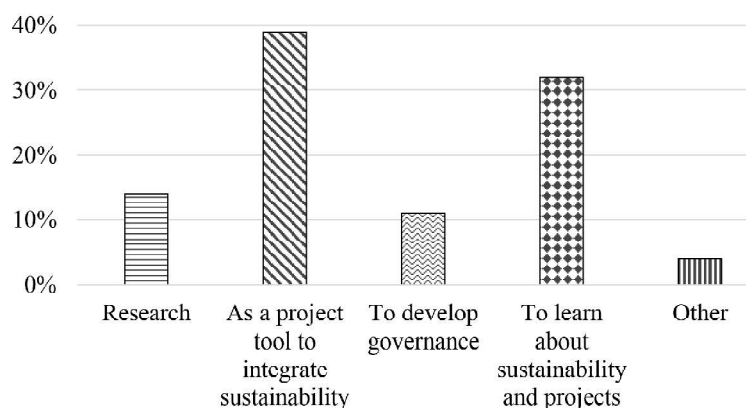


Fig. 4. Reason for downloading the P5

Source: [14, p. 11].

nability, the second that of the level or depth of considering sustainability. The maturity assessment uses a questionnaire consisting of four sections and in total 31 questions. The model assesses the level (business resources, business process, business model, products/services) on which the different aspects of sustainability are considered in the project. The sustainability aspects are derived from the sustainability checklist and are grouped in economical aspects, environmental aspects and social aspects. Presenting the project's maturity separately on these three pillars of sustainability is a deliberate choice in order to address the regional differences mentioned earlier and the ambitions or values an organization may have. Figure 3 shows the conceptual model of the assessment [3].

Despite the global recognition of integrating sustainability into project management, current practices often fall short in reflecting this connection. The study suggests that project managers see the contribution of project management to a more sustainable society mainly in terms of project processes, with less awareness of how projects can drive broader change in organizations and society towards sustainability [4, p. 8].

Developing sustainability in project management involves establishing clear guidelines to align with organizational objectives. Consequently, various project management frameworks have been created to assist project managers, with the two most comprehensive and recognized ones being:

- 1) the PRiSM approach (Projects Integrating Sustainability Methods);
- 2) the P5 Standards by Green Project Management [10].

(1) PRiSM, a framework encompassing stakeholder engagement, eco-friendly design, efficient resource management, and continuous monitoring, aims to deliver successful projects aligned with ethical, environmental, and social responsibilities. Implemented across four phases — definition, design, delivery, and handover — PRiSM ensures sustainable parameters, reduces project risks, and realizes long-term benefits. Stakeholder engagement in the discovery phase sets sustainable goals, while the subsequent phases integrate sustainable design principles, execute projects with organizational orientation, and demonstrate sustained sustainability achievements upon project completion [10].

(2) The P5 Standard enhances traditional project management by incorporating environmental, social, and economic responsibilities. It emphasizes the importance of competent and sustainability-aware project teams, clear workflows with sustainability criteria, continuous monitoring, and achieving sustainability goals in addition to project objectives. This framework expands the traditional bottom line to include sustainability in all project activities, aiming to enhance organizational viability, reputation, profitability, and efficiency while benefiting society in the long term [10].

The P5 Standard offers guidance on integrating sustainability into projects and managing associated risks and opportunities. In a study involving 9,000 project managers from 97 countries and territories, were explored their reasons for downloading the standard and examined its impact on their projects (Fig. 4) [14, p. 11].

14% of respondents were conducting research on how to integrate sustainability into projects, up from 5% in 2019. 80% of PM respondents who downloaded the standard to put it into practice which is up from 26% in 2019. 26% realized the most improvement in environmental sustainability 14% saw the most improvement in social sustainability 5% saw the most improvement in economic sustainability 55% realized a balanced improvement across all three domains [14, p. 11].

Enhancing sustainable project management practices is achievable for organizations by integrating stakeholder engagement and knowledge management into their processes, thereby optimizing performance and ensuring superior outcomes in terms of sustainability [15]. As a result of a survey-based research, four factors stood out that explain sustainability in project management in the project managers' perspective: sustainable innovation business model, stakeholders management, economics and competitive advantage, and environmental policies and resources saving [7]. The presence of these four factors further indicates the pertinence of the strategic aspect of Triple Bottom Line (TBL) sustainability in project management, as articulated within the categorized factors.

Incorporating sustainability into project management requires the profound integration of broader social and environmental goals, and here are seven key steps to initiate the process:

- 1) define your sustainability goals (start by articulating specific sustainability goals tailored to the project, ensuring alignment with organizational values and broader sustainability principles);
- 2) engage with stakeholders (involve stakeholders, such as project teams, communities, and regulators, in identifying and prioritizing the key sustainability aspects that are most significant to them);
- 3) conduct a sustainability assessment (perform a thorough sustainability evaluation of your project, taking into account environmental factors like the carbon footprint, social considerations such as community well-being, and economic aspects like cost-efficiency);

4) develop a sustainability management plan — SMP (create a thorough plan detailing the strategies, targets, and actions necessary to achieve the specified sustainability goals);

5) establish a sustainability breakdown structure (form a structured hierarchy that categorizes, organizes, and prioritizes sustainability goals within the project for more effective deployment);

6) monitor sustainability as projects are delivered (consistently monitor sustainability performance, transparently communicate progress to stakeholders, and make adjustments to strategies as needed to stay on course);

7) practice continuous improvement (following project completion, assess outcomes and lessons learned to enhance future sustainability endeavors) [10].

The authors concur with the proposed conceptualization of sustainable project management [16], which is defined as the strategic coordination of project planning, monitoring, and control. This definition considers the environmental, economic, and social dimensions throughout the project life cycle, including resources, processes, deliverables, and impacts. The primary objective of sustainable project management is to achieve benefits for stakeholders in a transparent, equitable, and ethical manner, incorporating proactive stakeholder engagement.

CONCLUSIONS AND PROSPECTS FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION IN THIS DIRECTION

This comprehensive overview delves into the intricate dimensions of project sustainability and sustainable project management. Sustainability is explored through environmental, social, economic, and institutional lenses, reflecting the interdependence between companies and society. Six sustainability principles are considered, emphasizing the balance between short and long-term interests, and local and global perspectives. Sustainable projects are elucidated as those achieving objectives without causing harm, maintaining intended benefits over the long term. Key elements of project sustainability, including stakeholder involvement and long-term impact assessment, contribute to a responsible and ethical framework for project management.

The study then shifts to key concepts in sustainable project management, highlighting its relevance in aligning with global sustainability goals. The integration of sustainability expands system boundaries, necessitating a broader perspective beyond traditional project management methodologies. Shortcomings in existing standards prompt the need for their reevaluation to align with contemporary sustainability principles. The potential transformation of project management practices due to sustainability integration is discussed, emphasizing holistic approaches and models like the sustainable project management star.

In conclusion, a holistic approach to sustainable projects and project management should be emphasized. This involves adopting an interdisciplinary and intersectoral approach to project design and im-

plementation, along with fostering deeper collaboration with scholars, NGOs (local, national, and international), professional networks, and a wide range of stakeholders to effectively balance short-term needs with long-term goals.

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Стаття надійшла до редакції 15.01.2025 р.